

WICKED PACTS

A MODERN DAY GAME OF MAGIC

WICKED PACTS

A MODERN-DAY GAME OF MAGIC

Created By

John M. Barfield

Edited By

Richard Kelly

Assistant Editors

Eillen Barfield

Other Contributions

Richard Kelly, Robert Odom, Ian Hamilton,
S. Klay Sheddan, John Patterson, John
Gutshall, & Claude Smith

Artwork

Cover Art-

Shutterstock

Interior-

James E Shields, Trajche Pavlov
& Shutter Stock

Special Font Provided By

Blam Bot

Play testers

John Patterson , John Gutshall, S. Klay
Sheddan, Claude Smith, Craig Harvey,
Robert Odom, Dan Jones, Shane
Handke, Emil Palisoc, Doug Riley, Chris
& Desiree Forester, Ali Samiiian, William
Hartman, and a large host of other
gamers who showed up at the demos at
various game stores and conventions.

Special Thanks

To Eillen my loving and ever
supportive wife and muse- thank you so
much for believing in my projects and
me. Also, my daughter Siobhan, who is
the best little girl in the world. I
couldn't ask for a better daughter.



I would like to thank my regular
gaming group the Polyhedral Knights;
you guys helped shape this project. Tom
Cavender, John Patterson, and Foster
Coker III, you guys always ran the best
games, which challenged me to go
further in storytelling. You guys remind
me why I love this hobby.

First Published 2018

ISBN: 978-0-692-11130-7



This game uses the John M Barfield roleplaying
system, developed by John M Barfield
(thepolyhedralknights.com)

Wicked Pacts-A Modern Day Game of Magic
and all associated logos and trademarks are
copyright, John M Barfield

©2018 John M Barfield. Wicked Pacts-A Modern
Day Game of Magic and all related marks and
logos are trademarks of John M Barfield. All
Rights Reserved.

Produced under license by John M Barfield
©2018. All Rights Reserved.

**Also, a special thanks to ALL the
Kickstarter Backers!!!!**

Matt Wester, Jay Sharpe, Ryan Bicz, Nick, Ana, Jeff Robinson, William Scott, Mark Craddock, Timothy Brannon, Andrew Robinson, Jaymi Elford, Jenny Reed, Francois Richard, Parker Authier, Henry Perez, Johnny Freedom, Boyd Stephenson, Jon Dodson, Ross Thompson, Michael Ramsey, Nicolette Tanksley, Nick Zahkar, Peter Holland, Donald A. Turner, Michael Lord, Peter Engebos, Adam, Mikaela Barree, Black-Thing, Drift Dragon, Johnathan James Daily, Barrister, Mike Wallace, Egg Embry, Steven Lord, Tommy Brownell, Ryan Kent, Ian McFarlin, Bruce E. Coulson, Kerry Lamb, Mark, Jetstream, Chris Dzialo, Chris Forster, Lauren, Ron Sago, Rebecca Odonnell, Omari Brooks, William Bossier, Craig Senatore, Johnathan Schmalzer, Jim Mangiameli, Frank Hart, Charlie Rose, Jin42, userzynyx, Ian Borchardt, Wajanai Snidvongs, Ryan King, Patrick G, Timothy Salisbury, Steven Locke, Scott W Hill, Robert Daley, Jason Marks, Andrew Bennett, Jake, Steven Warble, Raymond Bennett, Paul Gibson, Terry J Hughes, Lakshman, Brett Ritter, Jason Duke, Belle Sorciere, Lopikl6, Dawid Wojcieszynski, Gallant Knight Games, Coady Bennet, Morgan Jones, Kimmo K, Robert Pennebaker, Jose Alarico Teixeira Manzano, Kenny Murray, Shane C, Blake Rice, Tim Smith, Oldstevo, Douglas Riley, Steve, Ron Smay, Jat, Adumbratus, Lisa Padol, Jeff Combs, Chuck Cooley, Sterz

Sebastian, Christopher Vogler, James Adnitt, Tommi Koivula, Patrick Schwierien, Steven W Noll, Wildstar, Shawn Carman, Lian, Waylander, David, Jamie, Lou Gouncey, Josh Medin, Josephtrd, Brandon Perkins, Leon Powell, William P, Jason Corley, John Di Pietro Jr., The Rangdo of Arg, Kevin "Wolf" Patti, JackM3, Jack Gulick, James Dillane, Craig Bishell, Chris Jahn, Andrew Matiukas, Christian, Bryce Leland Carlson, Thomas Shey, Andrew Prowse, Gary Furash, Samuel Lynn, Cuthbert Cooper, Jason Childs, Elegiac Catalyst, Aaron Pothecary, Timolution, Richard Rivera, Conrad Audette, JR Green, Ryan Dukacz, Dan Jones, Tyler Brunette, James Fellows, Oliver Peltier, Allan Schooner, Russ Watson, Shane McLean, Ron, James Hays, DivNull Productions, Michael Sandlin, DapperDevil, Caspar Gregers Jensen, Ghostshipblue, Chuck Dee, Joshua Lutz, Doug Grimes, Robert Ritchie, Thomas M Burke, Darkdeathflame, Roger Haxton, S. Klay Sheddan, Fredric Dalqvist, Jennier Fuss, Thomas R., Johnathan Turner, John Taber, Sean Donnelly, Patrice Mermoud, Gilber Isla, Danny S Atwood, Historic Engraver, Azlunde, Ian Hamilton, Attack Dice LLC, Craig Karas, Erik Ingersen, Winterhawk, Jesse Rossen, Lloyd Brown III, The Underwoods, Rich Steeves, Rabi, Michael McGregor, Richard Kelly, Ron Beck, John Ackerman, Donnie Hanby, Dom Hero Ellis, Scott Maynard, Leingod, Matt Holden-Indie Game Alliance, John Bradshaw, Neal Tanner, Robert Adams

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Story: Bliss

Pages: 3,10,24,42,53,64,122,163

What is Wicked Pacts	pg. 5
Basic Game Mechanics	pg. 6
Character Creation	pg. 11
Tarot Cards	pg. 18
Archetype Talents	pg. 27
Complications	pg. 44
General Talents	pg. 49
Skills	pg. 57
Spells	pg. 68
Archetype Spells	pg. 69
General Spells	pg. 96
Sample Characters	pg. 110
Combat	pg. 131
Equipment	pg. 142
World of Wicked Pacts	pg. 164
Ley Lines	pg. 180
Other Realms	pg. 182
Adversaries	pg. 185
Experience & GM Section	pg. 227
Sample Adventure	pg. 230
Character Sheet	pg. 247

BLISS

Part 1 by Richard Kelly

I'm in my best suit in the worst part of town and the rain is coming down like judgement. It sluices off the street-signs and broken-window tenements. Bits of urban detritus--cigarette butts, plastic bottles, burger wrappers--drift by in the flood. A sodden rat bounds across the empty street, its body splashing in the current. It makes it to a stoop and hauls itself up the stairs, sheltering from the storm beneath the overhang while it stares out into the deluge with beady eyes.

If it weren't for the rain, I know I'd look like a mark. I'm dressed for a cocktail function, but the storm has transformed me. My blonde hair is plastered in flat locks against my scalp and my dress pants and jacket look like they've been fished out of a lake. I have the hungry, desperate look of a businessman on the fall, and that's what makes me sure Wade will meet with me.

I'm the only warm body sitting under this bus stop awning, and I know there can't be many cameras in this part of town, but it's still a good ten minutes before he shows--peering out of the doorway of a basement apartment, and then dashing through the downpour with a piece of ratty cardboard held over his head. He's got on a ratty gray t-shirt with a faded American flag and his cargo pants are ripped at the edges. He's carrying a flip-knife clipped to the inside of his left pocket, and he walks with his shoulders hunched in a way that suggests

both a dog on the prowl and a dog that's expecting to be kicked.

"You're lucky I'm here," he tells me, skipping right past the introduction. Flinging aside the sodden piece of cardboard, he sits down on the bench opposite me. He's about nineteen or so, and his skin's the sallow pale of a white kid who doesn't see the sun more than once or twice a day. "You need your medicine, old man?"

I've got, at most, eleven years on him. Wade doesn't like to be laughed at, though, and he's one of the few dealers in this area that isn't put off by me, so I manage not to snort. If only barely. "I'm looking for something different, actually," I say. "Something new. Something uplifting. You got anything you can prescribe me, doc?"

Wade digs in one of the cargo pockets, then pauses. He looks back up at me warily. "You're not a cop, right? You've gotta tell me if you're a cop."

"I'm still not a cop, Wade," I tell him. "I wasn't last time. I'm not this time. I don't plan to be next time."

"You can never be too sure," he says, a touch defensively.

I roll my eyes, but I let it be. I know I give off a weird vibe. People like Wade, people who only stay in business because they keep their intuition sharp, have a way of sensing it.

The rain is loud, giving cover to our conversation, but Wade still passes me the plastic baggie discreetly and I keep it screened against my body while I study it.

Red powder, an eighth of an ounce in total, rests at the bottom. I have no guarantee that it's anything more than just dyed talc, but Wade hasn't been the type to rip me off--not when he thinks I still have a long way to plunge and a lot of money to shed before I hit rock bottom--and anyway, this is what I was hoping he'd show me.

"What is this?" I ask, since that's what he expects me to do.

Wade gives me a look like he can't imagine how boring old people are. "It's Bliss," he says. "Raises you up high. Makes you invincible. Then smooths you out. You wanna try a pinch?"

Not really, I think.

"I trust you," I say, but there's a slight shift in my tone and Wade hears it.

"Look," he says hastily. "I don't dip into the product, but I've got tons of repeats on this stuff, okay? Customers love it. And it's *healthy*, man. This isn't some Walter White shit that'll make your teeth fall out. This is some fair-trade, locally-sourced, artisanal eco-shit. Only reason it's not being sold on the open market is it hasn't gotten certified yet." His eyes get suddenly shifty, and I can tell that he knows I know he overplayed his hand.

He doesn't actually *know* what's in the Bliss.

And that makes two of us.

"How much is it?" I ask. Wade licks his lips. "It's selling like fire, man."

"How much?" I repeat, all emphasis on the second word. I didn't come all the way to this part of town on short-notice, ditching out on cocktails at a Rauch U fundraiser, just to get the runaround from a kid whose only real knowledge of economics comes from a Youtube video.

"Forty for what's in the bag," says Wade. "That's with my discount for a first-timer on the stuff, and for being a reliable customer. Don't be a hardass."

I remind myself that Wade doesn't know anything about me. If he did, he'd think twice before trying a pressure sale to move his drugs.

I peel two damp twenties out of my wallet and stuff them into his open hand. The baggie with the red powder vanishes inside my suit jacket.

"If I need more, I can reach you at the same number?" I ask.

Wade gives me a look that says *not if I change it*, but aloud he tells me "you know how to find me."

I nod.

He's right about that. More right than he knows, but I don't let him dwell on it. Snatching up his piece of cardboard, I position it over my head and stalk off into the rain.

Wade shouts something after me, but it's lost in the downpour.

WICKED PACTS

What is Wicked Pacts?

Wicked Pacts is a story of our world; a world magic never left. It is a story of the secret war that festers in every city, in the slums and the subway tunnels and the penthouses, dragging angels, mages, demons, and other beings into the fray. It is a story of backroom deals, drug sales, entangling alliances, lightning bolts, and 9mm parablellum. It is a story of those who cling to the law, and those who care only for power.

But most of all, it's a story about you.

You decide how far you will go to protect humanity from the unseen. You choose between loyalty and valor or a place among the amoral elite. You kick down the doors of cultists, you analyze the mauled bodies that are found during the full moon, and you trace the demon-tainted amphetamines back to their lab.

In the secret war, you are the thin line between order and bloodshed.

Between survival and discovery.

Between those who abide by the old laws, and those who have entered into Wicked Pacts.

ANCIENT HISTORY

Since the dawn of man, magic has been among us. In the early days we walked with it hand in hand, but over time we became arrogant. We felt we didn't need the wisdom of the gifted. We cast them out of our cities, forced them to live in the wild, promised ourselves that we would live free from their influence.

But that wasn't enough. We forgot our fear of them and instead became jealous of what they could do. We used terms like witch and warlock to demonize them. We hunted them down, and we killed so many that the rest finally went into hiding.

This didn't stop them from practicing their craft, though. Nor did it stop the other supernatural creatures, the ones we couldn't see, from feeding on us. To avoid further witch hunts, many mages banded together and formed councils and codes of law to help manage their risk of exposure.

These laws punished acts of magic where we could see them and forbade sharing the hidden world with us. A little knowledge was a dangerous thing, the councils decided. Especially in the hands of the masses.

To enforce their laws, these councils authorized certain mages to catch and punish rule-breakers. In response, other mages formed independent societies: ones that let them do as they pleased.

Over time, little wars broke out between these groups formed and mages took sides. Those sides solidified, becoming power blocs that were almost like hidden

nations—or cartels.

Eventually, we forgot the existence of magic entirely, but as we entered the modern age, the secret war burned on around us.

And it is there still, smoldering in the places where we dare not look.



BASIC GAME MECHANICS

Wicked Pacts is a tabletop roleplaying game. To play, you need some pencils, dice, a few friends, and your imagination. This book will provide you with a few rules, and together you'll use them to tell a story.

Because your story needs main characters, most of you will be Players. Players each create a Player Character (PC) and guide them through the story. Each group will also need a Game Master (GM) to

adjudicate the rules, narrate what's happening, and play any supporting characters (called Non-Player Characters, or NPCs). Being the Game Master is a little bit like being the director of a movie, and it is usually best suited for whomever has the most previous experience with tabletop roleplaying games.

Everyone, Game Master and Players, will need a set of polyhedral dice to play the game. If you don't already know what polyhedral dice are, pay a visit to your local gaming store or look online. You will need a d20 (twenty-sided die), a d12 (twelve-sided die), and three d10s, d8s, d6s, and d4s.

Most of the time, playing the game will work like this: the GM will present the Players with a situation and the Players will describe how their PCs react. Then the GM will describe how the situation changes based on their reactions and the Players will react again.

For example: let's say the PCs are in a burning building. One Player might say "I run outside" another might say "I look for a fire extinguisher" and another might say "I search for survivors". Then the GM will respond with "the doors are all barred from the outside, but there's a fire extinguisher on the wall. There's also a man hovering in the air in front of you. He's cackling and sheathed in flames. What do you do?"

When a character is faced with a tough situation, such as climbing a cemetery gate in the rain or throwing a fireball at an enemy mage, the polyhedral dice are used to decide whether they succeed. The GM will assign a Target Number (TN) based on how difficult the task is, and the character

will roll their Skill dice plus their relevant Attribute (more on this in a second) to determine whether they succeed. If the player's roll is greater than or equal to the TN, the Skill Test is a success. If not, it's a failure.

PCs, like people, are all good at different things, and so every Player Character has different statistics.



ATTRIBUTES

Attributes measure how innately good at certain things a character is. A brawny character has high Strength. A bright character has a high Intelligence. Etcetera. Attributes effect everything from how easily a character can beat certain kinds of TNs to how much damage they can take and how many Spells they can sling before they run out of gas.

Hit Points and Magic Points:

Hit Points are a measure of how close a character is to death. When a character gets hit with a bullet, a Spell, or anything else that really hurts, they will typically lose Hit Points.

Magic Points, on the other hand, are a measure of a character's reserves of magical energy. The more Magic Points a character has, the more Spells they can cast.

Skills and Spells:

Skills are things that a character has learned how to do. These include firing a handgun, driving a car, or creeping silently through an abandoned house at night. Skills are measured in dice, and the more dice someone has in a Skill and the bigger those dice are, the better they are with it.

Spells are treated the same as Skills, but they require Magic Points to activate them. They also produce effects that no Skill ever could.

Critical Successes:

When at least two of a character's dice come up the highest number possible (i.e.

two 6's on 2d6) and the character succeeds on a roll, that character scores a Critical Success.

On a Critical Success, they don't just skate by—they succeed overwhelmingly. If they're trying to scale a wall, they spot handholds that would help anyone else get up it. If they're trying to hack a network, they set up a backdoor so that they can get in again whenever they'd like.

Critical Failures:

When a character rolls all 1's on a task, there is a chance that whatever they're doing is about to go catastrophically wrong. That character immediately rolls again. If this second roll is a success, they simply fail at what they were trying to do. If this second roll is a failure, then whatever they were doing blows up in their face.

Combat Critical:

In combat, both Critical Successes and Critical Failures are handled a little differently than they are out of combat.

For more information about Combat Critical, see the Combat section.

Saving Throws:

Sometimes a character will need to shrug off nausea, mind-control, resist breaking a limb, or deal with some other kind of trauma that is not easily represented with Hit Point damage. In these cases, that character will need to make a Saving Throw. To do this, they roll 1d10, add their relevant Attribute, and if they beat the TN they can weather the ill effects of whatever just happened to them. If not, they throw up, get mind-controlled, snap their tibia, or suffer whatever bad thing was at stake.

Talents, Tarot, Backgrounds, Complications, Bloodlines, and Archetypes:

A Wicked Pacts character is more than just a bag of Skills, Spells, and Attributes. Talents, Tarot, Backgrounds, Complications, Bloodlines, and Archetypes help flesh out who they are, where their powers come from, what they can do, what holds them back, and what additional edge they have against the forces of darkness.

Equipment:

Finally, most characters have worldly possessions. These items also have their own stats, detailing how much damage they can soak (for armor), how much damage they can do (for weapons), or what other effects they can produce (for magical items, gear, and all kinds of other things).

CHARACTER CREATION QUICK REFERENCE

If you've decided that you're going to be a Player, use this chart to guide you as you create your PC.

- Determine Your Character Concept (*Ex. Demonic Bail Bond Enforcer, Sarcastic Wizard PI, Mild-Mannered Templar Librarian, Etc.*)
- Select Bloodline
- Roll for Background
- Gain 3 Adjustment Points
- Gain 3 Scene Points (*Half Bloods gain 4*)
- Assign 18 points to your Attributes
- Calculate your Derived Attributes (*Hit Points, Magic Points, Heal Rate, Damage Bonus, Initiative, Movement, Saving Throws*)
- Factor in your Bloodline's Benefit and Penalty
- Assign Intelligence x 4 Language Fluency Points
- Draw a Tarot Card
- Select an Archetype and gain 2 Talents (Archetype or General)
- Assign 84 points to your Skills and Spells (see Skill Levels in the Skills section). Remember to assign points to any Magic Lore category you want to take Spells in.
- Spend Adjustment Points to modify your character (*raise an Attribute of 4 or lower by 1, assign 4 extra Skill points, change your Background, or gain a single extra Archetype or General Talent*)
- Take a Complication for one more Adjustment Point or a bonus Talent (*optional*)
- Determine your starting equipment

BLISS PART 2

I walk for a half a dozen blocks before taking shelter under a shopfront awning and calling a cab. The driver is a forty-something Cuban woman with a Crown Vic that smells like the depths of an ashtray, but she's not getting a lot of fare and I'm not getting any drier, so she controls her irritation when my suit squelches against the seat as I climb in.

We travel back to my apartment in relative silence. The storm and the lateness of the hour have driven almost everyone else indoors. Even on the main streets, traffic is light and only the occasional clusters of umbrellas dot the sidewalk.

I tip the cabbie another bedraggled twenty as I lever myself out of her vehicle, then trudge through the sluicing rain to the doorstep. I slap my keycard against the sensor on the brick wall by the door and walk dripping into the lobby.

My apartment is three floors up and I leave damp prints on the carpet most of the way.

Once I'm in, I'm peeling off my suit before the doors had time to fully swing closed. I chuck my sodden clothes in the hamper and drag dark blue jeans and a black sweater out of my bedside dresser, pausing briefly to scrub a towel through my hair. I still look like something that came up with a drag-net, but I live alone and so there's no one here to hassle me over it.

I pace through the living room, where my bookshelves and diplomas lie in quiet residence. There's a bachelor's in political science, a Master's in international relations, and a PhD in history. A faint patina of dust lies over them, and books are scattered across the coffee table in the middle of the room: *Guns, Germs, and Steel*. *The Things They Carried*. *A People's History of the United States*. They've been there for close to a month now, as I rarely have time to clean.

Between my day job teaching at Rauch and my other occupation, I don't often get the luxury of keeping up with the housework.

My refrigerator is a wasteland of takeout, and I grab the freshest carton--lo mein--and pop it into the microwave. While it's hissing and snapping, I take a bottle of wine off the kitchen rack and fill a glass. I take a sip, then leave the bottle and the glass next to the microwave unit while I take my plastic packet of drugs to the spare room.

I don't often have guests over, not for anything more than a night, and the spare room is secured with a padlock on the outside. It's also protected by several far less visible security measures on the inside. Little carvings dot the edges of the door.

When I insert the key and the lock clicks open, the door swings wide, it does so onto harsh white light, a series of empty vats, and a thick rubber mat that completely covers the floor. There is discreet soundproofing all over the walls, and three tables covered in scales, beakers, bunsen burners, and herbal sachets dominate the center space. Overhead, a series of jury-rigged fire-extinguishers hang suspended

from a metal lattice that covers the ceiling. All of them are hooked up to a single pull-cord.

And at the far end of the clutter covering the tables, there's a clunky, ten-years-out-of-date microscope.

My eyes alight on it. At the same time, from the kitchen, I hear the microwave ding.

I slap down the plastic baggie on the middle table in my alchemical lab and--ignoring my slowly cooling dinner--I get to work.



CHARACTER CREATION

Player Characters in Wicked Pacts are created in a hybrid style.

Players choose their Attributes, Skills, Languages, and Spells by spending points from different pools.

They select Bloodlines, Talents, and Complications by picking items off of lists.

They get Backgrounds and Tarot Cards by generating them randomly.

And finally, they get to spend Adjustment Points to tweak the results.

BLOODLINE

Magical abilities are passed down through families. The gift may have entered a mage's bloodline only one generation ago, or it may have happened in the distant past. Either way, it is the source of their abilities.

There are four main Bloodlines that mages can come from. Mages from these lines are called Pureblooded, Angel Blooded, Demon Blooded, or Halfblooded (or *Mutts*, if the speaker is being insulting).

Each Bloodline comes with benefits and drawbacks, and the Bloodlines do not mix. Children born to parents of two different Bloodlines only inherit the traits from one of them—or else are born completely mortal.

ANGEL BLOOD

Uncommon but respected, mages of this Bloodline tend to look very striking and have a sense of tremendous grace about everything they do. It is very rare for one of them to have met their Angelic parent, as fraternization with mortals does not seem to be something Heaven appreciates.

Offspring Benefit: +1 to either Charisma or Willpower (to a maximum of 5). Gain the Fine Looks General Talent for free

Offspring Penalty: None

DEMON BLOOD

The children of these brimstone cast-offs tend to be less well received than the Angel Blooded. Many do not have wholesome upbringings, and even those that do tend to manifest minor demonic tendencies. Demon Blooded are often excellent fighters, and they would be a terrifying force if anyone could unite them. Fortunately, the children of Hell don't tend to want to share power with each other.

Offspring Benefit: +1 to either Strength or Health (to a maximum of 5). Pick a Combat Skill. You always use this Combat Skill at -1 TN

Offspring Penalty: None

PURE BLOOD

These are the blue-bloods of the magic world. They tend to hold a great deal of status in the supernatural community and are sometimes resented by other mages. Chances are that if you grew up Pure Blood, you were made aware of how special you were from the moment you were born. Let's hope it didn't go to your head.

Offspring Benefit: +10 maximum Magic Points. Pick a Spell. You always cast that Spell at -1 TN

Offspring Penalty: -1 Strength. You must assign at least 2 Attribute Points to Strength

HALF BLOOD

AKA MUTTS

If Pure Bloods are the royalty of the spell-casting world, then the Half Bloods are the commoners. It's a rotten way of looking at things, but the Half Bloods grit their teeth and endure it.

Half Bloods are the most numerous Bloodline, and this worries the Pure Bloods. It doesn't worry them enough to change their behavior, but it causes a definite tension in large gatherings of mages.

Because of their treatment by Pure Bloods in power, Half Bloods tend to stick together, and this creates bonds that are often stronger than their loyalty to their factions.

Offspring Benefit: +1 to any Attribute except Willpower (to a maximum of 5). +5 maximum Hit Points. +1 maximum Scene Points

Offspring Penalty: -5 maximum Magic Points

BACKGROUND

Everyone has a history. To find out yours, roll on the tables below. Alternately, you may spend an Adjustment Point and pick whichever history you wish.

You are free to work with the GM to fill in the details of the Background you got. For example, if you got Criminal Record as an adult, you should decide what the record is for (and maybe whether you even did the crime you were convicted of.)

When rolling for Status & Wealth, the first number in parenthesis is how much money you can spend in a month. The second is how much you can spend on starting equipment.

You don't need to spend money on having living accommodations, medical care, food, transportation, clothes, etc. that matches your lifestyle. You *do* need to spend money on anything that's beyond your lifestyle.

Anything you don't spend on starting equipment you can spend later during gameplay.

If you need to spend more than you have, ask your GM what the consequences will be.

There will always be consequences.

Status & Wealth (1d10)

- 1: Grew up On the Run (\$750 / \$8,000)
- 2-3: Grew up in the Ghetto (\$750 / \$10,000)
- 4-5: Grew up Lower Class. (\$1,250 / \$20,000)
- 6-7: Grew up Middle Class (\$1,750 / \$30,000)
- 8: Grew up in a Criminal Family
(\$2,500 / \$50,000)
- 9: Grew up Well to Do (\$3,000 / \$100,000)
- 10: Grew up Very Well Off (\$7,500 / \$1,000,000)

Family

- Parents (1d10)
 - 1-3: Both Living
 - 4-5: Mother Living
 - 6-7: Father Living
 - 8-9: Both Dead
 - 10: Missing
- Siblings Roll (1d6 for sex and 1d3 – 1 for number of siblings)

1-3: Male

4-6: Female

Childhood Events (1d12)

1. Gangland Violence at Home
2. Plagued by Bullies
3. Popular Kid
4. Teacher's Pet
5. Playground All-Star
6. Life-Long Friend
7. Life-Long Enemy
8. Child Prodigy
9. Protector
10. Tormented Physically/Mentally
11. Given Great Gift
12. Foretold Doom

Adolescence (1d12)

1. Social Pariah
2. Social Star
3. Lettered
4. Scholarly
5. Run in With the Law
6. Gained Friend
7. Gained Enemy
8. Caught Up in Criminal Activity
9. Victim
10. Troublemaker
11. Gained Mentor
12. Connection Made

Adult (1d12)

1. Record
2. Battle-Scar
3. Studied Hard
4. Married
5. Dependent
6. Financial Loss
7. Financial Gain
8. Hunted
9. Violence Victim
10. Gained Ally
11. Impending Doom
12. Gained Artifact

ATTRIBUTES

Player Characters get **18** points to assign to their Attributes. PC Attributes range from 1-5—although certain Spells can temporarily raise their Attributes higher. Supernatural creatures are not bound by the same limitations and can have Attributes much higher than five—although usually at the cost of severe drawbacks.

Player Characters cannot start with an Attribute lower than 1 or higher than 5, so you need to spend at least 1 point on each Attribute (and 2 on Strength, if you're playing a Pure Blood!)

The Attributes are as follows...

Strength (STR):

Strength measures a character's physical power. It also helps determine their Hit Points, Movement, and it determines their Damage Bonus.

Health (HLT):

Health is a measure of a character's overall physical condition. Health sets a character's Heal Rate and is used in Saving Throws against diseases and poisons. It also plays a key role in determining a character's Hit Points.

Reflexes (REF):

Reflexes measures how quickly a character can move as well as how coordinated they are. It plays a significant role in determining a character's Movement, it is used for Initiative in combat, and it determines how hard it is to hit a character with Ranged attacks.

Willpower (WLP):

Willpower measures a character's determination and grit. Willpower sets a character's Magic Recovery Rate and is used in Saving Throws against pain or mind control. It also helps determine a character's Magic Points.

Charisma (CHR):

Charisma measures a character's natural self-confidence, appearance, and charm. It is used on almost all social Skill rolls.

Intelligence (INT):

Intelligence measures a character's ability to think, reason, and remember. It sets a character's Language Fluency Points, and it helps determine their Magic Points.

DERIVED ATTRIBUTES

Derived Attributes are secondary values that are calculated from a character's Attributes. They include things like how quickly someone can heal, how many Spells they can cast, and how much damage they can take before dying.

HIT POINTS

Hit Points are a measurement of how much damage a character can suffer before they are put at risk of dying. To figure out a character's maximum Hit Points, refer to the table below.

For detailed rules on what happens when a character is reduced to zero or fewer Hit Points, see Damage and Death Saves in the Combat section.

<i>HLT</i> (down)	1	2	<i>STR</i> 3	(across) 4	5
1	8	12	16	20	24
2	12	18	24	30	36
3	16	24	32	40	48
4	24	36	48	60	72
5	28	42	56	70	84

HEAL RATE

A character's Heal Rate determines how quickly they can recover from serious injuries. A character's Heal Rate is **HLT x2**. They receive their Heal Rate in Hit Points at the start of every day, provided they rested for at least 7 hours during the previous day.

This natural healing can be supplemented with first aid, sophisticated medical care, or healing Spells.

MAGIC POINTS

Magic Points are the energy that fuels all spell-casting. To figure out a character's maximum Magic Points, consult the table below.

WLP (down)			INT (across)		
	1	2	3	4	5
1	5	10	15	20	25
2	10	15	20	25	30
3	15	20	25	30	35
4	20	25	30	35	40
5	25	30	35	40	45

MAGIC RECOVERY

RATE

A character's Magic Recovery Rate determines how quickly they recover depleted magical energy. A character recovers their Willpower in Magic Points every hour, no matter what they're doing.

If a character rests for four uninterrupted hours, they recover half of their maximum Magic Points.

If a character rests for eight uninterrupted hours, they recover all their Magic Points.

DAMAGE BONUS

A character's Damage Bonus measures how much extra force they can put into a Melee attack. A high Damage Bonus can put some serious hurt behind even a simple punch, whereas a low Damage Bonus will turn even solid baseball bat swings into harmless glancing strikes.

<u>Str</u>	<u>Damage Modifier</u>
1	-1d3
2	-
3	+1d3
4	+1d6
5	+1d8
6	+1d10
7	+1d12
8	+2d8

INITIATIVE

Initiative is how quickly a character reacts in tense or dangerous situations. A character's Initiative is **1d8 + REF**.

Unlike other derived Attributes, Initiative changes from situation to situation. That 1d8 + REF gets rolled each time combat breaks out—or any other time that there's a tense, time-sensitive situation.

MOVEMENT

Movement is how many yards a character can run in a combat Round (i.e. in about two seconds).

A character's Movement is equal to their **REF x2, plus their STR**.

SAVING THROWS

A Saving Throw is a character's ability to resist toxins, supernatural powers, or other effects caused by creatures, Spells, or their environment.

A character has a Saving Throw for each Attribute (i.e. a Willpower Saving Throw, a Reflexes Saving Throw, a Strength Saving Throw, etc.).

When a character is called to make a Saving Throw, they roll 1d10 + the relevant Attribute. The GM will compare the result against the difficulty of the roll. On a failure, the character gets hit with some kind of debilitating effect.

Example: Toshiro whips open the hatch to the decaying cellar, causing the cultists' shotgun trap to go off. Toshiro has only a fraction of a second to react to this hazard, so the GM calls for a Challenging Reflexes Saving Throw (TN 9). Toshiro rolls 1d10 and gets a 6. He adds his Reflexes, 4, for a total of 10. He barely twitches out of the way as the shotgun fires.

LANGUAGE FLUENCY POINTS

As convenient as it would be, not every person speaks the same language. To represent this, Player Characters are given a pool of Language Fluency points to divide as they choose.

A character's Language Fluency points are equal to **INT x4**. They do not get their native language(s) for free.

All language fluencies are rated from 1 – 4 on the following chart.

- 1- You can barely speak the language.
- 2- You can follow a simple conversation, but you trip over the grammar.
- 3- You can get by, although you have an accent.
- 4- You can pass for a native speaker. You even know the obscure words like *susurrus*.

SCENE POINTS

Scene Points are a little something extra that Player Characters can use to keep ahead of their problems. Every character starts with a pool of 3 Scene Points, and certain Bloodlines, Archetypes, Talents, etc. can increase the size of that pool further. Scene Point pools refresh at the start of each

game session, and Scene Points can be spent to swing the odds of a situation in a PC's favor.

Unspent Scene Points do not carry over between sessions, but the GM is free to award bonus Scene Points to players for good decision-making, excellent roleplaying, or otherwise helping to make the game more fun for everyone at the table.

When a Player spends a Scene Point, they do not have to declare it before taking an action. They can always act, roll the dice, and then use a Scene Point if they dislike the result.

A single Scene Point can be used to do any of the following:

- Add either +5 to a Skill Test or add an extra d10.
- Instead of *rolling* an attack's damage, deal maximum damage.
- Reduce incoming damage by half or spend two Scene Points to reduce it to zero.
- Alter a minor aspect of the Scene. The GM must approve this change and has final say over what is acceptable.

Example: Tom spends one Scene Point to say the security guard posted outside the office is a friend he used to serve with in the army. The GM okays it.

Tom then starts to say he's spending another Scene Point to have the security guard hand him a bundle of magic swords but changes his mind when he sees the look the GM is giving him.

ADJUSTMENT POINTS

Like Scene Points, Adjustment Points are another slight edge that Player Characters have over the rest of the world.

Unlike Scene Points, Adjustment Points are spent for permanent bonuses. They don't refresh. If they aren't used during character creation, they're lost for good.

Every Player starts with 3 Adjustment Points, and they can spend them to do any of the following:

- Raise an Attribute by 1 point (to a max of 5)
- Gain 4 more Skill points
- Buy 1 General or Archetype Talent (only one Talent may be purchased this way)
- Decide your Background

WHAT ABOUT CARRYING CAPACITY?

In a game about crossing great swathes of wilderness on foot or exploring ancient dungeons and filling your backpack with chunks of solid gold, it makes sense to keep careful track of how much you can carry.

However, Wicked Pacts is a game where you can have half a dozen guns in your safehouse, two flak jackets in the trunk of your hatchback, and a pistol under the sofa cushions at home--and you can retrieve them all easily before a job.

As a result, Wicked Pacts uses a common-sense approach to how much a character can carry: as long as what a character is carrying doesn't seem unreasonable to the group, the group doesn't need to worry about carrying capacity.

If a character starts lugging around a truly absurd amount of gear (twelve snow shovels, three automatic rifles, sixteen hats, and a cinderblock, for example, all sticking out of their backpack) the GM should start imposing penalties on their rolls.

There are also social disadvantages to walking around in riot armor with a pair of combat shotguns strapped to your back, and NPCs will react accordingly to a PC that strolls down main street looking like they're going to declare war on the city.



TAROT CARDS

Each Player Character in Wicked Pacts is linked to a Major Arcana from the Tarot deck. A Major Arcana is any card that does not have "of wands", "of cups", "of swords", or "of pentacles" in the name. If a card has "of wands", "of pentacles", etc. in the name, it is a Minor Arcana.

To determine a Player Character's Tarot Card, simply draw one from a handy deck, use an online Tarot reader, or just choose a card that fits their personality.

Two players in the same group generally should not have the same Tarot Card.

Tarot Mechanics

Tarot aren't just a way to add more color to the PCs. They also affect gameplay.

At the start of each gaming session, each player should draw a card from the Tarot deck. Make sure the deck has been spread out and shuffled thoroughly, as the facing of each card matters.

A card that is drawn upside-down is called a "reversed" card and is handed to the GM. Cards that are drawn right-side up, the players get to keep.

The players and the GM can all use their cards during play for a variety of bonuses, but at the end of the session all the cards go back into the deck—whether they've been used or not.

DRAWING SOMEONE ELSE'S CARD

If a player draws a Major Arcana belonging to another member of the group and the Major Arcana is right-side up, it is handed to the player whose Arcana it matches. The player who drew it draws again.

If a player draws another player's Major Arcana reversed, it is given to the GM and

the player does not draw again.

EFFECTS OF MAJOR ARCANA

Player can spend Major Arcana at any time to do one of the following:

- Automatically break or block a Spell
- Instantly refill a character's Magic Points
- Instantly find a nearby Ley Line or Dead Zone
- Gain a Scene Point
- Ask the GM for a specific effect related to the card (for example, a bonus to Driving for playing The Chariot)

The GM uses Major Arcana a little differently. Instead of triggering one of the above effects, the GM can introduce a complication into the story. These complications should be based on the meaning of the reversed card, and they should be something the players can work to overcome.

For example, the GM should *not* use the Tower to declare that a *Player Character* dies of a sudden heart attack, but the GM could use it to have a minor NPC get arrested, an ally think the PCs are working against them, or a cult begin consecrating a major ritual site nearby.

Example: Bill, Andy, and the GM sit down to play. Bill's card is the Tower. Andy's is the Chariot. Bill draws the Chariot right-side up, so he places the card in front of Andy. Andy then draws Wheel of Fortune reversed. Andy scowls and hands it to the GM.

Later in the game, Andy is faced with a terrible Angel Slayer who has Andy's scent and is ready to collect a bounty on his head, regardless of whether that heads still attached. The Angel Slayer has a reputation for a high body-count, so Andy decides to use the Chariot for a specific effect. He asks the GM can if he can use it to boost his swiftness in this combat. The GM thinks about it for a second, agrees that Swiftness is one of the positive features of the Chariot, and rules that Andy gets to act first for the rest of the combat. The card is spent and now the GM starts thinking about ways to use that Wheel of Fortune.



EFFECTS OF MINOR ARCANA

The bulk of the Tarot deck is made up of Minor Arcana, but don't let the name fool you. Minor Arcana are just as valuable as Major Arcana. They are just more specific in how they can be used, and their effects depend on their suite:

- **Wands** - Increase Initiative for a combat Scene
- **Cups** - Reduce the TN for a single social Skill
- **Swords** - Reduce the TN for a single combat Skill
- **Pentacles** - Reduce the TN for a single non-combat, non-social Skill

How much a Minor Arcana increases a character's initiative or reduces a TN depends on the number of the card. A Three of Wands, for example, increases Initiative by +3. A Nine of Swords reduces the TN for a combat Skill by -9. Cards such as Page, Knight, Queen, and King all count as 11.

When the GM uses a Minor Arcana, the rules are the same, but the GM *increases* TNs and *decreases* Initiatives when using the cards on the PCs. The GM can also decrease the TNs and increase the Initiatives of the bad guys.

ARCANA EXPLAINED

Each Arcana, Major or Minor, has certain associations. Below is a guide to help the players and GM understand what they can mean.

As a general rule, while Arcana *can* be literal, often their meaning is more vague. Death, for example, can mean the death of a person, but it is more likely to mean a change of thinking, the end of a certain way of life, or a major transition from one state

to another.

THE MINOR ARCANA

CUPS

Cups cards center around matters of emotion. Many also indicate good fortune or a time of plenty.

Reversed

Ill fortune, lack of emotion, missed opportunity.

PENTACLES

Pentacles cards evoke physical possessions, wealth, the managing of assets, and progress in a vocation.

Reversed

Financial hardship, professional setbacks, lack of worldly goods or abilities.

SWORDS

Swords cards describe conflict between people. They may also indicate rash decisions and harrowing trials.

Reversed

Harmony, tolerance, agonizing too long over a decision, conceding power.

WANDS

Wands cards represent conflict between a person and the world around them. They also indicate hard work, endurance, and suffering.

Reversed

Lack of conflict, progress, effort, or

community strength.



THE MAJOR ARCANA

0 - THE FOOL

The Fool is a free spirit with barely a care in the world. A dreamer, uninterested in practicality, the Fool is also a traveler.

Reversed

Failure, madness, and a blocked path.

1 - THE MAGICIAN

The Magician shows mastery, cunning, a new beginning to a project, creativity, and a sense of purpose.

Reversed

A weak will, indecision, trickery, and deceitfulness.

2 - THE HIGH PRIESTESS

The High Priestess' influence is often hidden. She tends to be patient, silent, and slow to make decisions. She may be an

adviser with an unusually good intuition and she is usually a woman. She also represents psychic ability and the manifestation of femininity in the spiritual world.

Reversed

Secrecy, deception, laziness, intolerance, delays, falsehood, mood swings, and superficial behavior.

3 - THE EMPRESS

The Empress is understanding, kind, charismatic, beautiful, safe, trusting, and nurturing.

Reversed

False appearances, vanity, sterility, carelessness, and disdain.

4 - THE EMPEROR

The Emperor is a source of power and stability. Ambitious and firm of purpose, he indicates a dominant male leader.

Reversed

Loss of control, emotional immaturity, ill temper, megalomania, and loss of wealth.

5 - THE HIEROPHANT

The Hierophant is wise, persistent, enduring, a giver of good advice, a great organizer, gives freely of his heart, and represents the querant's voice and inner self.

Reversed

Being overly critical, needless concern with the morals of others, inability to deal with finances and practical matters, superstitious, and illogical thinking.

6 - THE LOVERS

The Lovers evoke unity, good choices, an agreement between opposites, attraction, balance, and harmony.

Reversed

Disorder, failure, broken relationships, quarrels, and dangerous temptation.

7 - THE CHARIOT

The Chariot shows the triumph of willpower over the material, success, self-control, self-determination, physical ability, swiftness, and mental strength.

Reversed

Disorder, illness, and risk of violent accident.

8 - STRENGTH

Strength suggests power and force. It is evocative of lower instincts and passions, such as possessiveness and lust. It also suggests someone who is filled with power, energy, and love. It can refer to success, power, and good physical strength. It can even mean the inner strength needed to tame lust.

Reversed

Discord, weakness, listlessness, stubbornness, and abuse of power.

9 - THE HERMIT

The Hermit is known for his wisdom, patience, silence, spiritual advice, inspiration, and solitude. He may represent a teacher or indicate a desire to be alone.

Reversed

Viciousness, darkness, deception, stubbornness, and misanthropy. Also an inability to find solace or distance from problems.

10 - WHEEL OF FORTUNE

The Wheel of Fortune is about change, evolution, luck, happiness, abundance, and success, all happening seemingly due to random circumstances.

Reversed

Slowed progress, unexpected setbacks and delays, foul luck, things going exactly as they are expected to, a dreary sense of order to life.

11 - JUSTICE

Justice suggests balance between the necessities and responsibilities of life. It can also allude to a need to keep order, concern over matters of law, trials, marriages, and any binding concerns.

Reversed

Injustice, legal complications, fanaticism, insecurity, and being judgmental.

12 - THE HANGED MAN

The Hanged Man represents voluntary sacrifice that leads to new insight. He can suggest taking the initiative in a time of suffering, or finding wisdom through great fortitude. The Hanged Man *can* mean redemption, but only by way of sacrifice and loss.

Reversed

Arrogance, wasted efforts, resistance to spiritual influence, someone else is wrongly

blamed, a lesson goes unlearned.

13 - DEATH

Death can mean a literal death, but it more often refers to a transformation, parting of the ways, a change in how the querent sees the world, or an end that leads to rebirth.

Reversed

An ending that won't come, stagnation, illness, and broken relationships that limp on.

14 - TEMPERANCE

Temperance typically means careful consideration, moderation, self-control, patience, the careful bringing together of two opposites, good marriage, working in harmony with others, great talent, and creative input.

Reversed

Conflict, bad combinations, quarrels, shipwreck, and disorder.

15 - THE DEVIL

The Devil is filled with seductive power, temptation, and obsession. He can imply sexual deviation, out-of-the-box thinking, earthly passions, and thinking that is distorted and filled with blind impulse.

Reversed

Wrongful use of force, weakness, disorder, a terrible fate, or a tendency to choose illusion over facts.

16 - THE TOWER

The Tower portends sudden changes. It may represent a fall from grace, the collapse

of a plan or institution, escape from prison or bondage, a bankruptcy, failed plans, and possibly sudden death.

Reversed

False accusations, oppression, confusion, freedom at a cost, the groundwork being laid for a great and terrible plan.

17 - THE STAR

The Star evokes hope, insight, flexibility, unexpected help, and inspiration. The Star may also imply that good health and love will be given and received.

Reversed

Illness, pessimism, stubbornness, arrogance, and errors in judgment.

18 - THE MOON

The Moon represents intuition, important changes, an arduous and obscure path, a changeable nature, or a link to psychic powers.

Reversed

Secret foes, self-deception, intractability, hysteria, blackmail, disorientation, and unseen perils.

19 - THE SUN

The Sun hints at a happy relationship, creature comfort, good energy, motivation, and inspiration.

Reversed

Depression, truth covered over by a lie, a broken relationship, a lost job, listlessness, darkness, or a lack of pleasure.

20 - JUDGMENT

Judgment promises retribution, new life, radical changes, willingness to try something new, creative power, a discerning mind, forgiveness, and legal matters settled in the querent's favor.

Reversed

Weakness, wrongness, spiritual vacillation, bad legal advice, illness, or separation due to disagreement.

21 - THE WORLD

The World encompasses everything that can be. It can also suggest success, rewards, travel, or a change of residence.

Reversed

Stagnation, being trapped or isolated, a problem centering around one very small matter.

BLISS PART 3

Before I continue, you should know that I'm not a chemist.

The high school that I went to never taught chemistry. In fact, I'd be surprised if there was a single federal standard that they followed, from core curriculum to student safety. The American history classes I took weren't anything like what mundanes learn, and my science department had neither biology, chemistry, nor physics.

Instead, what they taught was the truth.

When I was seven, the Granite Lodge School for The Gifted took me in on a scholarship. The terms of their acceptance meant living on campus, working between classes, and looking like a target to every trust-fund legacy student who found out I was there on a free ride.

It wasn't a pleasant experience, but it was better than the projects in Detroit.

It was better than a family fallen from glory. It was better than a mother who would shut down every time I mentioned the name of the man who had brought me into this world and then left me to rot.

Granite Lodge toughened me up. It taught me lessons I would never have acquired in the mundane world.

The proper way to use an alembic is one of them.

Extracting a small sample of red powder from the bag, I run it through a series of basic tests.

Assays. Distillations.

And again, this isn't chemistry.

Alchemy, unlike most mortal sciences, is about the raw essence of a thing. To a chemist, a hawk's feather is mostly carbon. To an alchemist, the feather is air. Distill it into a tincture, and you've bottled the wind. Mix it carelessly with a handful of earth, and the compound swings wildly back and forth between its two essential natures.

Unless a third element is added to stabilize the fusion, it cooks off in an explosion of stone and vapor, ruining your lab.

Under controlled conditions, I ply small samples of the powder with opposite elements. As I do so, my stomach rumbles.

Excluding a couple of unsatisfying crab canape, I haven't really eaten today.

I have a tendency to skip meals when I'm engrossed in an assignment. It's left me whiplash thin.

I suspect that it worries a few of my mundane co-workers but, at the end of the day, all that really shows is that mundanes don't have anything better to worry about.

Controlled explosions scatter ash and smoke across my lab bench and I determine that the red powder is infused with the essence of fire. This could mean that it's amphetamines, or it could mean that it's made from saltpeter, or it could mean a dozen other things only tangentially connected to the English meaning of the word 'fire'.

I dash a fingernail's width of the powder onto a slide and jam it under the microscope's aperture. Putting my eye to the scope, I squint and dial the Bliss into focus.

For a moment, I almost sigh with relief. The drug is dense and crystalline. It looks right for meth, and meth isn't really my concern.

Then I see the scales.

They're tiny, almost translucent. Each one is perfectly formed and startlingly intricate. They look like little crimson snowflakes, but they're not melting.

I curse.

My testing didn't show even a trace of life essence in the powder, and mortal byproducts like skin, hair, or fingernail clippings always have a hint of life essence in them. So, whatever these flakes are, they didn't come from a person or an animal.

Which is not the same as saying they didn't come from a living thing.

I curse again and dig in the laboratory clutter for my scrying bowl.

Maybe you've realized it already, but Granite Lodge didn't take me in because of my athletic ability. They didn't write a blank check for my room and board because of my grades in Detroit elementary.

They took me in because for the past god-knows-how-many-generations, my father's line has been marrying cousin to cousin, concentrating the Girodana blood until it's practically viscous in our veins.

I have distant memories of being only a couple of years old and being sick all the time, having trouble thinking, and bleeding too easily. One night, when I would normally have been in bed, my mother kept me up to meet a trio of strangers at the door. There were two men and a woman, and they drew intricate diagrams on the living room floor, burned foul-smelling bundles of herbs, and chanted over me.

When they left, my club-foot was gone. As were my cognitive problems and my hemophilia.

All I was left with from my father's line was my blonde hair, my green eyes, and my aptitude for magic.

Setting my scrying bowl on the laboratory bench, I fill it with half a beaker of spring water, a dollop of spit, and two drops of blood from my pricked pinky finger. I grip the edges of the bowl as tightly as I can, and I will my power into it. The water swirls.

"What will happen if I try the powder?" I ask it. "Will it kill me?"

Letters press in translucent indentation against the surface. *No*, they say.

"Will I learn where it comes from?" I ask.

Yes, swirls the bowl.

I push it aside.

Putting a pinch of the bliss powder up my nose is still probably a bad idea, but I don't like the thought of just giving up on this lead. Besides: I am Renzo Girodana, last of my line. The energies of creation and destruction boil in contradiction beneath my skin.

I am flush with arcane power, the hour is too late for good decisions, and I am still young enough to be reckless.

I am not, however, a total idiot.

I chain the doors to my laboratory shut, close my eyes, and fling the key haphazardly into the clutter. Whatever the drug does to me, if I'm not sober enough to find it and dig it out, I'm not getting loose anywhere else in the apartment building.

On the lab table, I portion out the barest dusting of the powder. Putting my nose to it, I inhale gently.

For a moment, I'm certain that the dose is too low, or that it's bunk. I sit back, waiting for it to kick in, and I wonder if Wade was selling a sham. If he wasn't able to get a drug so new on the market, he might have cooked up a replica.

Maybe that was what I saw in the microscope: borax or drain cleaner or some other bit of nastiness mixed in with the product.

It's a comforting thought. Better than the alternative.

I decide with absolute confidence that I'm right.

Then the apartment vanishes, to be replaced with a vista of fire and violence.



ARCHETYPES

If a Bloodline determines where a mage's power comes from, an Archetype determines how they use it.

Every Player Character has an Archetype. Almost every Archetype requires certain Attributes and Skills in order to choose it, so be sure that your character can qualify for the Archetype you want to take.

When you select an Archetype, you get 2 Talents. You may use these to take any of the Talents listed under the Archetype, or you can use them to pick from the list of General Talents right after this.

ANGEL SLAYER

The opposite side of the coin from the Demon Hunters, many Angel Slayers see Heaven as a corrupt institution that must be brought to heel. Others harbor a grudge against a particular Angel, or simply wish to test their skills against the most difficult

prey on earth. They are accepted in the Order, but only on the condition that they keep their darkest impulses at heel.

Requires: Health at 4 and Occultism at least 2d8

Areas of Magic: Angel Slayer Spells and General Spells

Spellcasting Attribute: Strength

Talents:

- **Demon Blood:** A demon's power courses through your veins. Attacks against you are at +2 TN. When you make a Saving Throw against a magical or supernatural effect, you make that save at -2 TN.
- **Demon's Embrace:** Three times per game session, you may drink the blood of a human, an Angel-Blooded, or even a full Angel for nourishment. If this ability is used against a conscious, unwilling target, it costs an Action and triggers an Opposition Roll using Brawling. If you succeed against a human, you drain 2d6 Hit Points. If you succeed against an Angel-Blooded, the effect is the same, but you also gain the same number of Magic Points. If you somehow manage to succeed against an actual Angel, drain 4d6 Hit Points and gain the same number of Magic Points.
- **Demon's Sense:** You can see in the dark (even total darkness or magical darkness) as easily as you do in daylight. Unfortunately, when you use this power, everything you see is tinged in shades of dull red. Regardless of whether your Demon's Sense is "on", you gain a -2 TN bonus on all Observation rolls.
- **Expendables:** You might not treat

them well, but for some reason people keep lining up to do your dirty work. You have three low-level enforcers you can call on, once per game session each, to do the kinds of tasks you don't feel like wasting your time on. Use the stats for Angry Low-Life from the Adversary section if stats are needed.

- **Expert Slayer:** Three times per game session, you can reroll any combat Skill. You may use whichever result is better.
- **Infernal Blade:** From the pits of hell these blades were forged. Each is spiritually linked to its wielder and deals 2d8+2 damage, AP 2, and poisons any target it strikes. Anyone struck by an Infernal Blade must make an immediate Health Save (TN 11). If they fail, they suffer -3 to their Initiative and they reduce one of their Skills (your choice) by one die type. This effect lasts for the entire combat Scene, or until healed, whichever comes first. A target can be poisoned multiple times, but the target's Initiative cannot be reduced below 1 and each Skill can only be reduced once per fight.
- **Temptation:** You corrupt everyone you meet. Once per game session, when you try to win someone over to your way of seeing things, make an Opposition Roll using Persuasion against their Willpower Saving Throw. If you succeed, the target doubts their earlier conviction and will support you—at least for a little while. If you fail, you can never use this power again on that target. Some NPCs, at the GM's discretion, are immune to the full force of this

Talent. You may make a Persuasion roll against their Willpower Save as usual, but success simply means they hesitate long enough for you to get in the first strike, shout a warning to your friends, or run away.



DEMON HUNTER

Not everyone agrees with their methods, but few can argue with their results. Demon Hunters don't tend to live particularly long, but they carve a swathe through Hell's minions before they go.

Requires: Health at 4 and Occultism at least 2d8

Areas of Magic: Demon Hunter Spells and General Spells

Spellcasting Attribute: Reflexes

Talents:

- **Angelic Aegis:** Your connection to Heaven strengthens you, giving you 2 DR to all Hit Locations and a -2 TN bonus on your Saving Throws against disease or poison.
- **Angelic Blade:** You have a specially crafted blade, forged under the guidance of Heaven. Your Angelic Blade does full damage to any supernatural creature, regardless of their resistances. Furthermore, it has AP 2 and its base damage is 2d8+2. A demon that is struck with your Angelic Blade may not heal that damage with magic. If anyone else tries to use this blade, they take damage as if they had been struck by it. If you die, the blade disappears entirely.
- **Bravery:** You don't scare easy. Rather than rolling one dice for Willpower saves, you roll 2 dice and keep the best roll. This applies also to resisting Spells.
- **Keen Eye:** You are so practiced at stalking your prey that you can re-roll an Observation or Tracking Skill Test 3 times per game session.
- **Supernatural Sense:** You can pick out supernatural elements from your surroundings. Furthermore, you can spot demons and people under demonic influence in a crowd by making an Observation Skill Test against their Stealth.
- **Supernatural Snitch:** There is always a lowlife who is willing to roll over on his comrades, and you have an absolute *gift* for finding them. CHR times per game session, you can declare that you know a snitch with information related to

the current situation. Of course, these snitches might not want to talk with you, and some will bolt if they see you coming.

- **Support Network:** Over time, you've amassed a lot of places to lay low or resupply. Once per game session, you can declare that you have a nearby safe house with a cache of healing supplies, ammunition, and anything else you regularly find yourself needing. The GM has veto power if you find yourself regularly needing nuclear weapons, but most supplies are fair game.

ENCHANTER

Sometimes derided as not being a 'true' mage, an Enchanter invests their power in the objects around them, rather than simply turning that magical energy into a fireball or a bolt of lightning. While not as flashy as a Warlock, a fully equipped Enchanter is much harder to kill.

Requires: Intelligence at 4 and Alchemy at least 2d8

Areas of Magic: Enchanter Spells and General Spells

Spellcasting Attribute: Intelligence

Talents:

- **Alchemy Stash:** 3 times per session, you can declare that you have a potion stashed somewhere nearby. The stashed potion *must* be in a place you could conceivably have visited before and you must pay half the potion's cost when you use this ability.
- **Alchemy Stone:** You have an object

that acts as a receptacle for stored magic energy. It can hold up to 15 Magic Points and it starts every session fully charged. It can only be accessed by the Enchanter, who can draw out Magic Points by touching it.

- **Dedicated Workshop:** You have a private lab. When you use it to cast a Spell or craft an item, you get a -2 TN bonus on the roll.
- **Extra-Dimensional Storage:** You have an item (*ex: bag, purse, hat, etc.*) that is actually anchored to Somewhere Else. You can reach into the Somewhere Else to store or withdraw objects at any time. The space on the other side is as big as a broom closet and can only be accessed by you.
- **Enchanted Ranged Weapon:** Some time ago, you decided it would be safer if you kept a holdout piece. Your weapon is something small—typically a wand, a ring, or even a pistol—but discharges a bolt of almost transparent energy, using the rules for a pistol on the Range Table in the Combat section. Your weapon is linked to you and it refuses to work for anyone else. Its base damage is 2d6+2, and you may upgrade it with one of the following for free:
 - AP 2
 - Drains 1d6 Magic Points on a successful hit
 - Ignites target, dealing 1d6 damage at the end of their turn for 1d3 turns.
 - Slowing effect. The target makes a Willpower Saving Throw (TN 11) when struck.

If they fail, they suffer -3 to their Initiative and reduce one of their Skills (your choice) by one die type. This effect lasts for the entire combat Scene, or until disenchanted, whichever comes first. A target can be slowed multiple times, but the target's Initiative cannot be reduced below 1 and each Skill can only be reduced once per fight.

- **Golem Servant:** You have a superbly crafted Flesh Golem that serves you (see Flesh Golem under Adversaries). It can pass as a human, although it is only capable of short answers and simple sentences. It has 40 Hit Points and you may spend 10 Skill Points to increase its Skills or buy new Skills. It does not count towards the total number of Golems you can control. If it dies, at the end of the scenario you can craft another Flesh Golem of similar quality.
- **Precise Worker:** Your attention to detail gives you 3 re-rolls per session when casting Enchanter Spells or crafting items.

GRUNT

Not every Grunt is a musclebound hulk that can tear apart plywood like tissue paper, but many are. Specialists in physical magic, Grunts are tough, fast, and hit like a locomotive.

Requires: Strength 4, one combat Skill at 2d8

Areas of Magic: Grunt Spells and General Spells

Spellcasting Attribute: Health

Talents:



- **Combat Sense:** You are keenly aware of your surroundings at all times. You get +5 to your Initiative and cannot be ambushed or surprised.
- **Dirty Fighter:** Dirty fighter is the least of the things they call you. At the start of each Round, choose one: you get +3 damage when using Brawling, you get a -3 TN bonus on Brawling rolls.
- **Meat Monkey:** You're an absolute bruiser. You get +10 Hit Points.
- **Mystic Fist:** You've got some big meat hooks. When you throw a punch, roll 2d4 instead of 1d4 for damage. This punch counts as a

magical weapon for affecting certain supernatural creatures.

- **Physical Adept:** Before making a HTH or Melee attack, you may choose to spend up to 6 Magic Points. If the attack hits, for each point spent, you deal +1 damage. However, if your attack misses, you may not use this ability again this Round.
- **Skilled Fighter:** 3 times per game session, you may reroll any combat Skill.
- **Taunt:** You know how to get inside your opponent's head. 3 times per game session, during anyone's turn, you can force a target to attack you instead of an ally, or you can make an Opposition Roll using Intimidation + CHR against a target's Resist Torture/Interrogation + WLP or their Willpower Saving Throw. If you succeed, they reduce all their rolls by one die type for the rest of the combat. You may only apply this effect to the same opponent once per combat.

KNIGHT TEMPLAR

Without access to magic, agents of the Knights Templar rely on faith and force of arms. Fortunately for them, they also have access to powerful miracles, blessings that seem to contradict the laws of magic.

Requires: Strength or Health 4, Any combat Skill at 2d10

Areas of Magic: None. However, gain an

additional Talent and begin play with one Miracle of Faith (see Miracles of Faith in the Spells Section.)

Spellcasting Attribute: None

Talents



- **Blindside:** You are used to getting the drop on your targets. When attacking a target that is unaware of your presence or already engaged in combat with someone or something else, you get a -2 TN bonus and deal +2 damage against them.
- **Connected:** You have a special network of connections among the Knights Templar. CHR times per session, you can call on them for information.
- **Holy Relic:** You have been entrusted with a sacred relic in the war against

evil. See the Holy Relics under Equipment, to determine which relic you have been given. If the relic is lost or stolen, by divine providence you will receive another relic at the start of the next session, but your superiors will still expect you to track down the original relic.

- **Move and Shoot:** You may move and shoot on the same turn without taking a penalty for it. This does *not* negate the penalty for taking multiple Actions.
- **Ninja:** Infiltration is second nature to you. 3 times per game session, you may reroll Stealth. You must take the results of the second roll, even if it is worse.
- **Street Savvy:** Knowing the streets is one thing, but being from the streets and understanding its life blood is another. Three times per session, you may reroll Streetwise. You must take the results of the second roll, even if it is worse.
- **Strong Faith:** Your conviction strengthens you. Gain a -4 TN bonus on all Saving Throws.

NECROMANCER

Necromancers have a reputation as spindly, sallow freaks who spend more time speaking with the dead than with the living. Of course, people don't gossip about Necromancers too much, as it's best not to anger anyone who might have a rotting army on standby.

Require: Charisma at 4 and Magic Lore (Necromancy) at least 2d8

Areas of Magic: Necromancy Spells and

General Spells

Spellcasting Attribute: Willpower

Talents:

- **Astral Sight:** By making a standard Observation Skill Test, you can notice spirits, astral projections, and other things that would normally be invisible.
- **Haunting Presence:** Once per game session, you briefly join the worlds of the living and the dead, causing an eerie atmosphere to settle around you. When you do this, make an Intimidation Opposition Roll against every target within a 15-yard radius of you. Each target resists with a Willpower Saving Throw at +3 TN. Failure means they flee. This ability effects supernatural creatures, even ghosts, as nothing likes to be reminded of its own mortality.
- **Natural Immunity:** You are so used to handling the grossest things the world has to offer that you never have to make a Saving Throw vs poison or disease. This applies to supernatural poisons and diseases as well as perfectly mundane ones.
- **Scepter of Power:** You have an old, warped wand or staff filled with unwholesome power. You must have the item on your person in order to use its bonus. The item required a lot of study and concentration in order to master, and it will not function for anyone else. If lost or stolen, it will be gone for the rest of the game session, but then it will come back of its own will. Choose one of the following benefits:
 - It gives you DR 2 to all Hit Locations

- You get +2 maximum Scene Points
 - Increase your maximum Magic Points by +10
- **Shady Contacts:** You know a few people that like easy payouts and don't ask too many questions. CHR times per game session, you can call up a contact to offer professional advice or to get you in the door somewhere you wouldn't normally be allowed to go. The GM may limit how you can use this power. *Ex: a coroner might get you access to a specific body in the morgue, but they're probably not going to charge at a demon, armed only with a scalpel, for you.*
- **Skilled Raiser:** When you cast Raise the Dead (see the Necromancer Archetype Spells list) it only costs 3 Magic Points per dead raised.
- **Supernatural Servant:** Sometime during your career, you acquired (or assembled) a Ghost or Flesh Golem servant to do your bidding (see their respective entries in the Adversaries section for stats). Your supernatural servant obeys your every order, but it may choose to follow your orders *too* literally if it gets upset with you.

SCRIBE

Versatile casters, Scribes are walking libraries of eclectic magic. Some find themselves adopted by powerful patrons, while others operate solo, doing the work of five or six mages at the same time.

Requires: Intelligence at 4, History and Occultism at least 1d8

Areas of Magic: Any Spell list other than Miracles of Faith. Also, begin play with the Petty Magic Talent for free

Spellcasting Attribute: Intelligence

Talents:



- **Apprentice:** A minor caster studies under you. They have access to only one Spell list and are not nearly as strong as you are, but they are very eager to help. If something unfortunate happens to them, another hopeful apprentice will show up at the end of the scenario. For your apprentice's stats, use the Street Mage in the Adversaries section.
- **Blip:** You are so unimpressive-looking that goons will attack

everyone else in your party before bothering with you. However, if the enemy has truly overwhelming numbers or you pull out some exceptionally flashy magic, they might send one expendable minion your way.

- **Great Detective:** 3 times per game session, you may ask the GM a question. The GM must give you a truthful, one-word answer.
- **Great Library:** Over time you have amassed an incredible library full of useful information. Twice per game session, when using a Magic Lore or an academic Skill, you get to count two of the dice on a roll instead of just one. *Ex: if you have Magic Lore: General 2d10, you roll 10 and 10 and you activate your ability, your total is 20 instead of 10.*
- **Higher Education:** Instantly gain 10 Skill Points.
- **Scribe Scrolls:** INT times per game session, you can produce a scroll version of one of your Spells from your pack. The scroll costs an Action to activate and ignites when used, burning instantly to ash, but using it casts its inscribed Spell for 0 Magic Points. Anyone can use your scribed scrolls, but you (and they) cannot keep any of these scribed scrolls past the end of a scenario.
- **Studious:** 3 times per game session, you can reroll any academic Skill. You may take whichever result is better.

SEER

Stocked with powerful divination magics and abilities, a Seer is more than capable of wriggling out of the way of a fight. If you find yourself face to face with one, that's because they've got you right where they want you.

Requires: Willpower at 4 and Augury at least 2d8

Areas of Magic: Seer Spells and General Spells

Spellcasting Attribute: Willpower

Talents:



- **Danger Sense:** You can't be ambushed. Even when a fight starts unexpectedly, a half a second's warning is good enough. Furthermore, you get +2 Initiative.
- **Drain Magic:** 3 times per game session, you can drain 2d4+1 Magic Points without so much as touching your target. They feel a tingle and know that they've lost magic, but they may not know that you are responsible.
- **Foresight:** You receive +1 maximum Scene Points.
- **Influential:** Once per game session, you may succeed on a social Skill Test or Opposition Roll without rolling.
- **Mental Attunement:** 3 times per game session, you can reroll the casting of any mind-influencing Spell. This includes Spells that would be cast on you.
- **Mooch:** You have a benefactor. Work with the GM to determine who they are. 3 times per game session, you may call your benefactor for money, a place to crash, an item, or a small favor that doesn't put them in danger or overly tax their (considerable) resources.
- **Third Eye:** 3 times per game session, you can view someone's aura and get a strong sense of what motivates them.

SHADOW

Masters of stealth and subterfuge, Shadows are difficult to spot, let alone catch. When they can be found at all, they are usually standing right behind you.

Requires: Reflexes 4, Stealth 2d8

Areas of Magic: Shadow Spells and General Spells

Spellcasting Attribute: Reflexes

Talents:



- **Friends in Low Places:** You have connections to both the mundane and magical underworlds. 3 times per game session, you can call one of them up for advice or supplies.

- **Low Blow:** When ambushing or flanking an opponent, you may reroll any damage you deal. You must keep the results of the reroll, even if it is worse.
- **Shadow Duplicate:** 2 times per game session, you can create a shadow copy of yourself that lasts for one Scene. It cannot interact or be interacted with physically, but the caster can see and hear with its senses and can talk through it. If the shadow duplicate is attacked with magic or other supernatural powers, the caster can take damage or suffer other effects.
- **Shadow Walking:** Once per Scene, you can teleport 100 yards away by walking into one shadow and stepping out of another. Completely dark areas work just fine for the purpose of your teleports and there does not need to be a light source nearby for darkness to count as shadow. You may step into your own shadow if you wish, and anything you are carrying or wearing comes with you when you use this power.
- **Sneaky Bastard:** 3 times per game session, you may reroll Stealth. You may use whichever result is better.
- **Steal Identity:** Once per game session, you can steal someone's appearance and a day's worth of their memory with a touch. This *does not* cause them to lose that day's worth of memory, and they will feel a distinctly uneasy sensation every time you try to access their memories. Powerful supernatural beings will know what this sensation means and will almost

certainly come after you. Especially if you find anything juicy.

- **Striking Shadow:** Instantly, as part of an unarmed attack, you can spend 1 Magic Point to form darkness into a blade around your fist. The blade does 2d4+1 damage, AP All. When you attack with the blade, roll as if you were making a Ranged attack. Your target may attempt to dodge. You *cannot* summon the blade inside of another HTH or Melee weapon to increase the damage of the attack, but you *can* choose to roll either Brawling or Blades when attacking with the blade.

UNGIFTED

Although they may still have a Bloodline, their gift has never manifested. To compensate for this, the Ungifted are exceptionally resourceful, getting by without any need for magic.

Requires: No requirements

Areas of Magic: None. However, you gain an additional Talent. This Talent cannot be magical

Spellcasting Attribute: None

Talents:

- **Action Hero:** You are cool under fire, bullets miss you by a mile, and you stroll slowly away from explosions. Gain +5 Hit Points and pick a combat Skill. You always roll that Skill at -1 TN. Furthermore, once per game session, you may declare after the dice have been rolled that an attack has simply missed you.
- **Charming:** Silver tongued devil is one way to describe you. Once per

game session, you may automatically succeed with a social Skill. In addition, you gain a -2 TN bonus on all other social Skill rolls.

- **Dumb Luck:** +2 maximum Scene Points.
- **Heirloom Magic Item:** You have either inherited, found, or been tasked with holding onto an object of obvious occult significance. See the Heirloom Magic Items section under Equipment and work with your GM to determine the details of the item and how it came to be in your possession.
- **Resistant:** You've learned to weather harmful effects without relying on magic. Gain a -3 TN bonus on all Saving Throws.
- **Skill Expert:** Even though you might not have magical powers, you're still very talented. Pick one non-combat Skill and make it 3d10 at no Skill Point cost.
- **Slippery:** You're all but impossible to pin down. You gain a -1 TN bonus with Brawling and you gain an additional -4 TN bonus on any attempt to break a grapple or avoid being grabbed. Furthermore, your Movement increases by +2.

VOODOU

Like the Knights Templar, Vodou mages' works are guided by faith. They work to bring harmony to the community around them, interceding between mortals and spirits, curing illnesses, and warding off malicious influences.

Requires: Willpower 4, Occultism 2d8

Areas of Magic: Vodou Spells and General Spells.

Spellcasting Attribute: Willpower

Talents:

- **Bargain With Spirit:** Spirits are relatively simple creatures, especially when compared to the Invisibles, but they can still be of great use to mages. Once per game session, you can call up a Spirit and ask it to perform a task. The task can be complicated and have multiple steps, and the Spirit will perform it to the best of its ability and report back to you when it is done. For a list of Spirits that can be called on, see Spirits & Invisibles under Equipment for more information.



- **Enter Dreams:** By spending 10 Magic Points and making an Opposition Roll with Magic Lore: Vodou against a sleeping target's Willpower Saving Throw, you may slip into their dreams. You must be within ten miles of the sleeper and have something of personal significance to the target in order to properly focus this ritual. While inside of their dreams, you may eavesdrop on their unconscious mind, or you may manipulate their dreams into whatever form you desire. If you ever fail this Opposition Roll against a target, you may never attempt Enter Dreams on them again.
- **Gather the Faithful:** You have a strong bond with others who believe as you do. Once per game session, you can gather 1d6 followers of your faith to help you with a task. They will not go against their beliefs to assist you, and you should know better than to ask that of them.
- **Heal Wound or Illness:** Calling upon the spirits to help, you may perform a small ceremony over the injured or sick. You may spend up to 7 Magic Points, healing a room full of recipients 1 Hit Point per Magic Point spent. Furthermore, you may spend 5 Magic Points per target to cure non-supernatural illnesses. This ritual requires half an hour, some cheap materials, and a consecrated space, and thus it may not be done in the heat of combat. A person can only be healed this way once per injury/illness.
- **Patron Invisible:** You have a special bond with an Invisible. Work out the nature of the Invisible and your relationship with it with the GM. As your patron, it can be called on for advice at any time—although the advice it gives will be limited by how it sees the world. Once per game session, it can also be invited to possess you, giving you improved Attributes and abilities. See Spirits & Invisibles under Equipment for more information.
- **Scrawled Protections:** By spending a few minutes drawing a magic circle, you can create improvised wards that keep the supernatural at bay. Drawing a circle takes 5 minutes, intense concentration, and ingredients such as chalk, wax, salt, blood, or bones. Once your circle is complete, roll your Magic Lore: Vodou + WLP to empower it and set its TN. To cross your circle, a supernatural creature must beat that TN with their Willpower Saving Throw. Mundane creatures (such as people) and mundane elements (such as bullets, Molotov cocktails, or rainwater) may still cross your circle, and if a single line is smudged out or broken, the circle loses all protective power. Your circle may be as big as you like, but the bigger it is, the easier it is for an intruder to find a place where they can safely breach it.
- **Vessel to the Spirits:** By allowing a Spirit to guide your actions, you can make use of Skills you would otherwise lack. 2 times per game session, you may pick a Skill and become possessed by a minor Spirit of that Skill. For the rest of the Scene, you may use that Skill at 3d8.

WARLOCK

Sometimes referred to as 'battle-mages', Warlocks have a reputation for being rich, influential, and for being able to hold their own in a fight. Contrary to common belief, warlocks are not always men.

Requires: Willpower at 4 and one Magic Lore at least 2d8

Areas of Magic: Warlock Spells and General Spells

Spellcasting Attribute: Intelligence

Talents:

- **Arcane Power!** Gain +15 maximum Magic Points.



- **Esoteric Knowledge:** You have studied the arcane so deeply that you can access two other areas of magic. You can select Spells from two additional Archetype lists.
- **Private Sanctum:** You have the ability to open a portal to a private sanctum at any time. The sanctum contains a library, a place to rest, and other amenities. You must declare a dedicated transport medium (*ex: mirror, doorway, hedges, etc.*), and access to your Sanctum takes five minutes of concentration. You can bring other people with you, but in some cases access to your sanctum may be blocked by Dead Zones or other occult powers. When you leave your Sanctum, you can choose to step out where you were or into your home.
 - **Spellslinger:** Once per game session, you can cast two Spells at the same time without a Multiple Action Penalty (see Combat Modifiers, under the Combat section).
 - **Stinking Rich:** Over time you've made sure to acquire not just occult power but also money to go with it. You're a millionaire, and legality is your only concern when it comes to purchasing equipment. You may immediately set your Status & Wealth to Very Well Off (see the Backgrounds section). If you are already Very Well Off, double both your starting money and your money per month.
 - **Warlock's Familiar:** You have a supernatural bond with a small but useful creature. It might be a mortal animal (such as a

raccoon, possum, dog, or bat) or it might be a purely occult creature (homunculus, automaton, will-o-wisp, or minor ghost). Work with the GM to come up with something that fits your character and the game. You can communicate telepathically with your familiar, but if it ever dies, you suffer +2 TN on all rolls until the end of the scenario. After the scenario is over, the penalty goes away and you may bond a new familiar.

- **Well-Practiced:** Thanks to your long hours of practice, you can reroll three Magic Lore rolls per game session.

WITCH

With Spells that let them peer into the future, manipulate emotions, and impersonate others, Witches are at their best when working indirectly. Of course, they can also hold their own in a stand-up fight, so the real takeaway is that witches are not to be trifled with.

Requires: Charisma at 4 and Alchemy at least 1d8

Areas of Magic: Witch Spells and General Spells

Spellcasting Attribute: Charisma

Talents:

- **Consume Life:** Once per game session, you can drain up to 4d4 Hit Points with a touch. If this is used against a conscious, unwilling target, it requires an Action and triggers an Opposition Roll using Brawling. The victim is at a +3 TN penalty on their roll. Damage dealt

this way causes the target to age unnaturally.

- **Coven:** You have a network of other practitioners you can call on for support--magical or otherwise. CHR times per session, you can call a member of your coven for assistance. Your coven may also contact you with small requests or opportunities, but turning them down will not make your coven any less willing to support you.
- **Hex Blast:** On your turn in combat, or at any time out of combat, you may spend an Action to make an attack using your Magic Lore: Witch Skill. Your Hex Blast can be directed at any target in line of sight. It costs 1 Magic Point and does 2d4+1 damage.
- **Places of Power:** You have an instinctive knowledge of Ley Lines and other places of power. Once per session, you may instantly know the location of a nearby Ley Line or Dead Zone. You may also reroll the effects of stepping into a Ley Line once per session. You must keep the result of this second roll, even if it is worse.
- **Speak to Animals:** Three times per game session, you can establish a mental link with an animal. The animal will regard you as another of its kind and will answer any questions you ask, although its answers may be complicated by the fact that it thinks very differently than you do.
- **Stolen Talent:** Somewhere along the way, you managed to acquire a Talent that would normally only be available to another Archetype. You

may pick one Talent from any other Archetype and make it your own. This is done at creation.

- **Witch's Familiar:** You have a supernatural bond with a small but useful creature. It might be a mortal animal (such as a raccoon, possum, dog, or bat) or it might be a purely occult creature (homunculus, automaton, will-o-wisp, or minor ghost). Work with the GM to come up with something that fits your character and the game. You can communicate telepathically with your familiar, but if it ever dies, you suffer +2 TN on all rolls until the end of the scenario. After the scenario is over, the penalty goes away, and you may bond a new familiar.

BLISS PART 4

If you haven't been to Hell before, you'll have to trust me on this.

It's not worth the trip.

That goes for all of the hells, really. Even the Buddhist one with the really nice buffet table.

This is not that Buddhist hell.

This is a Bosch painting brought to life.

Smoke whispers past my face and I squint through the heat to see rolling black dunes, their sand made from razor-fine chips of obsidian. Near me, a dozen firepits are crackling as men and women are lowered, bound bodily in hemp-cord, feet-first onto the coals.

It's around now that I notice the screaming. It is so loud, so omnipresent that at first I'd mistaken it for the wind.

Everywhere I look, the dunes are dotted with little encampments where demons toil over their mortal charges, feeding them headfirst through all kinds of machinery. When they come out, the demons put them back together, and then they feed them through again.

Death does not seem to be an escape here.

The smell of cooked meat rolls past my nose, making me gag.

Nearby, on a dune above the firepits, a creature with the wings of a butterfly and the head and hooves of a goat is supervising the burning. I recognize it from an apocryphal scroll I had bought off of an antiquarian a few years back.

Iblis, its name is.

Or, more simply, "bliss."

Wade probably thought he knew the drug by its street name.

Instead, it was just a contraction.

The demon's wings beat in the hot air and I can see flakes of something iridescent scattering from them. Around its hooves, small creatures caper with leather bags, collecting the powder as it drifts by.

They seem to be amassing quite a stockpile, judging from the mound of similar sacks stacked to one side.

It sinks in now that what I inhaled
was part of a demon, and that maybe that's
all it takes for this hell to claim a part of me.

If I'm lucky, my body's still back in
my apartment--although God alone knows
what it's doing.

And if I'm unlucky, I've been
brought here both in mind and in flesh.

If that's the case, then my divination
bowl was only technically correct.

The powder won't kill me. I'll spend
the rest of eternity being barbecued instead.

Unless I can escape.

It's a desperate hope, but it's the
only one I have. I turn to slip away, but not
before Iblis catches sight of me.

It beckons to me with long, slender
fingers, a placid smile on its face. Its
attendants come to a stop, their work
forgotten in a moment of pure avarice.

I remember my Demonology classes
at Granite Lodge. I remember every
documented encounter from the course
readings between mankind the fallen
powers.

It took until the seventeenth century
for mages to learn to stop trying to bargain
with them. Even now, there's still the
occasional optimist who gets added to the
textbooks.

The fruits of those other mages'
mistakes crowd my mind.

Faced with a demon, the only sane
choices are to fight or run.

If you fight, you've got good odds
that it'll kill you rather than capture you.

If you run, you have only the
slimmest chance of getting away.

So maybe I'm an optimist, because I
sprint across the cutting sand, the scorching
dry air seething in my lungs.

Behind me, a howling rises, swelling
to eclipse the screams.

It's a hunting wail, like dogs on the
scent of a fox. It ullulates in and out of the
audible spectrum, writhing as it enters my
ears.

*How can Wade possibly have repeat
customers, a gibbering part of me thinks, if
this is the trip?*

My bare feet are bleeding.

The blowing wind flays my skin.

I grit my teeth and press forward.

It's not much of a strategy, but as
long as I'm running, I'm better off than if I
stop.

The desert blurs into a haze. My
heart hammers in my throat. I can feel
rather than hear my pursuers gaining. My
footprints are turning to blood. Sweat stings
as it soaks into a thousand tiny cuts upon
my face.

Long fingers reach out for the back
of my neck.

And then, with a lurch, hell is gone.
My flesh is whole. I'm back in my
apartment, on the floor of my laboratory.

On the floor of my *trashed* laboratory, surrounded by sundered benches, broken glass, and shredded sachets of herbs.

They've been arranged together into a sort of summoning circle, although the edges are incomplete.

I shudder.

The places looks like a bomb went off in it, but I feel jittery and alive. The doors are even still chained, although they've been scratched at quite a bit. Fingernail marks cover them from end to end. My right shoulder is sore, and there's paint under my fingernails.

Unsettlingly, I can feel my memories of hell fading, to be replaced with a sort of bland triumph.

What an amazing high I must have had, I think irrationally. Look at all this! I must have been out of my head.

I ignore that little voice in my head, as well as the good feeling that comes with it. Fishing in the mess, I find a permanent marker.

Iblis, I write on the floor.

Possession, I add.

Then, before the memory can leave me entirely, I write *don't do the powder EVER again, no matter how safe you think it was.*

One of the few pieces of furniture that survived my rampage is a clock on the far wall. It's up high, out of the easy reach of an arm-sweep, and that's probably why it wasn't torn away and kicked into the heap.

9:20 PM it reads, and I realize that I was only gone for a couple of minutes.

The implications don't bother me. *Nothing* bothers me. By now euphoria has forcefully set in, and I can't imagine why anyone would ever be upset about things when the world is just so loose and perfect.

I lie back in the debris and just watch the minute-hand tick, fascinated by the movement.

I do this for six whole hours, before coming back to the worst hangover of my life.



COMPLICATIONS

Complications are the vices, flaws, and bits of pure bad luck that make your life more difficult. Taking a Complication gets

you an extra Adjustment point or a bonus Talent.

It is possible to work off a Complication, but it takes time, effort, Experience Points (see the Gaining Experience section), and the consent of the GM.

Addiction

You have a problem, whether you've admitted it or not. Pick a vice. Any time a temptation shows itself, you need to make a Willpower Saving Throw in order to resist indulging. The GM decides the TN of this Saving Throw based on the severity of the temptation.

Bad Reputation

Deserved or not, you have a bad reputation. Skill Tests or Opposition Rolls to get someone to trust you or work with you suffer a +2 TN penalty, and you may be subject to rumors, exclusion, or even attacks purely because of your reputation.

Bloodthirsty

Letting your opponent live isn't exactly high on your list of priorities. As a matter of fact, you tend to find any way possible to make sure they meet their maker. This can be a real problem if you need to bring someone in for questioning.

Any time a fight breaks out, you need to make a Challenging Willpower Saving Throw (TN 9) to resist killing your opponents the first time you have a chance to do so. If your opponent is a personal enemy, the Saving Throw is instead Tough (TN 12). If you genuinely like your opponent or have reason to believe that they're innocent, your Saving Throw is Average (TN 7).

The trail of bodies you tend to leave behind also means you make peaceful social Skill rolls at +1 TN.

Chronic Ailment

You need constant medical attention. This could get costly. Once per scenario, the GM may call for a Tough Health Saving Throw (TN 12). If you fail, you are at +4 TN on all Skill rolls for the rest of the day.

Coward

At heart, you're a coward. Any time you are startled, put in danger, or put yourself in danger, make an Average Willpower Saving Throw. If you fail, you suffer +3 TN on all your Skill rolls for the rest of the Scene. If you critically fail, you get to choose: either you faint on the spot, or you flee in blind terror. Unless a situation gets drastically more scary, you only need to make this roll once per Scene.

Debt

You owe someone, and you owe them big. Work with the GM to determine what you owe and who you owe it to. One catch: your debt-holder is not the forgiving sort, and they don't have your best interests in mind.

Delusions

Many people think you're nuts...and they happen to be right. You believe something that is fundamentally untrue, sense things that are absolutely not there, or remember things that plainly never happened. Work with the GM to figure out your specific delusion.

Once per game session, the GM can call for a Tough Willpower Saving Throw (TN 12). If you fail, you slip completely into your delusion for the rest of the Scene.

Enemy

Along the way, you've managed to piss someone off so bad that they're practically baying for your blood. Work with the GM to determine who this is and what you did to wrong them. After that, it is the GM's discretion where and when they strike. These are not average mooks and they are passionately committed to their cause. If you kill them or convince them to back off, someone else will pick up their crusade.

Fat

Try as you might, it's hard to keep the weight off, but you've let things slide and now you're out of shape as well. You suffer -2 to Initiative, your Movement is -2 yards, and when traveling long distances or doing strenuous physical activity you must make a Challenging Health Saving Throw (TN 9) or stop midway through due to exhaustion.

Fewer Hit Points

You're practically built of model glue and balsa wood. Treat your Strength and Health each as being 1 point lower on the Hit Points chart (see Hit Points under Character Creation) to determine your new maximum Hit Points. If either your Strength or Health is already at 1, instead reduce your hit points by half (round up). If *both* are at 1, your maximum Hit Points starts at 4.

Foul Tempered

Once per Scene, when someone looks like an easy target or they're just plain getting on your nerves, the GM can call for a Challenging Willpower Saving Throw (TN 9). If you fail, you take +2 TN on Leadership, Seduction, and Persuasion rolls for the rest of the Scene. Furthermore, you make a bad impression in front of any

friends, romantic interests, or superiors that might be watching.

On the bright side, when you're in a foul mood after failing, you get -2 TN on Intimidation and Interrogation rolls for the following Scene.

Glass Jaw

When a fight breaks out, you tend to take one hit and crumble. If you ever take 20% of your maximum Hit Points in one blow, you must make a Challenging Health Saving Throw. If you fail, you suffer +3 TN to all actions for 1d3+1 turns, and if your roll doesn't even beat an Average TN (7), you pass out on the spot.

Greed

"Greed is good", at least in your eyes. When you see something valuable that you *might* be able to get, or when someone tempts you with the offer of money or other riches, make a Willpower Saving Throw. The GM sets the TN based on how tempting the object or offer is, and how easy it seems to get a quick payday. If you fail your save, you must make an honest attempt to steal the valuable or accept the offer, even if it puts you in danger. If accepting an offer would cause you to betray your companions, you must still accept the offer, but you can change your mind at the last possible second, *after* most of the damage has been done. Needless to say, this will cause the person who made the offer to single you out for some very personal revenge.

Haunted

You've picked up a spiritual hitchhiker and it refuses to leave you alone. This might be the ghost of someone you've personally

wronged, or it might be an entirely unrelated spirit. Needless to say, this is not a friendly haunting. Work with the GM to figure out what the ghost is and how it works. If you manage to get rid of it, other spirits will take an interest in you.

Hedonist

To say that you like to party is an understatement. If it involves sex, drugs, and rock and roll, you're in. Once per session, the GM can present you with an obvious trap that is baited with your chosen vice. You must make a Tough Willpower Saving Throw (TN 12) in order to resist this temptation.

Illiterate

Whether it's for neurological reasons, supernatural ones, or simply due to a lack of formalized education, you are unable to read. In the modern age, this can be a huge problem.

Jinx

Bad luck seems to follow in your wake, affecting everyone around you. 3 times per game session, the GM can declare that your jinx has struck, increasing every TN during a single Round by +2. Only enemy Lieutenants and Masterminds are immune to this effect.

Marked

Something in your past has left a supernatural mark on you. This mark cannot be gotten rid of and is like a beacon to anyone who can sense magic. Also it seems to lure creatures to attack you.

Night Blindness

Operating at night is a problem for you. When you take a penalty for Dim Light or

Complete Darkness (see Combat Modifiers under Combat), the TN is increased by +2.

Obsession

You have an obsession that interferes with your daily life. Work with the GM to determine what you are obsessed over. Once per session, the GM can call for a Tough Willpower Saving Throw (TN 12) from you. If you fail, the TN of all your rolls is increased by +2 until you take time out of your schedule to pursue your obsession. This penalty can stack.

One Arm/Hand

You've lost an arm or hand, but it hasn't kept you down. You can only carry things in one hand, and objects, vehicles, doors, etc. designed for two-handed people (which is nearly everything) are a problem for you. You might have a prosthetic, but make sure you keep your character's background in mind. A good myoelectric prosthetic for a full arm, not including attachment and physical therapy to acclimate to the new limb, can cost \$60,000.

One Eye

You got your eye poked out, shot out, or something else removed it. Good thing you've got another eye. Don't lose this one. Any time you make an Observation Skill Test that relies on vision, the TN is increased by +2. Enemies also have a -2 TN to hit you on that side.

Phobia

You are afraid of something, and that fear runs so deeply that it can cause you to freeze up or get you killed. Work with the GM to determine your specific fear. When you are confronted with it, you will need to make a Challenging Willpower Saving Throw (TN 9). If the situation is particularly

terrifying, the GM may increase the TN. If you fail, the TN for all your actions is raised by +2 for the next 1d6 hours. If you succeed, the TN is only raised for 1d12 minutes. This penalty does not stack.

Poor Perception

One of your senses is seriously impaired. Observation Tests with that sense suffer a +3 TN penalty.

Secret

You've got skeletons in your closet. Work with the GM to determine your secret, but it should be bad enough that its exposure would completely destroy your way of life. Try not to let it get out.

Skinny

You're not just thin. You're practically malnourished. You may not raise your Health above 3, and you suffer -5 to your maximum Hit Points.

Slow Healer

There is something about your healing process that is just naturally slow. Your Heal Rate is now **Health x1**, not **Health x2**.

Slow Runner

Maybe you've had a bad injury, or maybe you never spent much time running track, but you've got more of a mosey than a sprint. Your Movement is decreased by -3 yards.

Social Pariah

The people you would normally associate with want nothing to do with you. Work with the GM to determine why. Using any social Skill against the people who are shunning you is at a +2 TN penalty.

Terminally Ill

You are on your way out. Work with the GM to figure out what you are dying from and what your life expectancy is. It should not be more than a year.

Unfortunate Looks

Even a mask doesn't help much. You suffer a +2 TN penalty on all in-person social Skill rolls or social Skill rolls where the other party can see you.

Unnatural Presence

There's something about you that makes people uneasy, sets babies crying, and makes animals scared and hostile. Unless you are deliberately trying to scare someone, all of your friendly social Skill TNs suffer a +2 TN penalty. However, the TNs for your *unfriendly* social Skills (Intimidation and Interrogation) receive a +1 TN bonus.

Vendetta

You've been carrying a grudge in your back pocket for quite some time now. It's just about due. Work with the GM to determine who it was that wronged you. Whenever you have a chance to hurt your target, you must make a Challenging Willpower Saving Throw (TN 9) to keep your focus.

Weak Willed

You've never been particularly good at resisting peer pressure, or turning away salesmen, or standing up for yourself. You've probably been called an easy mark. Your Willpower Saving Throws suffer a +3 TN penalty.



GENERAL TALENTS

While these Talents aren't tied directly to your Archetype, General Talents are another way to enhance your character with a unique knack, asset, or ability.

Allies

You have an ally in your line of work or in a related field. Work out the details of who they are and why you know them with the GM, but they should be someone (or several someones) who have almost your level of power or influence. They will help you, even at risk to themselves, but they also might ask you for help in turn. If your ally is killed or otherwise removed from the picture, you may replace them at the start of the next scenario.

Alternate ID

You have a series of alternate identifications complete with a detailed histories and backgrounds. These will stand up to even rigorous examination. Once per game session you can produce an ID that is relevant to the situation at hand.

Ambidextrous

You do not suffer a penalty for attacking with your off-hand. You still suffer penalties for attacking with two weapons at the same time and take penalties for multiple Actions as normal.

Bad Ass

You are the stuff legends are made of. Destroying the enemy is more than a job; it's an art form and you're an artist. You gain +5 to your maximum Hit Points and a -3 TN bonus with any Melee combat Skill of your choice.

Contacts/Snitch

You have made it a point to collect contacts, snitches, and a network of other people that can be of use. Generally, these people want something in return for their services, but you can call on them without a cost once per game session.

Death Curse

Pity the person who finally puts you in the ground. When you are killed, as long as you can tell who killed you (or can decide who to accuse), work with the GM to determine the terrible fate that befalls your killer. Activating your death curse uses it up for good, and if you are later resurrected (or curse the wrong person), you do not get another shot.

Eagle Eyes

Your ability to pick out objects at a distance is exceptional. Reduce any penalty that you would suffer for attacking at range by 2.

Educated

You are filled with bits of knowledge that can be useful in a pinch. Once per game session, you can use a Skill you have no training in at 2d8.

Energy Miser

You are so stingy with your power that you have managed to reduce the Magic Point cost for all of your Spells by -1. Spells still cost at least 1 Magic Point.

Extra Hit Points

You're a little tougher than average. You gain +10 to your maximum Hit Points.

Extra Training

You have done extensive cross training in another magical art. You can select Spells from one other Archetype's Spell list. You may take this Talent multiple times, but you must have the appropriate Magic Lore to use any Spells you acquire this way.

Fast Draw

You can clear a holster faster than most people can think. You suffer no penalty for drawing a weapon and attacking in the same Action. You also gain +1 Initiative.

Fast Healer

You bounce back from things that would leave other people in the hospital for weeks. You heal by your Heal Rate every 12 hours, instead of every full day. You also do not

need to rest for a third of the day in order to heal this way.

Fast Runner

You've got get-up-and-go on tap. You gain +2 Initiative and add +2 yards to your Movement.

Fine Looks

Whether you're conventionally beautiful or just striking, one thing's for sure: you are easy on the eyes. You get -2 TN on all social Skill rolls where the other party can see you.

Improved Defense

You've made it through barroom brawls without a scratch. The TN to hit you is raised by +2. You may want to remind the GM of this when combat breaks out.

Intuition

You've always had a knack for figuring things out. Once during every real-life hour, you spend playing Wicked Pacts, you can ask the GM a simple yes/no question. The GM has to answer truthfully, and to the best of their ability. The answers to questions about the future do not become prophecy or destiny. If the situation changes after the GM has answered, that answer may no longer be true. Always announce when you are using your Intuition so that there can be no misunderstandings.

Lucky Bastard

Some people can never seem to catch a break. You, on the other hand, could probably make a living playing Roulette. Increase your maximum Scene Points by +1.

Natural Criminal

Maybe it's from careful study, or maybe

it's from practice, but you make a better career criminal than most other career criminals. Twice per game session, you can reroll any criminal-related Skill Test. You must still take the results of the second roll, even if it is worse.

Natural Linguist

You have a real gift for picking up languages. Gain +4 Language Fluency points.

Night Vision

You may not be able to see in absolute blackness, but anything short of that might as well be broad daylight. You no longer take a penalty for poor lighting.

Pain Resistant

You could undergo major surgery without anesthesia and, at worst, it would only be kind of annoying. You get a -2 TN bonus on all of your Health Saving Throws.

Petty Magic

You have access to all the Spells on the Petty Magic List. You do not need to assign Skill points to them individually. To cast a Petty Magic Spell, you roll Magic Lore: Petty Magic + INT. This Talent may not be taken by Templar and Ungifted.

Photographic Memory

Everything you've ever seen is logged somewhere in the back of your head. You can ask the GM for detailed descriptions of things you've glimpsed for only a moment, and in situations where your photographic memory comes in handy, the GM may award you a small bonus on your rolls.

Rank

You've served in the armed forces, and you still have some pull with anyone who respects your rank. Your training has also given you a -3 TN bonus on Leadership rolls.

Army:

Sgt, Warrant Officer, 2nd Lt, 1st Lt, Captain
Major, Lt Colonel, Colonel

Navy:

Petty Officer, Warrant Officer, Ensign
Lt Jr Grade, Lieutenant, Lt Commander
Commander, Captain

Marines:

Corporal, Sgt, Warrant Officer, 2nd Lt, 1st Lt,
Captain, Major, Lt Colonel, Colonel

Air Force:

Senior Airman, Staff Sgt, Chief Master Sgt,
2nd Lt, 1st Lt, Captain, Major, Lt Colonel,
Colonel

Rapid Fire

You've trained with taking multiple shots in quick succession. Your second shot in a Round does not increase your Recoil penalty. The penalty from your first shot, and from any additional shots, still applies.

Example: you fire 3 times with +1 Recoil. Your total penalties from Recoil on the three shots are +1, +1, and +2.

Read Person

You can cold-read somebody, detect a lie, or figure out someone's motives by making an Observation roll at an Average difficulty. A target that knows they're being observed can try to contest your roll, but they suffer a

+2 TN penalty. You also get +2 on Initiative.

Safe House/Cache

You're like a squirrel, but with caches of gear and weapons instead of acorns. Once per session, you can work with the GM to establish a safehouse nearby, including stocking it with any reasonable supplies or amenities. You must pay for any gear you add to the safe house.

Scientific Mind

You paid attention in school. Your science-related Skill rolls all have their TN reduced by -2.

Scout

It's not trespassing if no one knows you were there. 3 times per session, you can add a -2 TN bonus to a Stealth roll that you are making or one that is being made in your presence. You may add all these bonuses at the same time if you choose, stacking up to a -6 TN on the roll.

Sex Appeal

Some people struggle just to flirt. For you, the art of seduction is effortless. You get a -2 TN bonus on all social Skill rolls where you have the other party's interest.

Sharp Senses

You can look at an area and automatically figure out where the good strategic locations would be for snipers, traps, etc. Furthermore, you can evaluate a combat situation just by listening to the gunfire, and you can accurately guess the guns involved. On top of that, you gain +3 to your Observation.

Silent Caster

You've learned to cast Spells with little more than a gesture. You do not need to speak or make noises in order to cast.

Spray and Pray

No one's quite sure how you do it, but you always seem to be able to put an extra round in your targets. When you hit with a short or long burst, treat your attack as if one more bullet had hit the target.

Strong Willed

Other people might call you hard-headed. You get a -2 TN bonus on all Willpower Saving Throws.

Tough S.O.B.

You don't have time to bleed. Gain a Damage Resistance of 2 to all locations.

Warrior's Sense

You start to react almost before you realize you're in danger. Gain +3 Initiative.

Wealth

Thanks to either an inheritance or a lucrative job, you're loaded. Set your Wealth to Very Well Off (see Background under Character Creation). If you are already Very Well Off, double both your starting wealth and your wealth per month. If you are already doubling them, double them again.

You Jerk!!

You can be a bit of a dick--particularly in combat, where you do +2 damage with a particular type of weapon. Write down which type of weapon that is.

Zero ID

No record remains of your original identity. It's as if you never existed.

Anyone who tries to conduct research on you can only find out basic information (where you've been seen lately, who you associate with, what line of work you're in) and, even then, you know about their digging before they're done.

The GM will describe what they look like and tell you where they can be found, giving you a chance to pay them an unexpected visit.

Of course, the GM will not tell you why they're interested in you or how powerful they are.

BLISS PART 5

Needless to say, I don't get a lot of sleep that night.

Between cleaning up the laboratory and deciphering the messages I'd left myself, it's about 5:00 AM when I call in sick to Rauch U and it's about 6:00 AM when I place a call to my other supervisors, who work downtown.

I only get three minutes into the call before they demand to set up a meeting.

So, at 8:00 AM, I end up in a glass-and-steel financial building with four shots of espresso in my cappuccino and deep bags under my eyes.

I might be able to will a gashed-open leg back together if I concentrate hard

enough on it, but the only magic I have for exhaustion is a good night's rest.

Caffeine is a Band-Aid over the problem, but it's all I can afford.

The vicious black brew is just starting to stir a little activity in my senses when I'm led into a small, corporate-style meeting room on the seventeenth floor. The executive aide who met me at the elevator shows me to my chair, then politely excuses herself and leaves.

There's a platter with pastries and fruits on a side-table, but I don't think I even spare it a glance as I sit. All of my attention is on the man and the woman at the other side of the room, standing side-by-side next to the floor-to-ceiling window.

This high up, the other side of the glass looks directly out on downtown. Below us, cars crawl through traffic in a caterpillar procession, never seeming to make any progress.

If this were seventeenth century Europe, I would already be kneeling before the man and woman.

Because this is twenty first century America, I take a sip of cappuccino instead.

"We appreciate your making time to meet with us at such short notice," says the man, Frederick Martins. He's always the first to speak. There is a slight French lilt to his voice, but his enunciation is clean and effortless. He's wearing the sort of suit that I will never be able to afford--a charcoal-black three-piece that accents his light brown skin--and his expression is one of polite neutrality. "Obviously," he continues,

"your findings are of interest and we wish to review them in greater detail."

"But," says the woman, who is wearing a visibly less expensive gray suit, "right now, we don't have the luxury of doing that." She speaks with a brisk New England accent and holds her hands at her waist, folded together in a way that suggests she would be fidgeting constantly if they weren't. "You've confirmed the existence of a suspected problem and our first priority is to take care of it conclusively and without delay."

Her name is Mallory Able and, from the few times we've met, I've come to suspect that she's always like this. She brushes a lock of auburn hair away from her freckled brow and removes her cellphone from inside her suit jacket, glancing at its screen.

Frederick steps back in smoothly. "As you might have suspected," he says, "you were asked to look into local sales of Bliss in support of a broader investigation. Your findings, in conjunction with that of the agent assigned to the case, have given us the impetus to move forward. But, before we continue, we would like to review your testimony. You have alchemically determined that the powder is of demonic origin, and we understand that alchemy is often a messy science, so we would like to be clear on this: have you taken all the proper precautions to avoid exposure to anything that might be contained in the Bliss?"

"Yes?" I say. It's not exactly a lie.

I'm just not sure how they would respond if I told them I'd inhaled a pinch.

I don't think it would be with congratulations for my bravery.

"If you're certain you're free of influence," says Frederick, "then that's good enough for me." He turns to Mallory. "Let's bring her in."

"Her?" I ask, but Mallory's fingers are already dancing over her phone's keypad. A moment later, the door to the conference room swings open behind me and Augustina Bello walks in.

She's taller than I am. She carries herself ramrod straight. Her white pantsuit is perfectly tailored. Her skin is midnight, cool-undertone and lustrous, and her eyes flash fire when they settle on me.

"Him?" she says sharply.

Inwardly, I curse.

I should have expected the Order would bring the demon hunter in. They don't have many in the district, and she's one of the best.

She's staring at me levelly, like I have no right to be here.

And maybe I don't.

Yesterday, when I told Wade I wasn't a cop, I was being truthful. I'm not a cop.

I'm not a fed, either. I answer to a different authority than the government of mundane America.

What the Hermetic Order does is it polices my side of reality. In my world, crime isn't just psychopaths and

opportunists and the mob. It's the kinds of things that went into hiding during the witch trials and the Inquisition--and it's also the people of the world that strike bargains with those beings.

Of course, the Order hides too. The mundanes wouldn't even try to distinguish us from the monsters if we told them what we are and what we can do, and so we've carried on our work in secret, with gifted families feeding their best and brightest into the Order, which in turn keeps the peace, hunts down the sorts of entities that would prey on us, and ensures that the mundanes never have reason to hit us with another purge.

A lot of us are Pureblooded but being Pureblooded isn't the only way a person can get the knack for magic.

The demands of our world have forced the Order to bring in skilled agents from all different walks of life.

Augustina, for example, is a significant part mundane.

Half-blooded mages don't have the genetic complications that Pureblooded do, but they also have a lot less casting power. Augustina's strong, which catches a lot of Order members off-guard.

It also got me started on kind of the wrong foot with her.

Our working relationship hasn't improved since then, and I'm pretty sure she thinks I'm crooked.

Which would be easier for me to argue against if I hadn't put demon-powder up my nose last night.

Perhaps she's been following my thoughts, because she glares down at me as she pushes past to take her seat. Instinctively, I look up to meet her eyes, and it's a mistake. The intensity of her expression makes me flinch.

"Please, Mr. Girodana. Ms. Bello," says Frederick. "We are all here in the spirit of cooperation."

Without prompting, Augustina slides out a chair, shoots me a poisonous look, and settles into it. "Have you considered my request?" she asks bluntly.

"No," says Mallory, equally bluntly. Her fingers are skittering over the phone's keypad again. She looks up only briefly.

Frederick sighs. "What my colleague means," he elaborates, "is that we considered your request for a strike team on the bank but believed it would likely stir up trouble we could not afford to deal with at the moment. Furthermore, we have every reason to believe that the Onyx Syndicate has just as much desire to put a stop to this distribution, given that it is happening on their territory. For the moment, we do not wish to antagonize them unduly."

This gets my attention.

Name-dropping the Onyx Syndicate has a way of doing that with Order mages.

You see, not all of us believe in the rule of law.

In fact, there's rather a lot of mages that believe the rule of law should start and end with themselves.

Most of them are unified into the Syndicate.

Compared to the Order's bureaucratic republic, the Onyx Syndicate is more like a series of fiefdoms, united only by a generalized pursuit of profit and a bland accountability to their prince-of-all-princes. They form alliances of convenience with each other, often in the shape of mutual defense pacts, and they hold city blocks and square miles of countryside the way lords and ladies used to.

I don't like them for several reasons.

Not the least of which is that when I was graduating, they tried to pressure me into joining. They started with a soft sell about how I was naturally gifted; a perfect fit for a culture of self-propelled achievers. When that failed, they threatened me. They told me what would happen to the people I cared about if I backed the wrong side.

That didn't work, either. There weren't a lot of people that I cared about, so a little ways down the road, they tried a third tactic.

It didn't leave me with a particularly high regard for their methods.

The Syndicate are scum, but they're power-hungry and smart. They don't like demons any more than we do, and they'd rather reign on earth than serve in Hell.

Augustina doesn't seem to have reached the same conclusion as I have. "You can't believe they're innocent," she says fiercely.

"We don't," says Frederick. Even though his tone is mild, he stresses the

second word in a way that we all notice. "They're criminals. We just don't think they're guilty of *this* particular indiscretion. Moreover, the unique nature of the situation provides us with an opportunity." He pauses. "As you know, with every day that passes, the number of cases our district office is handed grows. We do not have the personnel to respond to all of them--let alone to do so with the resources and manpower they deserve. Already, we are becoming reliant on hired contractors, and *their* loyalty is to their paycheck. Therefore, it is the considered opinion of Ms. Able and I that we are going to resolve this issue quickly, using *all* of the resources at hand."

Augustina meets his eyes and holds them. After a moment, he looks away.

I barely pay attention.

My brain is still churning over the words he used and the way he said them.

"Wait a minute," I say into the silence. "You believe the Syndicate is going to cooperate with us?"

Mallory looks up from her phone. "I do" she says mildly. "I've set up a meeting with them, and we'd like you to attend."

"By 'you'," I say, glancing warily at Augustina, "you mean her?"

We've worked together in the past, and it didn't go particularly well. She's already made it clear what she thinks about me.

Augustina looks no happier about this than I am. Her hands are balling up so tightly that the knuckles have gone bloodless.

“We mean both of you,” says Mallory, killing any hope I have of getting out of this intact. “Augustina’s the case agent, but we’re assigning you as backup. Unless,” she adds with a raised eyebrow, “there’s a good reason you shouldn’t see this through to completion?”

There isn’t.



SKILLS

Each new player character receives **84** Skill points to spend on Skills and Spells. These don't all have to be spent on Skills that match your Archetype. You should pick Skills that fit what you want to do with your character and what your character has done in their life.

Skills are measured both in Learning (the size of the dice you roll) and Practical Usage

(how many dice you get to roll). When you buy a Skill, you can spend points on its Learning, Practical Usage, or both. Each level of Learning or Practical Usage costs one Skill Point.

All Skills that you purchase must be bought at least the 1d6 level, for 2 Skill Points.

If you need to roll a Skill that you do not have any points invested in, treat it as 1d4 (see Defaulting under How Skills Work).

Example: Andy wants to have the Fast Talk Skill. First, he spends 2 Skill Points to buy it at a 1d6.

Next, he decides that his character had majored in marketing, so he spends 2 Skill Points raises the Level of Learning to Well Educated, d10.

Finally, Andy decides that his character works weekends as a used car salesman. He makes the Practical Usage Frequent, 2d. This costs him 1 more Skill Point.

Andy’s Fast Talk is now a 2d10 Skill, for a total of 5 Skill points.

SKILL LEVELS

Level of Learning

Barely	d6
Passable	d8
Well Educated	d10

Practical Usage

Casual	Roll 1 dice
Frequent	Roll 2 keep best one
Proficient	Roll 3 keep best one

Points Spent	Skill Dice
2	1d6
3	2d6
4	3d6
3	1d8
4	2d8
5	3d8
4	1d10
5	2d10
6	3d10

HOW SKILLS WORK

Skill Tests

When a character attempts a task (such as jumping over a concrete divider, spotting a shotgun trap in a darkened hallway, or slamming a door on a charging werewolf) where there is some doubt as to whether the character would succeed, the GM will call for a Skill Test. The GM will give a Target Number (or TN) based on how difficult it would be for an average human being to do. The GM will then increase or decrease that TN if there are any bonuses or penalties or other situational elements (called Modifiers) that are involved.

To make a Skill Test, a player rolls an appropriate Skill (Brawling to throw a punch, Drive to weave through traffic, tracking to tail a suspect, etc.) and adds an appropriate Attribute (Reflexes to catch a ball, Willpower to hold out under interrogation, etc.) to the highest number they rolled.

If the final number is equal to or greater than the TN, the player succeeds. If not, they fail. Either way, the GM describes the

result.

Modifiers

The Target Number for a Skill Test is not always a static thing. Sometimes the Game Master needs to adjust it to reflect the ease or difficulty of the situation, and sometimes bonuses and penalties from Talents, Equipment, Complications, Spells, and abilities factor in.

Usually the modifier on a roll is between -4 TN and +4 TN, but in truly extreme cases it might be much higher.

TARGET NUMBERS

Task	Target Numbers
Easy	4
Average	7
Challenging	9
Tough	12
Extreme	14

Example: Andy is trying to leap from rooftop to rooftop to get away from a cultist with a machete. This is an Athletics Skill Test that involves Reflexes.

The GM sets the TN at Challenging (TN 9), since there is a good bit of distance between the two rooftops but bumps the TN up even higher because it's raining, and the surfaces are slippery. Now the TN is 11.

Andy rolls his Athletics (3d8) and gets a 1, a 4, and a 7. That 7, plus his 4 Reflexes, is 11. He ties the TN, which is a success.

He barely makes it to the other rooftop, and he skids a bit, but for the moment he's safe.

Opposition Rolls

Sometimes a character isn't just struggling against an obstacle; they're struggling against a person or creature. When this happens, the GM will call for a slightly different kind of Skill Test: an Opposition Roll.

In an Opposition Roll, both sides roll to determine who succeeds.

However, instead of the GM setting the TN, everyone rolls against a TN of 0. Whoever beats the TN by the biggest margin wins.

In the event of a tie, if there is an obvious 'defender', the defender wins. Otherwise neither character succeeds.

Example: Andy is trying to sneak past some guards in a warehouse. The GM decides Andy is the defender and calls for him to roll his Stealth (3d8).

Andy rolls 2, 4, and 8. He adds his Reflexes, 4, to the 8 for a total of 12. There aren't any bonuses or penalties in play, so with the TN at 0, his margin of success is 12.

The guard, meanwhile, is a poorly paid part-timer. He is playing a game on his cellphone and only looking around occasionally, so GM assigns a +2 TN modifier.

The GM rolls the guard's 1d6 Observation and gets a 5. He adds the guard's 2 Intelligence for a total of 7 and compares it against the TN of 2. The guard's margin of success is 5.

With a 12 vs the guard's 5, Andy easily sneaks past the guard. The guard doesn't notice and continues working on his high score.

Defaulting

Sometimes a character needs to make a Skill Test for a Skill they don't have. If the Skill in question requires a level of training and knowledge that they cannot possibly be expected to have (such as an unfamiliar Magic Lore), they cannot roll at all. Otherwise, they may roll 1d4 plus the relevant Attribute.

The GM has the final say on whether a player can default on a Skill.

SKILL LIST

The following Skills represent the knowledges and abilities that characters use to get by in the world of Wicked Pacts. Some Skills overlap in certain practical ways (for example, Chemistry and Demolitions for crafting explosives, or Botany, Chemistry, and Poison for brewing up a toxin.) In the case of an overlap, players may use any of the Skills that are appropriate for the task.

Alchemy

You can create potions, understand their uses, and even figure out what an unfamiliar potion is supposed to be used for by doing a few laboratory tests.



Athletics

You can jump, tumble, climb, swim, and sprint without getting winded.

Augury

Signs and omens are everywhere if you know how to look for them. Fortunately, you know how to look for them.

Blades

Deadlier than a fist and quieter than a gun, you've learned how to use knives, machetes, axes, swords, and a variety of other edged weapons without cutting yourself.

Botany

You're more than just a capable gardener. You know which plants are safe to eat, which can be used to heal, and which can be used to kill. You can make non-magical tinctures and poisons and you can forage for ingredients to use with Alchemy or Chemistry.

Brawling

Maybe you've done a bit of street fighting, or maybe you've trained more formally in Krav Maga, Capoeira, or Shaolin Kung Fu. Point is: you know how to use your body as a weapon.

Chemistry

You've devoted some time to the study of non-magical compounds, their properties, and behaviors. With a proper laboratory, you can create pharmaceutical drugs. With a bathtub and some household supplies, you can create everything from bombs to poisons to stimulants. You can also study someone else's creations, analyzing them on a scientific level.

Club

One of the oldest tools in human civilization, the club has yet to go out of style. Some clubs are heavy and unwieldy, but this category also includes staffs, police

batons, and Eskrima sticks.

Computer Operation

More than just cruising the internet, Computer Operation covers file architecture, program writing, security, intrusion, and effective research. It can also be used for smartphones, tablets, and any other sort of electronic, programmable system.

Crafting

You understand the process of imbuing magical energies into stable items. You can analyze scrolls, staffs, wands, and other magical artifacts in order to coax out their secrets.

Cryptography

You can devise and crack codes, mask your communications with ciphers, and filter through the enemy's encrypted messages. You can also figure out slang or shorthand with ease.

Demolitions

You know what goes into a bomb, how to deactivate a bomb, how to make a bombs, and how to safely detonate a bomb without catching yourself in the blast. You are either a very good person or a very bad person, depending on how you act on this knowledge.

Disguise

You understand the art of passing yourself off as something you're not. You can impersonate a target, vanish into a crowd, conceal an object from casual inspection, and avoid recognition by the kinds of people who might want to pull you into an alley for a 'chat'.

Dodge

You can fling yourself out of the way of a spray of bullets. As long as you are aware of the direction a Ranged attack is coming from, you can spend an Action from your next turn to increase the TN needed to hit you. For a deeper explanation of how this works, see Dodge Attempts in the Combat section.

Drive

Pick a vehicle type (such as boat, motorcycle, car, or big rig). You've learned how to comfortably maneuver with that vehicle. You may take this Skill multiple times, selecting a different vehicle each time.

Electronics

You can design and understand the workings of electrical systems. You know exactly where to cut and where to splice to turn off or restore the power to buildings, security systems, and explosives.

Escape

You can wriggle out of bonds, slip out of handcuffs, and generally Houdini your way out of situations that the average person would be trapped in.

Fast Talk

A mix of emotional appeals, clever wordplay, and misdirection, you can quickly convince someone to see things your way—so long as they don't think too hard about what you're saying.

First Aid

You can patch up a wound, diagnose a common injury, and keep someone alive until they can get more comprehensive medical care—even in the middle of combat. Using First Aid on someone

restores 1d3+1 plus their Heal Rate in Hit Points, and you may do this once per injury (see Healing in the Combat section). The GM may assign you bonuses on your roll for access to good equipment, support, or a safe and sterile working environment, and you can use First Aid on yourself in a pinch, although the GM is advised to raise the TN accordingly.

Forgery

You've studied classical art, calligraphy, and even a bit of psychology. You know how to pass off a document as someone else's writing and, given the right amount of time, you can create a duplicate of an object to swap with the original.

History

You know a wealth of information about ancient cultures, trade, and politics. You also know a fair bit of local history, and you've gotten very good at digging through old records.

Heavy Weapons

You can operate heavy machine guns, grenade launchers, and other highly situational munitions.

Improvised Weapons

You are never unarmed. You have learned how to fight with car keys, pencils, chair legs, beer bottles, and anything else that's at hand.

Interrogation

Intimidation is fine if you already know what you want, but sometimes you have to dig deeper. Interrogation, which is not necessarily torture, is the practice of wringing out of someone as much usable information as you can get. Your victim will get a Willpower Saving Throw against

your Interrogation attempt, cracking if they fail. Of course, if they don't *actually have* the information that you're looking for, they'll start making up things they think you want to hear. It's your job to separate truth from fiction.

Intimidation

You know how to coerce a target into doing your bidding. Typically, this involves scaring the crap out of them. Your victim will get a Willpower Saving Throw against your Intimidation attempt, but you can stack the odds in your favor with a lot of situational modifiers. An intimidated target is merely someone you have scared into doing what you want. They are not under your absolute control.

Law

You understand both the American legal system and the simpler codes that govern the Syndicate and the Order. You also know where the gray areas are and can sometimes avoid consequences on a technicality.

Leadership

You can coordinate a team, inspire a mob, and take charge when no one else knows what to do. *You* get to be the responsible one. Lucky you.

Lock Picking

You can bypass conventional and electronic locks, getting into places you're not supposed to go.

Magic Lore

Pick a type of magic. You have studied that specific type of magic and have a good sense of both its applications and of how to invoke it.

Having a particular Magic Lore is not the same as being able to cast that kind of magic, and you must still be able to select its Spells through your Archetype.

You cannot have a higher rank in a Spell than you have in its corresponding Magic Lore. Having 3d10 in Shadow, for example, does not also give you 3d10 in Warlock.

You may take this Skill multiple times, selecting a different type of magic each time.



Mechanics

You understand the inner workings of vehicle engines, industrial plants, and other complex machines. You can diagnose and repair mechanical problems, and you can even jury rig your own creations.

Navigation

You have a good sense of direction and, more importantly, you know when to stop and get your bearings. You can find your way through crumbling tenement buildings, moss-covered swamps, or even parts of faerie without getting utterly lost.

Observation

You can tell when something is off, your senses are sharp, you know when someone is hiding something from you, and you can

read the twitch of a person's fingers right before they go for their gun. This Skill covers every sense, including taste, although you're hopefully not going to spend a lot of time tasting crime scenes for clues.

Occultism

Some mages might be content with just Magic Lore, but you've spent your time studying the broader realm of the supernatural. You know useful facts about creatures, Ley Lines, and haunted locations, and you have a better sense of the motives behind certain cults.

Persuade

A heavy hand is not always the best approach. You've learned to convince other people to come around to your point of view. This takes more time than Fast Talk, but the results last.

Physician

If a paramedic's job is to keep someone alive, yours is to make sure they stay that way. You can diagnose and treat a variety of conditions and you can perform complex medical procedures with the right equipment and help. You may not roll Physician in combat (see Healing in the Combat section) and the GM may assign you penalties on your roll for a lack of good equipment, support, or a safe and sterile working environment. Healing someone with Physician restores 2d4+1 plus their Heal Rate and may only be done once per injury.

Physics

You've made a study of matter, energy, motion, and time. You get very excited about these things.

Pilot

Pick a vehicle type (such as drone, helicopter, propeller, or jet). You've learned how to comfortably maneuver with that vehicle. You may take this Skill multiple times, selecting a different vehicle each time.

Pistols

You know the basics of handgun use and ownership. You can find the safety, perform routine weapon maintenance, and discharge the gun into the face of an oncoming demon as needed. This Skill also covers submachine guns.

Poison

You've studied the many ways in which a body can be made to sicken. You can identify, counteract, brew, and use poisons with ease.

Police Sciences

You can review a crime scene, deduce a perpetrator's motives, anticipate a police response, and interact with police officers in a way that does not put them on edge. You also know how to search for evidence, how to tag and preserve it when you find it, and what the politics are like in the local precinct.

Primitive Ranged Weapons

You know how to calibrate, maintain, and use bows and crossbows against game animals—or against larger, two-legged prey. Hunting science has come a long way in the past two hundred years, and it is easy to find bows and crossbows that are foldable, concealable, and thoroughly modern in their design.

Resist Torture/Interrogation

Holding out in a tough situation is more than just a matter of willpower. It is a skill, and skills can be taught. Resist Torture/Interrogation + WLP can be used in place of a Willpower Saving Throw in any situation where a character is being mentally, spiritually, or physically put through the wringer. Any bonuses to Willpower Saving Throws carry over to this roll.

Ride Horse

You're comfortable with a horse, camel, dogsled, or any other animal-driven form of transportation. You also know how to care for animals and have an easy time understanding their behaviors.

Rifle

A step up from pistols and submachine guns, rifles and shotguns are much less concealable. They also tend to hit harder. You know how to maintain, modify, and fire these weapons.

Security

You know your way around security systems, guard rotations, and how to set them up and bypass them. You can create traps, fortify a location, and identify weak-points in someone else's security.

Seduction

You have a good sense of the kinds of motivations that move people, and you can use that knowledge to sweep someone off their feet, win their affection, or simply distract them while your friends slip past.

Sleight of Hand

You can palm and plant objects, perform acts of legerdemain, and obscure small movements.

Stealth

You've learned that the best way to avoid a fight is simply not to attract any notice in the first place. You can fade into the shadows, escape detection, and walk softly without breaking your stride.

Streetwise

You've gotten very good at thinking like a criminal. This might be because you are one. You know basic etiquette for dealing with criminals, you know several types of criminal operations work, you know the right people to talk to if you need a hook up or a fix, and you know where to find contacts on the wrong side of the law. You also have a more general sense of where to go to buy guns, drugs, or other gray and black-market supplies.

Throwing

You can throw baseballs, bolas, shuriken, knives, spears, grenades, and other objects with speed and accuracy.

Tracking

You know how to track, shadow, lay a false trail, and generally tail a target through an urban or wilderness environment.

Veterinary

You know how to diagnose, treat, and care for animals.

BLISS PART 6

An eight-hour nap, half a toaster pastry, and a fraught van-ride later, it's nighttime and I'm in an abandoned warehouse, an automatic rifle in my hands and

surrounded by nervous-looking Order foot soldiers.

The warehouse is in what's called a Scrape, which is a place where the magic of the world doesn't properly flow. Scrapes happen in places with either really bad history, or where the local leyline shifted, dragging the energy away and turning the place into the thaumaturgic equivalent of a desert.

I have no idea which of the two possibilities this warehouse is, but everyone is already on edge, and I don't feel like speculating on who might have died here in the company of a crowd of heavily armed men and women.

The guns aren't helping anyone's nerves, and we've all clustered together, staring out into the dimness.

There's a thin drizzle muttering against the roof and we've grouped ourselves near a jumble of crates and shipping containers in the southeastern corner of the massive building.

We're right by the unlocked side-entrance where we made our insertion and our van is idling outside. Our driver and her guard are in there, keeping our escape route clear.

I try not to think about how easy it would be for the Syndicate to pick them off.

In the Scrape, we're all as fragile as mundanes.

My only real comfort is that if the Syndicate rubbed us out, it would mean war.

The Syndicate princes don't want war with us. Not a hot war, a shooting war, the kind they might not profit from.

They love the cold war we currently have going with them. It lets them use the Order as a boogeyman, a threat to keep their own members in line.

No one in the Syndicate is going to move too aggressively against a prince's holdings if it might bring the Order down on their head.

And the Syndicate is all about territory.

Theirs is a feudalism backed with spells and guns.

The Order doesn't respect their land claims, but we do make a point of knowing about them. It helps us know where it's safe for us to operate without precipitating an armed response.

It also helps us know where to hit when a strike team is authorized.

From our briefing beforehand, I know that the Syndicate has claimed this particular Scrape.

So technically, we're on their turf.

"I don't like this," says Augustina harshly.

I tell myself not to engage her. *No one* likes this, but she has a history of picking fights with the Syndicate; some personal grudge that she keeps chasing. It ties her to the Order, but it also means that people like me get paired with her when the

district office needs someone to mellow her out.

I tell myself not to engage her, but I find that my mouth has opened anyway. "Just keep your finger outside the trigger-guard," I say before I can stop myself. She shoots me a poisonous look and I almost throw up my hands in exasperation. I probably would, but they're completely full of rifle. "I've never fired one of these outside of practice conditions," I say sharply, shaking the gun. "I'm a professor of world history. Do you think I'm comfortable being here?"

"We're negotiating with the enemy," Augustina says coldly. "Does anyone else think this isn't going to end well?"

A couple of the men and women in our escort nod in agreement. Several others take a good step back from her, just in case.

I sigh. "Broadly speaking," I say, "negotiating's how you stop being enemies. Killing them just invites a brother or a cousin or a friend to pick up where they left off, but if you can both get to the table and decide that talking is better than endlessly bumping each other off, then you're trade rivals at worst."

Augustina stares at me like she's seeing something she can't believe exists. I look away.

"There are some things you can't negotiate with," she says. "A flood. A famine. A rain of meteors."

"Or the death of the firstborn?" asks a wry voice from the darkness.

Rifles instantly swing its way, flashlight beams sweeping over the obscuring clutter until they fall on a woman in a floor-length white and gold dress, her hair expertly pinned, as she steps out from behind a cargo container.

She's dressed for a music video, not an armed confrontation between rival wizarding factions, and she has an orchid corsage pinned to her left lapel to complete the look. Behind her, a squad of well-dressed killers strolls into view.

I can tell they're killers because of the tattoos on their cheeks--Syndicate princes *love* tattooing their vassals--and because their handguns are still holstered. They haven't drawn a single piece, and they're facing down men and women who have flak jackets and automatic rifles.

I've seen a lot in the past twelve years since leading Granite Lodge, and this still gives me pause.

"I am prince Harcourt," says the woman briskly, "and I speak for the Syndicate in these negotiations. May I ask who speaks for the Order?"

Before I can open my mouth, Augustina says "I do." I bristle, but it's too late to try and contradict her. Doing so will instantly erode our position in front of the Syndicate. "You know my name," Augustina says to the prince.

"Indeed, I do," says prince Harcourt languidly. "Are you going to try to kill me again?" She quirks an eyebrow towards our guns.

I bite my tongue.

My fingers itch and a drop of sweat rolls slowly down the side of my brow.

"No," says Augustina firmly. "Not this time," she amends.

"I'm relieved," the prince says. She sounds amused, as if her life had not just been hanging in the balance. "Let's talk about your demon, then. The one that's selling product in our domain?"

Dear God, let's, I think.

"It's not ours," says Augustina. "We're going to kill it," she adds, without preamble.

"Hard to kill demons," says the prince. "Especially since they don't tend to manifest long enough to let you take a swing at them, but we can certainly point you towards some of its proxies."

"You know where its worshippers are?" Augustina asks.

"After the call from your Ms. Able, I had my vassals do a little digging," the prince responds. "We don't know how widespread it is, but my men turned up the regional distribution center for this 'Bliss.' Sites like that are usually hardened, so if you're going to do something about it, we'd be glad to send a team with you. Consider it a show of inter-organizational cooperation."

"Where are they?" presses Augustina.

"They're on a little farm upstate," says the prince. "I would tell you the layout, but the men we sent to survey it haven't checked in yet. They're three hours overdue. Tell me," she licks her lips, "since

we're both on something of a schedule, what do you say we go there now?"

My first thought is that it could be a trap

However, if it is, then why wouldn't they have just ambushed us here?

This time Augustina seems to have reached the same conclusion.

"We'll need to confer with the district office," she says, lowering her rifle, "and we'll need to resupply. If they okay us to respond, you will be notified." She hesitates. "Once we get there," she adds hastily, "make sure your team keeps out of the way."

"Wouldn't dream of stepping into your line of fire," Harcourt assures her, and withdraws.



SPELLS

While no longer the force equalizer that they were hundreds of years ago, knowledge of even a few Spells gives a mage considerable advantages over a mundane.

Many Spells are highly specialized works of magic, available only to a particular Archetype, but every spellcaster also has access to a list of General Spells, which are used by all mages.

In order to learn a Spell, you must first be able to cast Spells of that Area of Magic. Your Archetype will generally provide at least two Areas of Magic, and most Archetypes can unlock more by taking the Extra Training Talent.

Spells are otherwise bought just like Skills, using the same pool of Skill Points, however you may not raise a Spell higher than its corresponding Magic Lore.

Example: Lani is an Angel Slayer. She has Magic Lore: Angel Slayer at 2d8 and Magic Lore: General at 2d6.

Lani can learn any Angel Slayer Spell and raise it up to 2d8, and she can learn any General Spell and raise it up to 2d6.

If she wants an Angel Slayer Spell at 3d8 or 2d10, she would need to increase her Magic Lore: Angel Slayer first.

SPELLCASTING

In order to cast a Spell, you must be able to speak and move at least one hand. Some Spells may have other costs or requirements.

You may not Default on Spells, so if you do not have at least 1d6 in a Spell, you may not cast it at all.

When you cast a Spell, you spend the appropriate number of Magic Points and roll the Spell's dice plus its relevant Attribute against an Average Skill Test (TN 7). On a success, the Spell goes off. On a failure, the Spell fails to invoke. Either way, the Magic Points spent to fuel it are used up in the process.

Some Spells may have a higher TN than Average to cast, and the GM is free to impose penalties or award bonuses depending on the conditions under which the Spell is being cast.

Unless a Spell's Notes say otherwise, all Spells require a single Action to cast in combat (for more about Actions, see the Combat section).

TOUCH SPELLS

In most cases, using a Spell against a hostile target means having to touch them.

To do this, the caster spends their Magic Points, uses an Action, and rolls to activate their Spell as normal. Then, as part of the same Action, they make an Opposition Roll using Brawling + REF against the target's Brawling + REF.

If the caster succeeds, the Spell strikes the target.

NOTE: Either side of the Opposition Roll may substitute Sleight of Hand for Brawling if they wish, and the defender may choose to make a Reflexes Saving Throw instead.

THROWN SPELLS

Some Spells can also be thrown. A Spell marked with a Range other than Self or Touch can *still* be used as a touch Spell (see above), but it can also be delivered as a Ranged attack.

To do this, the caster spends their Magic Points, uses an Action, and rolls to activate their Spell as normal. Then, as part of the same Action, they make a Ranged attack using their Relative Magic Lore (see Attacking and Damage in the Combat section) against the target.

The target may also Dodge if they wish (see Dodge Attempts in the Combat section).

If the caster succeeds, the Spell strikes the target.

If a Spell is being Thrown at a specific spot (such as into a vent, into the middle of a room, etc.), the GM provides the TN to hit with it.

STACKING EFFECTS

The notes for some Spells (and for some abilities, items, etc.) sometimes mention whether a Spell's effect 'stacks'.

If an effect stacks with something else,

that means both effects apply.

For example, if you have a +1 TN penalty from one Spell and a +1 TN penalty from another Spell and those penalties stack, you're at a +2 TN penalty overall. If the penalties *don't* stack, you're only at a +1 TN penalty.

Most bonuses and penalties in Wicked Pacts stack with each other, but when an effect *doesn't* stack, or when a bonus or penalty only stacks in some situations, there will be a note explaining it.

EFFECTS THAT INCREASE YOUR MAXIMUM HP/MP

Some Spells, items, or other effects will raise your maximum Hit Points or maximum Magic Points. When this happens, you also gain that many Hit Points or Magic Points.

When the effect ends, lose that many Hit Points or Magic Points, and then return your maximum to its original level.

This cannot reduce your Magic Points below 0.

ARCHETYPE SPELLS

The following Spells are available only to characters who know the appropriate Areas

of Magic. For a list of each Archetype's Areas of Magic, please see Archetypes section.

ANGEL SLAYER

Angel Slayer Spells are vicious and fearsome but often come at a cost. Whether you pay that cost or someone else does depends on the Spell.

Angel Slayer Spells are cast using the Strength Attribute.

Binding Contract

Demons love contracts. In fact, they were all too happy to teach mortal spellcasters how to imitate theirs. Thanks to their tutelage, you can draw up a contract backed by the powers of Hell that provides you with *very* favorable terms.

Cost: 10 points

Duration: Until the contract is destroyed, fulfilled, or until the target dies.

Range: Touch

Notes:

You may sign away a single Spell or power to a willing person, losing access to it for the duration of the contract. In return, as long as the contract is active, you can divert a portion of any damage you take to the signatory.

You can divert as much damage as you like, but most people only have 10 -15 Hit Points. If the signatory dies while the contract is active, they are sent to Hell.

You may only have one contract out at a time, but you may spy on the signatory through their senses for as long as the contract is active.

Brimstone Shift

With a few chanted phrases and a twitch of your fingers, you can easily teleport wherever you would like to go. Unfortunately, you perform this teleport by stepping directly through Hell.

Cost: 2 points

Duration: Instant

Range: Self

Notes:

You instantly travel up to 50 yards anywhere within Line of Sight. Successfully using Brimstone Shift causes you to take 1d8 damage, which ignores both your Protection and Damage Resistance and leaves a violent smell of sulfur at both the starting point and exit point of your teleport.

Burst of Ash

You fill an area with swirling toxic ash.

Cost: 4 points

Duration: Last for 1d4 Rounds

Range: 25 yards

Notes:

The cloud covers a 5-yard radius. Each time someone is caught inside, ends their turn inside, or moves through the ash cloud but does not end their turn inside it, they must make a Tough Health Saving Throw (TN 12). If they fail, they begin choking and suffer a +3 TN penalty on all their Skill Tests, Opposition Rolls, and Saving Throws until the end of the duration.

You may increase the cloud's radius by another 5 yards for +2 MP.

Demon Armor

Weightless, wicked-looking obsidian armor settles into place on your body.

Cost: 4 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

You instantly don a suit of armor that provides +5 Protection to all Hit Locations. Additionally, while wearing the armor, you drain 1 Magic Point from one random target within a 1 yard of you at the start of your turn. You may not cast this Spell if you are already wearing armor. If you remove the demon armor, it vanishes.

Demonic Intelligence

You can tap a hellish source when you need advice on academic matters.

Cost: 3 points

Duration: One turn

Range: Self

Notes:

Pick a Skill. For the rest of the turn, you both roll *and* keep an extra die on any information-related use of that Skill.

Demon Minion

You conjure a brimstone mook to do your dirty work.

Cost: 10 points

Duration: 1 week or until minion dies

Range: 1 yard

Notes:

Conjuring a demon minion requires a 10-minute ritual. You can only control up to half your Strength in minions at any time (round down). For the demon minions' stats, use the Minor Demon in the Adversary section. The demons will generally try to interpret your bidding in such a way as to advance the causes of Hell.

Frighten

Hell has taught you how to get inside someone's head and show them the things they fear the most.

Cost: 5 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

Make an Opposition Roll using your Frighten + STR against the Willpower Saving Throw of everyone in a 20-yard radius. If any of the targets fail, they suffer a +2 TN penalty on any action they take against you until the end of the scene. This effect does not stack with itself.

Furious Fist of Hades

Dark energy sheathes your fist, turning your strikes into magical attacks and allowing them to do full damage to supernatural creatures.

Cost: 3 points

Duration: Instant

Range: Self

Notes:

Make a Hand-To-Hand attack as part of the Action to cast this Spell. The attack deals an extra 2d6 damage to your target's Hit Points and 1d4 damage to their Magic Points.

Steal Spell

You know how to pluck a Spell from someone else's head and use it for your own purposes.

Cost: 5 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Touch

Notes:

Pick a target and a Spell that they can cast, then make an Opposition Roll using Steal Spell + STR against their Willpower Saving Throw. If you succeed, write down how many dice they had in the Spell. For the rest of the Scene, they lose access to that Spell and you may cast it with that same number of dice.

Vigor of the Beast

You can call on an infernal power to enhance your natural abilities.

Cost: 7 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

You gain +15 maximum hit points, +2 Protection to all Hit Locations, and +1 Strength. This can raise you over 5 Strength. This effect does not stack with itself.

DEMON HUNTER

Demon Hunter Spells are about dogged pursuit. A mage with Demon Hunter Spells can stay on their prey, no matter what that prey throws at them.

Demon Hunter Spells are cast using the Reflexes Attribute.

Arrow of Righteousness

With a touch, you can imbue an arrow with a portion of your holy wrath.

Cost: 2 points

Duration: Instant

Range: Touch

Notes:

This Spell is cast as part of a Ranged attack with an arrow. If the arrow hits, it deals an additional +2d3 damage, gains AP 2, and counts as a magical weapon.

Cure Disease

You cure a disease plaguing the target.

Cost:

5 points cures a minor disease

10 points cures a moderate disease

15 points cures a serious disease

Duration: Permanent

Range: Touch

Notes:

This only works on mundane diseases, not curses or supernatural ailments. The GM decides whether the disease is minor, moderate, or serious.

You may use Cure Disease to buy off the Terminally Ill Complication, but only with the GM's permission. This typically requires both a complex ritual and a set of rare ritual foci, all tailored to the character's condition. The GM is encouraged to use these foci as hooks for scenarios.

Disarm

With a touch, you can deactivate magical wards, traps, and alarms.

Cost: 5 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Touch

Notes:

Make a Skill Test using Disarm + REF against the TN of the ward, trap, or alarm. On a success, it is deactivated without alerting the person that set it.

Divine Aura

You emit an aura that frustrates and disrupts the concentration of those around you.

Cost: 4 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

Anyone who can see you suffers a +2 TN penalty on all Skill Tests, Opposition Rolls, and Saving Throws until the end of the scene. Anyone within a 1-yard radius of you increases that penalty to +4 TN. This effect does not stack with itself.

Exploit Weakness

You know exactly where to hit your enemies.

Cost: 5 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: 5 yards

Notes:

You receive either a -2 TN or a +1d6 damage bonus against your target. You may cast this Spell a second time to receive the other bonus, but neither effect stacks with itself.

Healing Touch

You can heal yourself or another.

Cost: 5 points

Duration: Permanent

Range: Touch

Notes:

Your target recovers 8 Hit Points. You may heal someone multiple times per wound with this Spell, ignoring the usual restrictions on magical healing (see Healing in the Combat section). Healing Touch does not cure poisons, illness, or disease.

Hunter's Sense

You gain a keen awareness of your surroundings, perceiving energy residues and supernatural beings in your immediate vicinity.

Cost: 3 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

In addition to being able to see creatures such as ghosts, you gain +4 Initiative and a -2 TN bonus on any rolls to defend yourself. This effect does not stack with itself.

Hunter's Trap

You know how to create an inverted ward. Mages and supernatural beings are locked

in instead of kept out.

Cost: 12 points

Duration: 1 Day

Range: Touch

Notes:

You mark out a 5-yard radius and specify a type of creature (werewolf, ghost, etc.). Roll Hunter's Trap + REF to set the TN of the trap. If the correct creature walks through the trap, they must make a Willpower Saving Throw against the TN. Failure means that they are caught.

The trapped creature may make this Saving Throw again any time they are attacked while stuck in the trap.

A Hunter's Trap can hold as many creatures as are able to fit inside its area. Creatures may not burrow or fly to escape the trap.

Mask Self

You conceal your emission of magical energy, preventing you from being tracked by Spells or abilities.

Cost: 5 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

You become immune to Mage Eye. You may also resist any other magical attempt to track you or trap you with your Mask Self + REF.

Quick Pursuit

You flood your body with a quick burst of energy, giving you the speed, you need to catch your prey.

Cost: 2 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

Your Movement doubles. For +2 MP, your Movement triples.

The effects of this Spell apply *before* modifiers from Spells, Talents, etc. are factored in.

Track Prey

Your senses sharpen, allowing you to track a caster or supernatural being by its residual magical essence.

Cost: 4 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Line of Sight

Notes:

Make an Opposition Roll using Track Prey + REF against your target's Willpower Saving Throw to see their trail. If your target realizes they are being tracked, they may try to obscure their trail, forcing a Track against. Stealth Opposition Roll to stay on them.

ENCHANTER

Enchanter magic is commonly thought of as support magic. This is technically true, but you can tell whether a mage has fought an Enchanter based on whether they sneer or shiver when they say it.

Enchanter Spells are cast using the Intelligence Attribute.

Arcane Attunement

You can magically charge an item to carry a Spell, allowing you to deploy your magics in unexpected ways.

Cost:

20 points to attune an item

10 points to disenchant an item

Duration: Permanent

Range: Touch

Notes:

To attune an item, pick an item in your possession and a Spell that you are able to cast. Write down the dice for the Spell, any relevant Attributes, and pick a condition that will trigger it (i.e. Burst of Ash 3d8, when touched). Then spend the Magic Point cost for both Arcane Attunement and the Spell that you are charging the item with. Finally, make a Challenging (TN 9) Skill Test using your Arcane Attunement + INT.

This process **takes two hours**, regardless of whether you succeed.

If you succeed, make a note of the number you rolled. This is now the TN for disenchanting the item.

When the attuned Spell is triggered, roll to cast it using the dice and Attributes that you wrote down.

Any time the Spell is triggered, you pay the Magic Point cost for the Spell it was attuned with. If you cannot pay the Magic Point cost, the Spell does not activate.

If you wish, you may have another mage assist you with the attunement. In this case, the other mage may supply the Spell you would like to attune and also pay its Magic Point cost (both up-front and whenever the item is triggered).

Only one Spell may be attuned to an item



at a time.

Disenchanting an item is much simpler than attuning one. Pay the appropriate Magic Point cost, roll to cast Arcane Attunement (and roll to cast against a hostile target, if the thing you would like to disenchant is in someone else's hands!), then make a Skill Test using your Arcane Attunement + INT against the item's TN. If you succeed, the enchantment is stripped from the item and it goes inert.

Armor Up

Although they still feel like normal fabric, your enchanted clothes can stop blades, clubs, and bullets.

Cost: 5 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Touch

Notes:

A set of clothing now provides +4 Protection to any Hit Location it covers until the end of the Scene. The enchanted clothes are not encumbering, and other armor can be worn over them. Only one Armor Up effect can protect a person at a time.

Assume Appearance

Your features blur and run together until you become someone else. Your voice changes to match.

Cost: 4 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Touch

Notes:

You may use this Spell to sculpt an entirely new appearance or to copy an existing one. If you use Assume Appearance to mimic someone else, you must keep something belonging to that person on you for the duration of the Spell. Wives,

husbands, and very close friends of the person you are mimicking will sense that you are an impostor after 5 minutes of talking with you. Otherwise, you pass undetected.

You may extend the duration of this Spell by paying its cost again at the end of each Scene.

You may also use this Spell to disguise an item no larger than a person. If you do, roll Assume Appearance + INT. The result is now the unmodified TN to spot the item with an Observation Skill Test.

Create Golem

With a series of complex rituals followed by a slow alchemical transfusion, you can awaken inanimate materials into a semblance of intelligent life.

Cost:

10 points creates a Flesh Golem

15 points creates a Clay Golem

20 points creates a Stone Golem

25 points creates an Iron Golem

Duration: Permanent

Range: Touch

Notes:

The entire process, from start to finish, takes 2d6 days, but you only need to be there for twelve hours at the start and four hours at the very end. It is considered good practice to check in on your creation periodically during the time in between, but not required. You only pay the Magic Point cost and roll to cast at the very end, and if you fail, you must start again from scratch.

See Golems in the Adversaries section for more details on your creation.

Once created, your Golem may go no further than your INT in miles away from

you. If it is forced to go further than that (or if you are forcibly taken out of its range), it falls dormant for another 2d6 days. If you still haven't returned by the end of that period, when it reawakens it is incurably insane.

You may only have one Golem at a time under your control. Some very advanced Golem operators have developed ways to control multiple Golems or to put unwanted Golems into stasis, but those techniques are not covered by this Spell.

Create Scroll

You can copy a Spell onto paper, turning it into a sort of one-shot arcane holdout piece.

Cost: 4 points

Duration: Permanent

Range: Touch

Notes:

Pick a Spell that you know. Write down its Magic Point cost, your Spell Dice, and its relevant Attributes and spend 10 minutes of uninterrupted time scribbling it down onto a piece of paper. Then pay Create Scroll's Cost and make a Challenging Skill Test (TN 9) using Create Scroll + INT. If you succeed, you create a scroll of your chosen Spell.

Anyone may now cast this Spell by holding the scroll up and reading the trigger phrase written at the bottom. Doing so unleashes the Spell and consumes the scroll.

Anyone, even Templars and the Ungifted, can use a scroll. However, you may only have INT x2 scrolls prepared at a given time. Scrolls that are stolen from you by enemies or lost irrecoverably do not count against this limit.

Fate Bomb

You charge an item with malign energy and key it to a particular target. Now all you need to do is wait.

Cost: 5 points

Duration: Permanent

Range: Touch

Notes:

Touch an item and declare a target. The next time that target touches the item, they take 2d4+2 damage, AP All. You may not stack this Spell multiple times on the same object, and you may only have up to your Willpower in Fate Bombs active at the same time. However, things like 'this bullet' and 'the floor of this room' count as individual objects for the purposes of this Spell.

Sharpen

With a touch, you put a razor's edge on a blade.

Cost:

1 point sharpens a dull blade

2 points gives a sharp item +3 damage

Duration: One Scene

Range: Touch

Notes:

You may make Sharpen permanent with a further +10 Magic Points. Sharpen does not stack with itself or with any other enhancement that grants a permanent damage bonus. If you fail to cast Sharpen on a blade, you may not Sharpen that blade again.

Smite

You imbue a mundane weapon with supernatural damage potential.

Cost:

2 points weapon gains AP 3

4 points weapon's damage dice type

improves. Ex: 2d6 becomes 2d8, 2d8 becomes 2d10, 2d10 becomes 2d12, etc.

Duration: One Scene

Range: Touch

Notes:

You may pay both the 2 Magic Point cost and the 4 Magic Point cost at the same time to gain both benefits. You may imbue multiple weapons this way. Weapons imbued with Smite can damage ghosts and other supernatural creatures. This effect does not stack with itself.

Structural Manipulation

By exploiting microscopic weaknesses or enhancing the true nature of an object, you can cause it to crack or become more whole.

Cost: 2-7 points (GM's decision)

Duration: Permanent

Range: Touch

Notes:

This Spell takes effect instantly, ruining or repairing an object up to the size of a small car.

It may also ruin *the engine* of a larger vehicle, but you will need to be touching the engine when you cast it.

You may use Structural Manipulation to ruin a weapon or piece of armor, rendering it worthless until repaired. If you use it against an object someone is holding or wearing, treat it as you would any other attempt to attack someone with a Touch Spell in combat. If your roll fails, so does your attempt to ruin the object.

Objects ruined with Structural Manipulation may be repaired with mundane methods or by casting Structural Manipulation on them.

True Aim

Vectors and firing solutions flash through

your mind. You already know where your target is going to be.

Cost: 4 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Touch

Notes:

You give a person a -2 TN bonus on their attack rolls or you imbue a weapon so that it gives its wielder a -2 TN bonus on attack rolls. This effect does not stack with itself.

GRUNT

Grunt magic is all about honing the Grunt's already impressive body. A Grunt mage can deal blows that would dent the side armor of an Abrams tank—or else take hits that would drop a rhinoceros.

Grunt Spells are cast using the Health Attribute.

Armor of the Gods

You invoke an ancient agreement and glowing golden armor forms around your body.

Cost: 6 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

You instantly don a weightless, glowing suit of armor that provides +5 Protection to all Hit Locations. If you remove the armor, it vanishes. You may not cast this Spell while wearing any other form of armor (although you may still cast it over enchanted clothing, scaly skin, etc.)

Bad Karma

Putting a hand on the scales of fate, you tilt the odds against your enemy.

Cost: 3

Duration: One Scene

Range: 10 yards

Notes:

Make an Opposition roll using your Bad Karma + HLT against their Health Saving Throw. If you succeed, they suffer a +2 TN penalty on all Skill Tests, Opposition Rolls, and Saving Throws. Repeated casts of Bad Karma do not cause this penalty to stack.

Control Body

You can resist the need to eat, drink, or even sleep for extended periods of time.

Cost: 4 points

Duration: 1 day

Range: Self

Notes:

You may renew the Duration of this Spell at any time by paying its Cost.

For every week you go without physical needs, you enter a 12-hour coma when this Spell's effect ends.

Shockwave

Channeling your energy, you strike the ground and cause a small, localized earthquake to roll out from the point of impact.

Cost: 3 points

Duration: Instant

Range: Self

Notes:

Make an Opposition Roll against everyone else who is standing in a 20-yard radius around you. Use your Shockwave + HLT against their Reflexes Saving Throw. If they succeed, they take 1d6 damage. If they fail, they take 2d6 damage and are knocked down.

Shield the Innocent

Sometimes a Grunt has to do more than just destroy things. This Spell allows you to

absorb damage that was meant for someone else.

Cost: 2 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: 10 yards

Notes:

This Spell is cast on the person you wish to protect. You may cast this Spell on multiple people if you wish, but you must spend its Cost and roll to cast it each time.

When one of the people you are protecting takes damage, you may take up to your Health x 2 points of that damage instead by paying 1 MP each. Damage diverted this way is AP All and ignores Damage Resistance.

Speed of Hermes

Time slows as your reaction speed increases, allowing you to respond to threats with an inhuman quickness.

Cost: 5 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

You gain +6 Initiative and double your Movement. This effect does not stack with itself.

Super Leap

You fling yourself into the air, moving at startling speeds.

Cost: 2 points

Duration: Instant

Range: Self

Notes:

You leap up to 100 yards vertical or 100 yards horizontal. You may choose to do both, traveling in an arc. You must make an Average Reflex Saving Throw (TN 7) to stick the landing, but you do not otherwise suffer any consequences from landing.

Titans' Strength

Magic threads itself through your muscle fiber, allowing you to casually hit your enemies like a speeding truck.

Cost:

4 points boosts Strength by 1

6 points boosts Strength by 2

8 points boosts Strength by 3

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

This Spell may temporarily raise your Strength over 5. For every point over 5, this increases your Damage Bonus by +1.

The effects of Titans' Strength do not change your Hit Points in any way and Titans' Strength does not stack with itself.

Toxin Resistance

You become completely immune to a specific toxin.

Cost: 3 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

Pick a toxin. For the rest of the Scene, you automatically succeed all Saving Throws against that toxin. This does not purge the toxin from your body and it does not erase any consequences you have already suffered from it.

Ultimate Sacrifice

To lay down your life in battle to protect a brother or sister is a great honor. It is an honor you are prepared to receive.

Cost: 10 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Touch

Notes:

You and a willing target share *your* Hit Points. If either you or the target takes

damage, that damage comes out of your Hit Points. You may only choose to end this Spell on your turn. Otherwise, it ends when the Scene ends or when you are killed.



NECROMANCER

Necromancer Spells are about turning the immutable wall between the realms of the living and the dead into a revolving glass door. As unsettling as their other magic might be, Necromancers can resurrect fallen comrades, and this has forced the Hermetic Order to at least tolerate them.

Necromancer Spells are cast using the Willpower Attribute.

Control the Dead

It doesn't matter that it's someone else's zombie. You have the access codes.

Cost: 8 points

Duration: Immediate

Range: Touch

Notes:

You may take over a Risen Dead by making an Opposition Roll using Control the Dead + WLP against either the dead's Willpower Saving Throw or its caster's Control the Dead + WLP—whichever is better. If you succeed, you hijack the dead thing.

You can control up to WLP x3 Risen Dead at any given time. Your Risen Dead fall apart if they move outside a 1-mile radius of you.

Death Vision

You force a vision of someone's death, real or imagined, into their mind.

Cost: 6 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: 5 yards

Notes:

Make an Opposition Roll using your Death Vision + WLP against your target's Willpower Saving Throw. If you succeed, they are stunned and unable to act until the end of their next turn. Additionally, they suffer a +3 TN penalty on all Skill Tests, Opposition Rolls, and Saving Throws until the end of the Scene. This effect does not stack with itself.

Feign Death

Sometimes you need to feign your own death. Sometimes you need to feign someone else's.

Cost: 4

Duration: One Scene

Range: Touch

Notes:

To all appearances, your target is now dead. They can wake whenever they want, and they can hear everything happening around them.

Raise the Dead

You can imbue a portion of your will inside of a dead thing, reanimating the corpse and placing it under control.

Cost: 7 per dead thing raised

Duration: Until the Risen Dead is destroyed, the caster is destroyed, or the caster relinquishes control

Range: Touch

Notes:

Raise the Dead requires 10 minutes of ritual to cast. Each Risen Dead functions as a zombie (see the Adversaries section) under your control.

You can control up to WLP x3 Risen Dead at any given time. Your Risen Dead fall apart if they move outside a 1-mile radius of you.

Resurrection

You can return the dead to life, dragging them forcefully back from their eternal reward.

Cost: 30 points, +5 MP for every day after the first that the target has been dead

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Note:

If you fail your roll to Resurrect someone, they are lost forever. If your roll is a Critical Failure, their body comes back possessed by a powerful demon.

Rotting Flesh

This is a truly heinous attack, causing wounds the ooze and seep with putrid ichor.

Cost:

2 points per attack for a 2d4+2 damage

3 points per attack for 2d6+1 damage

4 points per attack 2d8+3 damage.

Duration: Instant

Range: Range penalties apply. 5 yards is short range, 10 yards medium range, 15 yards long range

Notes:

When a target takes damage from this Spell, make a note of how much damage they took. If they take further damage from this Spell, add it to the total. When that target is healed, instead of restoring their Hit Points, subtract that healing from the total damage they've been dealt by Rotting Flesh. Until that total hits 0, they cannot restore their Hit Points and they look and smell gangrenous.

Soul Blast

You release an ominous blast of otherworldly energies that not only frightens your target but chills them to the bone.

Cost:

2 points for 2d3+2 damage

3 points for 2d6 damage

4 points for 3d6 damage

Duration: Instant

Range: Range penalties apply. 5 yards is short range, 10 yards medium range, 15 yards long range

Notes:

Unless your target is utterly unable to feel fear, in addition to the damage, they suffer a +1 TN penalty on all Skill Tests, Opposition Rolls, and Saving Throws for the next 1d3 Rounds. This penalty does not stack with repeated casts, but each time a target is hit by a Soul Blast, the duration of the penalty is extended for another 1d3 Rounds. There is no Saving Throw to counteract this effect.

Speak to the Dead

The dead can tell tales. At least, they can with you.

Cost: 4

Duration: One Scene

Range: 50-yard radius around the deceased

Notes:

You may cast this Spell either on a corpse or on a place where a person died. If cast on a place, you must specify which person you are trying to conjure up. The 'dead' that you speak to is not so much a person's soul as it is their echo, and you may cast this Spell even if the person you are hoping to talk to has been dragged off to Hell by demons. The 'dead' is not always coherent, and it is usually stuck in the last few minutes of its life, constantly on loop. It can answer simple questions but may become confused if anyone tries to remind it that it is dead. How willing the 'dead' is to help depends on how the caster approaches it.

Steal Spirits

You can drain energy from spirits, the undead, and even the living to replenish your reserves.

Cost: 3

Duration: Instant

Range: Range penalties apply. 5 yards is short range, 10 yards medium range, 15 yards long range

Notes:

You deal 1d4+4 Drain damage. You may drain either Hit Points or Magic Points. Decide which one you are going to drain *before* you cast.

Summon Ghost

Not only can you call up a ghost, but you can compel it to do your bidding.

Cost: 5

Duration: One Scene

Range: 1-mile radius

Notes:

Summon Ghost requires 10 minutes of

ritual incantation to cast. After a successful summoning, you can command the ghost, communicate telepathically, and even see through its senses, although it will not obey any orders that would result in its imprisonment or destruction. Use the ghost information from the Adversary section. You may have up to 2 ghosts under your control at any given time. If you try to summon and command a specific ghost, it can resist you with an Opposition Roll using its Willpower Saving Throw against your Summon Ghost + WLP. If it succeeds, it breaks free and you can never command it again.



SCRIBE

The Scribe Archetype does not have its own list of Spells. Instead, thanks to its open-minded attitude towards other mages' private spell books, it may cast Spells from any list, including Petty Magic.

The only list the Scribe cannot select from is the Templars' Miracles of Faith, although this has not stopped religiously minded Scribes from trying.

SEER

Seer magic is about using brain over brawn. Like Enchanters, Seers have to contend with the 'support mage' stereotype. Unlike Enchanters, when someone gets on the wrong side of a Seer, they rarely remember what hit them.

Seer Spells are cast using the Willpower Attribute.

Calculated Teleport

After a brief period of focus, you can transport yourself to another location.

Cost:

3 points for 100 yards

5 points for ½ mile

8 points for 1 mile

Duration: Instant

Range: Self

Notes:

By concentrating for 2 Rounds on a place you have been or a place that you can currently see, you may teleport to it—so long as it is within your range.

A Critical Failure on this Spell roll causes the teleport to go horribly (though not fatally) wrong. This will not put you on the moon or inside of a wall, but it may fuse the soles of your shoes to the floor or land you right in front of a monster.

Charm

By interfering with the way, a person thinks, you can cause them to find everything you do to be extremely charming.

Cost: 10 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: 5 yards short range, 10 yards medium range, 25 yards long range

Note:

Make an Opposition Roll using Charm + WLP against your target's Willpower Saving Throw. On a success, your target thinks you are attractive, finds everything you say witty, and wants you to be happy. This does *not* make them your helpless puppet, and they will still question or ignore commands they find extraordinarily dangerous or morally abhorrent.

If you fail to affect someone with Charm, you may never use Charm on them again.

Command

Far more invasive than Charm, this Spell lets you control the actions of another.

Cost: 15 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: 20 yards

Note:

Make an Opposition Roll using Command + WLP against your target's Willpower Saving Throw. If you succeed, you may give verbal commands to the target and the target will obey them. You may also pay an additional +10 MP to change the Duration to 1 Day.

Casting Command on a target does not blank their memory or suppress their awareness that they are being controlled. If your command is something the target would never normally do, make the Opposition Roll again and the target gets a -3 TN bonus. If they succeed, the effect immediately ends.

If you fail to affect someone with Command, you may never use Command on them again.

Mind Blast

You unleash a rush of sensory input into someone else's unprotected brain.

Cost: 3 points

Duration: Instant

Range: Range penalties apply. INT x1 yards is short range, INT x2 yards medium range, INT x4 yards long range

Notes:

Target takes 1d12 damage, AP all. This is mental damage and creatures that cannot think or that cannot perceive pain are immune.

If you have a telepathic link to your target, you may cast Mind Blast without Throwing the Spell.

Mind Shield

You bolster your mental defenses against intrusion.

Cost: 3 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

You gain a -5 TN bonus on your Willpower Saving Throws.

You may also pay +5 MP. If you do, you get +7 Damage Resistance against mental damage and you may make a Challenging Willpower Saving Throw (TN 9) against any Spell or supernatural effect that is currently influencing how you think. On a success, that Spell or effect ends immediately.

This Spell does not stack with itself, but you may cast it again to get another Saving Throw against a Spell that is affecting you.

Precognition

You gain a flash of insight into the near future. Sometimes this is all you need in

order to change it.

Cost: 3 points

Duration: Instant

Range: Self

Notes:

You get a premonition about something that will happen in the next half hour.

The images, sounds, and feelings that your premonition gives you are not arranged in an easy to understand sequence. You must make an Average Skill Test (TN 7) using Precognition + WLP in order to correctly interpret them.

You may also pay +2 MP to increase the TN of the Skill Test by +1 and extend your precognition by an additional half hour, and you can increase both your TN penalty and prediction time to a total of +7 TN and 8 hours, respectively.

When you gain Precognition, you automatically gain the Spell Combat Precognition at the same number of dice. When you increase Precognition, you automatically increase Combat Precognition by the same amount.

Combat Precognition

You have learned to focus your precognition on the immediate present, allowing you to react to danger as it is happening.

Cost: 1 point

Duration: 1 turn

Range: Self

Notes:

See Precognition. You may not learn Combat Precognition on its own.

Until the beginning of your next turn, any attempt to hit you suffers a +2 TN penalty. You may sacrifice Actions to add an

additional +2 TN per Action to this effect. Sacrificing Actions this way does not impose a Multiple Actions Penalty.

Recall Past Event

You can focus on an object to see its history.

Cost:

3 points lets you make an Average Skill Test (TN 7) using Recall Past Event + WLP to replay something from the past hour.

4 points lets you make a Challenging Skill Test (TN 9) using your Recall Past Event + WLP to replay something from the past day

6 points lets you make a Tough Skill Test (TN 12) using your Recall Past Event + WLP to replay something from the past week

12 points lets you make an Extreme Skill Test (TN 14) using your Recall Past Event + WLP to replay something from the past month

Duration: Instant

Range: Touch

Notes:

This power may only be used once per item. If you fail, you can't try again.

Reprogram Mind

You either implant a command in someone's mind and set a trigger to activate it, or you can disarm a trigger that has already been set in someone's head.

Cost:

10 points for a minor thought or action

15 points for a moderate thought or action

20 points for a major thought or action

Duration: One Scene

Range: Touch

Note:

Make an Opposition Roll using Reprogram Mind + WLP against your target's Willpower Saving Throw. If you succeed, you discover any commands that

are currently implanted in the target and may add or remove a command. If you add a command, you may specify the circumstances under which it is triggered. If you fail your roll, you may never use this Spell on that target again.

Your command normally fades away when the Scene ends (regardless of whether it has been executed). However, you may spend additional Magic Points to increase the Duration of this Spell. +2 MP extends it by a day, +5 MP extends it by a week, +7 MP extends it by a year, and +10 MP makes it permanent.

An implanted command is not used up after it has been carried out and it will be performed again whenever it is triggered.

Telekinesis

You can manipulate objects at a distance, lift heavy loads with the power of your mind, and even pick yourself up and haul your own body through the air.

Cost:

1 point lets you move up to 1 lbs.

2 points lets you move up to 50 lbs.

3 points lets you move up to 150 lbs.

5 points lets you move up to 300 lbs.

7 points lets you move up to 600 lbs.

Duration: 2d3 turns

Range: WLP x20 yards

Note:

Objects that you move with Telekinesis move relatively slowly—no more than 1 yard per turn—and you may only telekinetically pick up one object at a time. If someone else grabs and holds onto that object, they count towards the total weight of the object. If an object suddenly becomes heavier than your telekinesis can lift, it is immediately dropped.

Telekinesis gives you fine enough control to do something like insert a key into a lock, but not enough control to do something like remotely pick a lock.

You may use telekinesis on part of an object (for example, you may pull open a single dresser drawer), but not on part of a physical being (i.e. you can't just telekinetically pull out someone's eyes).

If you try to pick up a physical being, make an Opposition Roll using Telekinesis + WLP against their Strength Saving Throw. If they succeed, they break the hold. They may spend Actions on their turn to attempt this Opposition Roll again, with one attempt per Action spent (Multiple Action Penalties apply). A person that you are picking up may still move their arms and legs, and thus may still shoot at you, cast Spells, or kick their legs frantically while they dangle helplessly in the air.

You may extend the Duration of Telekinesis at any time by paying its Cost again. This must be the same Cost you paid to activate the Spell.

When you gain Telekinesis, you automatically gain Telekinetic Defense* and Telekinetic Attack* at the same number of dice. When you increase Telekinesis, you automatically increase Telekinetic Attack and Telekinetic Defense by the same amount.

Telekinetic Attack*

By concentrating for a moment, you can release your telekinesis in a single focused blast.

Cost:

2 points for 2d3+4 damage

3 points for 2d6+3 damage

4 points for 3d4+3 damage

Duration: Instant

Range: INT x10 yards

Notes:

See Telekinesis. You may not learn Telekinetic Attack on its own.

This attack cannot be dodged unless the target can see magic with a Spell or ability.

Telekinetic Defense*

You can throw up a telekinetic shield in front of yourself or another person.

Cost: 5 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: INT x20 yards

Notes:

See Telekinesis. You may not learn Telekinetic Defense on its own.

Your target gains +6 Protection to all Hit Locations. You may only maintain one Telekinetic Defense at a time, however you do not need to roll to Throw this Spell.

Telekinetic Defense has no effect against gas or vapors.

Telepathy

You can skim another sentient being's thoughts or communicate directly with their mind.

Cost: 4 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Line of Sight (40 yards)

Notes:

This Spell hits automatically. It does not need to be Thrown.

Telepathy establishes a telepathic connection with another mind. Once you have established that connection, you can use it either to communicate with them or to skim their surface thoughts.

If you wish to skim their surface thoughts, make an Opposition Roll using Telepathy + WLP against the target's Willpower Save. On a success, you can read whatever things are foremost in their mind. If you fail, they become aware of the intrusion and the telepathic connection immediately breaks.

If you wish to communicate instead, no roll is needed.

You may extend the range of this Spell by 40 yards for +1 MP, and you may pay this cost multiple times.

You may establish a telepathic connection to additional minds for +4 MP each. If you wish, you may then temporarily connect these minds, allowing them to talk to each other through you.

If a person you are telepathically connected to leaves your line of sight, you still remain connected to them for the rest of the Scene.

SHADOW

Most Shadow Spells are about stealth and repositioning. If you've spotted a Shadow mage, it's probably because they wanted to be seen.

Shadow Spells are cast using the Reflexes Attribute.

Combat Teleport

You blink out of the path of bullets, blades, and Spells.

Cost: 4 points

Duration: Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

When you are targeted with an HTH or Melee attack, you may roll Combat Teleport + REF +3 instead of rolling your Brawling, Clubs, Blades, or Improvised Weapons.

When you are targeted with a Ranged attack or a Thrown Spell, instead of Dodging, you may roll Combat Teleport +3 and add that to the TN to hit you.

Create Door

You can cut open a slit in reality and walk through it to someplace else.

Cost:

5 points up to 10 miles away

8 points up to 100 miles away

15 points anywhere on earth

Range: Touch

Duration: 1d3 Rounds

Notes:

You may only create doors to places you are familiar with--such as your apartment, a favorite restaurant, or your safehouse. It takes 4 Rounds for the door to form and it remains open for the Spell's Duration. This could potentially allow a creature, fireball, or Syndicate hit squad to follow you through.

The door makes a distinct ripping noise while forming, which may alert beings in the area.

Fleeting Shadow

You move at blinding speeds, outpacing even career athletes.

Cost:

3 points is Movement x 1.5 (*round up*)

4 points is Movement x2

5 points is Movement is x3

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

Fleeting Shadow does not stack with itself.

Glide

You might not be able to fly, but at least jumping off of tall buildings comes with a lot fewer consequences.

Cost: 2 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

You glide at 15 yards per turn. To perform any kind of maneuver in the air, you must make an Average Agility Saving Throw (TN 7).

Invisibility

You or an object you touch becomes invisible to the normal eye.

Cost: 10 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Touch

Notes:

You can still be detected with thermal sensors, magic, or simply by someone listening to you move or watching your footprints. Observation rolls to notice you start at Tough difficulty (TN 12), however.

Shadow Meld

You and your belongings melt easily into the darkness.

Cost: 7 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

You take on a shadow-form and receive a -6 TN bonus on all Stealth Skill Tests and Opposition Rolls in dark or poorly lit areas. The bonus decreases to -2 TN in well-lit areas and you lose your shadow-form. Neither bonus stacks with itself.

While in shadow-form, you can pass

through cracks or tight spaces. However, interacting with an object, attacking, casting a Spell, or taking damage immediately disrupts your shadow-form.

Silence

You create a zone of perfect silence around an object or person.

Cost: 4 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: 30 yards

Notes:

No sound is made, and no sound can be heard in a 5-yard radius. This also prevents Spells from being cast, unless the caster has the Silent Caster Talent, activates the Spell through a nonverbal Arcane Attunement trigger, or finds some other way around needing to speak aloud.

Slow Another

Sometimes it is helpful to make your opponent slower than they already are.

Cost: 4 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: 20 yards

Notes:

Make an Opposition Roll using Slow Another + REF against your target's Willpower Saving Throw. If they fail, they suffer a +2 TN penalty on all physical Skill Tests and Opposition Rolls as well as a -4 to their Initiative.

These effects do not stack with themselves.

Trick of the Light

For just a moment the shadows blur around your face and you look like you belong.

Cost: 5 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

When you are spotted trespassing, the person who spots you will pause, not sure what they're seeing, for a single turn. If you can get out of sight before the end of that turn, they will dismiss what they saw as a trick of the light. If not, they will call out to you, confront you, radio for backup, or open fire—whichever is their standard response for seeing an intruder.

Trick of the Light's Duration ends the turn after you are spotted, and the Spell must be re-cast if you wish to benefit from it again.

Walk on Walls

You can run, tumble, or stroll along walls as if they were solid ground.

Cost: 2

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Note:

Normal movement rules apply. The direction that you fall in is not changed, and if you jump off the wall, you will fall towards the floor.

VODOU

Vodou magic can do a little of everything and doesn't suffer for it. This allows Vodou mages to both be unpredictable and to support almost any team.

Vodou Spells are cast using the Willpower Attribute.

Bard

The spirit of a great leader guides your words, giving you the gift of influence.

Cost: 5 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

After casting this Spell, you must draw a small ritual circle and pray for five minutes. After your prayer finishes, you receive a -3 TN bonus on all social Skill Tests and Opposition Rolls. This effect does not stack.

Bottle the Soul

You can call a soul back from the beyond, even forcing it to re-inhabit its body.

Cost: 25 points

Duration: Permanent

Range: Touch

Notes:

To cast Bottle the Soul, you must spend three hours performing a ritual in an open area without interruption. At the end of the ritual, you may use an item of great personal significance to your target to call their soul to you. If you have their body, the body is in good condition, and they are no more than three days dead, you may force the soul back into the body, restoring them to life at 1 Hit Point. Otherwise, you may force the soul into a bottle. While bottled, the soul can be communicated with, although it does not like being imprisoned and may choose to lie to you or otherwise mislead you out of spite. If the soul is returned to its body, the restored person must make a Tough Willpower Saving Throw (TN) at the end of every day for the next three days. If they fail, the soul leaves the body, which falls dead on the spot. You may cast Bottle the Soul again to put their soul back in their body, but you must also perform the ritual again.

Curse

You can twist fate in a way that ruins someone's day.

Cost: 8 points

Duration: 1 day

Range: Line of Sight

Notes:

Make an Opposition Roll using Curse + WLP against your target's Willpower Saving Throw. If you succeed, your target begins to suffer exceptional bad luck and cannot spend Scene Points for the rest of the day. You must have one of the target's personal effects on you in order to cast this Spell.

Healer

By expelling the source of their sickness, you can heal someone with a touch and a prayer.

Cost: 1 point

Duration: One Scene

Range: Touch

Notes:

You heal your target of a magical or mundane illness. You must still get your GM's permission before attempting to heal any illness that a character took as a Complication.

Hold Gaze

You meet someone's eyes and they find themselves unable to look away.

Cost: 3 points

Duration: Permanent

Range: Line of Sight

Notes:

Make eye contact with a target. They cannot look away until you do. On their turn each Round they may attempt a Tough Willpower Saving Throw (TN 12) to break the hold.

While holding your gaze, they may still act, but they cannot turn to focus on anyone else.

Plague

You bring a hideous sickness down upon an enemy.

Cost: 8 points

Duration: Permanent

Range: 5 yards

Notes:

Make an Opposition Roll using Plague + WLP against your target's Health Saving Throw. If you fail, you may never attempt to use this Spell on them again.

If you succeed, your target begins taking 2d10 (AP all) damage at the end of every day. This damage cannot be healed except by magical means, and the plague cannot be cured except by magical means.

While under the effects of this Spell, your target suffers a +3 TN penalty on all Skill Tests, Opposition Rolls, and Saving Throws. They also manifest a variety of symptoms, including aches, fever, exhaustion, rashes, etc.

The effects of this Spell are not contagious and hitting a target multiple times with Plague has no additional effect. If you die, any plagues you have caused immediately begin to fade.

Scrying

You can throw your senses a great distance.

Cost: 5 points

Duration: 1 minute

Range: 10 miles

Notes:

Pick a target and pick a sense: sight or hearing. You may hold one of the target's personal belongings in your hands to focus on them, eavesdropping on them. You may also extend the Duration of Scrying by

paying +3 MP for each extra minute.

Shapeshift

You can disguise yourself as an animal, going places where a human would not be welcomed.

Cost: 7 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

By clutching a talisman made from hair, skin, scales, or teeth of a living animal, you may take that animal's form, retaining all your Skills, Talents, and Complications, but unable to cast Spells. The GM may assign you new Attributes and Hit Points while in animal form, but any damage you take as an animal carries over when you release your Shapeshift.

You may release your Shapeshift at any time, or you may spend +7 MP to continue your Shapeshift into the next Scene.

Warrior

The spirit of a warrior fills you and graces you with strength and speed.

Cost: 1 point

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

After casting this Spell, you must draw a small ritual circle and pray for five minutes. While you pray, you may spend Magic Points. Each +1 MP you spend raises either your Strength, your Reflexes, or your Health by +1. This does not cause your maximum Hit Points to change.

You may only raise two out of the three Attributes this way, and you cannot use Warrior to increase any Attribute above a 5 (or to increase an Attribute by more than

+3).

You may not cast Warrior while you are already benefiting from its effects.

Zombie Slave

By bearing down with your will, you can force another person into a hypnotic state, leaving their mind a helpless bystander while their body does your bidding.

Cost: 10 points

Duration: Permanent

Range: Touch

Notes:

Make an Opposition Roll using Zombie Slave + WLP against your target's Willpower Saving Throw. If you succeed, the target falls under your control. Their body obeys your direct orders, although not with exceptional speed or precision—more like it's sleep-walking. Their conscious mind remains much awake and watches everything their body does.

Each morning the target gets to roll a Tough Willpower Saving Throw (TN 12) to break free. If they succeed, you do not immediately become aware that they have broken the Spell, and they may pretend to be your slave for a little longer in order to get a shot at killing you.

WARLOCK

Warlock Spells are direct, flashy, and expensive, but don't let that fool you. A mage with Warlock Spells may not be subtle, but they're not a one-trick pony either.

Warlocks Spells are cast using the Intelligence Attribute.

Barrier Ward

By tracing an invisible line, you can prevent others from entering an area, or receive a warning when they trespass.

Cost: 15 points

Duration: 1 Month

Range: Touch

Notes:

When you draw your ward, roll Barrier Ward + INT. This sets the TN for the ward. Anyone who tries to cross your ward rolls their Willpower Saving Throw against the TN. If they make the roll, they can cross the ward. If they make the roll by more than 5+, you are not instantly alerted of the breach.

A single breach does not automatically destroy the ward. To destroy the ward, the writing must be smudged out from inside the warded area.

Borrow Energy

Sometimes you need a bit more energy. Sometimes the handiest source for that energy is the guy in front of you.

Cost: 0 points

Duration: Instant

Range: Touch

Notes:

If the target resists, make an Opposition Roll using your Borrow Energy + INT against the target's Willpower Saving Throw. If you succeed, you may immediately drain up to 10 Magic Points from them.

If you succeed with Borrow Energy, you may not use it again for the rest of the game session.

Cloud of Confusion

Mist fills the area, fogging the mind.

Cost: 8 points

Duration: 1d4 Rounds

Range: 20 yards

Notes:

This Spell affects an 8-yard radius. Anyone caught in the cloud makes an Opposition Roll, matching their Willpower Saving Throw against your Cloud of Confusion + INT. If they fail, they sit down on the ground and stare straight ahead, stupefied until the Duration ends. If they succeed, they do not need to roll to resist this particular Cloud of Confusion again.

Dragon's Flame

You fill your hand with volatile fire. It struggles against its containment, yearning to be let loose.

Cost:

2 points for 3d3+1 damage

3 points for 3d4+1 damage

4 points for 3d6+1 damage

Duration: Instant

Range: Range penalties apply. 5 yards is short range, 10 yards medium range, 20 yards long range

Notes:

Anyone hit by Dragon's Flame Ignites for 1d6 damage for the next 1d3 Rounds. Furthermore, you may upgrade a Dragon's Flame attack to an explosive Dragon's Flame attack for +1 MP per 1-yard radius.

After you have cast Dragon's Flame, you do not need to roll to activate this Spell again until the start of your next turn. You must still pay the Magic Point cost for any additional attacks.

Dragon's Skin

You sheathe your skin in ugly scales, protecting you from harm.

Cost: 7 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

You gain +6 Protection to all Hit Locations. This effect does not stack with itself, or with any other Spell or effect that hardens your skin. You may still wear armor over your Dragon's Skin.

Double Trouble

You create a temporary duplicate of yourself. It insists that it is the real you.

Cost: 6 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

Your doppelganger shares your memories and Skills but not your powers, Talents, or Spells. It also shares your personality, so if you are the selfish type, your copy will be as well.

The copy is dispelled if it moves more than 100 yards away from you.

If you get a Critical Failure while casting this Spell, the doppelganger gains a permanent Duration, loses its restriction on how far it can move away from you, gets access to all of your Spells and powers, and comes out *very* twisted. The GM now has a future plot hook and villain to use.

Flight

You lift off the ground, drifting rapidly through the air.

Cost: 2 points

Duration: Turn

Range: Self

Notes:

You fly at a rate of 25 yards per turn and may continue to fly so long as you pay an additional 2 MP each turn.

Maneuvering in the air requires an Average Reflexes Saving Throw (TN 7). Your Spell ends the moment you stop paying the Magic Points cost.

Heal Self

You can heal *yourself* with ease. For anyone else, you still need to break out the first aid kit.

Cost: 1 point per HP regained

Duration: Permanent

Range: Self

Notes: This does not cure poisons, illness, or disease.

Illusion

You can create convincing visual illusions.

Cost

1 point for a minor illusion.

2 points for a moderate illusion

3 points for a large illusion (*ex: 20 men at arms*)

5 points for a huge illusion (*ex. Dragon*)

Duration: One Scene

Range: Line of Sight

Notes:

Anyone seeing the illusion may make an Opposition Roll using their Observation + INT against your Illusion + INT. If they succeed, they see through it. You may add 4 Rounds of sound to an illusion for +2 MP, or just create sound for a total of 2 MP.

Mage Eye

You can peer through walls, around corners, and across football fields.

Cost: 5 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: 100 yards

Notes:

Declare a specific target within the Spell's Range. You may make an Observation Skill Test against the target as if you were right

next to them. They may try to mask their movements with their highest Magic Lore + WLP, or by casting Mask Self. Mage Eye cannot perceive a target that is cloaked with Mask Self.

WITCH

With Spells harness forces almost beyond the caster's control. Their effects start subtle and quickly turn devastating; manipulating and subverting the Witch's target. This can make it hard for other mages to trust a Witch.

Witch Spells are cast using the Charisma Attribute.

Alter Weather

The caster can alter the weather in a given area.

Cost:

3 points for serious weather conditions, dealing 1d4 damage per Round to anyone caught in the area of effect

6 points for extreme weather conditions, dealing 2d6 damage per Round to anyone caught in the area of effect

Duration: 3 Rounds

Range: Range penalties apply. 20 yards is short range, 40 yards medium range, 80 yards long range

Notes:

Alter Weather affects a 10-yard radius. You can increase the radius by spending +2 MP for every 5 yards you would like to add. You may also extend the Duration to One Scene for +3 MP.

Claws of the Beast

Your hands twist and deform, becoming weapons of preternatural potency.

Cost: 0 points to cast, 2 points on every

successful hit

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes: Your HTH attacks deal +2d4 damage, gain AP 2, and are treated as a magic weapon. If you run out of Magic Points before the Scene ends, the Spell breaks. Claws of the Beast does not stack with itself.

Divination

When you ask questions of the universe, the universe answers. Unfortunately, it also likes to be cryptic.

Cost: 4 points per question

Duration: Instant

Range: Self

Notes:

You may ask a question of the GM. The GM must answer honestly but may only give a one-word answer. Sometimes just knowing your fate is enough to change it, so anything the GM tells you is merely likely — not guaranteed to come to pass.

Drain Life

You siphon the life from another being and it tastes sweet.

Cost: 4 points, +1 pt. for every Hit Point drained (up to 8 per Round)

Duration: Instant

Range: Touch

Notes:

Make an Opposition Roll using Drain Life + CHR against your target's Willpower Saving Throw. If you succeed, you may begin draining Hit Points for as long as you can keep hold of your target. If your target breaks free, you will need to re-cast and grab them again to resume your drain.

Emotion Control

Much easier than manipulating someone with words, you can flare and suppress their emotions with magic.

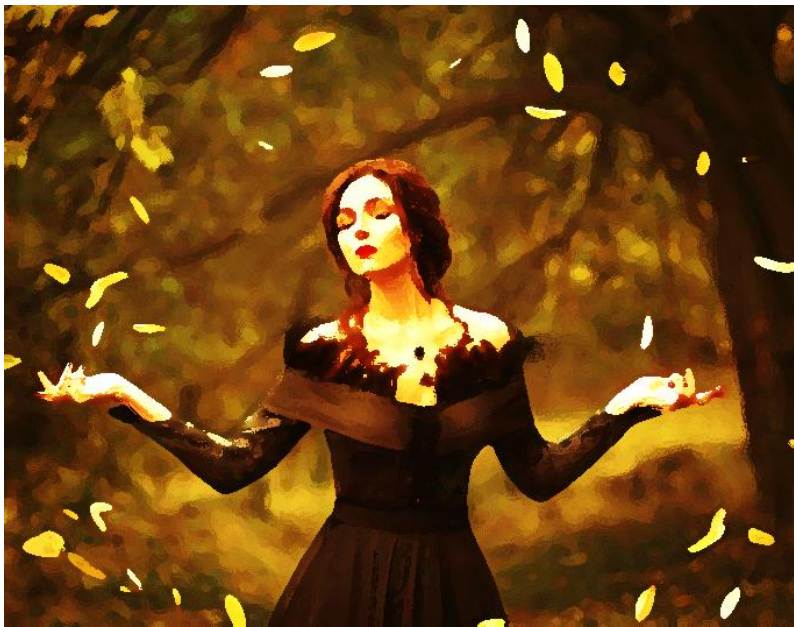
Cost: 12 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Range penalties apply. 5 yards is short range, 10 yards medium range, 20 yards long range

Notes:

Make an Opposition Roll using your Emotion Control + CHR against your target's Willpower Saving Throw. If you succeed, you can manipulate your target's emotions, bringing them to extreme highs or crushing lows. If you fail, you may never use this Spell on that target again. This Spell does *not* give you mind control, although you may use Emotion Control in conjunction with a social Skill to try and manipulate someone into doing what you want.



Evil Eye

With just a look, you can curse anyone who sleights you.

Cost:

3 points for One Scene

5 points for 1 day

10 points for 1 year

Duration: See Cost

Range: 10 yards

Notes:

Make an Opposition Roll using Evil Eye + CHR against your target's Willpower Saving Throw. If they fail, they reduce their maximum Scene Points by 1 and suffer +1 TN on all Skill Tests, Opposition Rolls, and Saving Throws for the Duration. An Evil Eye can be revoked by the caster at any time or canceled with the death of the caster. Evil Eye does not stack with itself.

False Loved One

Not only do you look like someone's beloved, they are given the unmistakable feeling that you *are* that person.

Cost: 7 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

In order to cast False Loved One, you need something of personal significance to the person you are trying to imitate, and you must keep it on you for the duration of the Spell. The person you are trying to dupe may make a Tough Willpower Saving Throw (TN 12) the first time they see you to pierce through the illusion. If they succeed, you may never use False Loved One on them again.

You may extend the Duration of this Spell by paying its cost again at the end of each Scene.

Fire Lash

A lash of fire licks out from your hands, wrapping your enemies in its scorching coils.

Cost: 0 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

Casting Fire Lash conjures a whip into your hands. Once you have conjured your whip, you may make attacks with it using Magic Lore: Witch + REF. The whip has a 3-yard range and deals no damage on its own, but if one of its attacks connects, you may pay 1, 2, or 4 Magic Points to deal 2d4+1, 2d6+2, or 3d6+1 damage respectively.

Any target you hit with the whip must also make an Opposition Roll using their Strength or Reflexes Saving Throw against your Fire Lash + CHR. If they fail, they are entangled by the whip. If they succeed, the whip is pulled out of your hands and evaporates.

As long as a target is entangled by the whip, they may not move further than 3 yards from you and you may spend further Actions on your turn (paying 1, 2, or 4 MP each time) to damage them with no roll to hit required.

On their turn, they may spend an Action and make an Opposition Roll to try and break free, or they may spend their Actions normally. Being entangled does not prevent them from casting Spells, using weapons, or attacking you.

If your Magic Points hit zero, the whip immediately winks back out of existence.

Summon Elemental

You summon a being of pure energy and bend it to your will.

Cost:

3 points for Small Elemental

5 points for Medium Elemental

9 points for Large Elemental

Duration: One Scene

Range: 20 yards

Notes:

Summon Elemental requires 10 minutes of ritual incantation to cast. See the Adversaries section for the stats of your Elemental.

You may control one Elemental at a time.

Terrible Whispers

By implanting a whisper, you drive someone insane.

Cost: 9 points

Duration: 2d4 days

Range: Range penalties apply. 5 yards is short range, 15 yards medium range, 30 yards long range

Notes:

Make an Opposition roll using your Terrible Whispers + CHR against your target's Willpower Saving Throw. If the target fails, an hour later they begin to suffer a continuing madness as horrible things are slowly hissed inside of their head.

Once the whispers set in, all of their TNs are increased by +4. Furthermore, at the start of every day they are afflicted, they lose 2d3 Hit Points and 2d4+2 Magic Points.

Casting Terrible Whispers on them again does not increase the penalty or damage, but it does extend the Duration. Terrible Whispers does not stack with itself.



GENERAL SPELLS

General Spells are available to all mages. Only Templar and the Ungifted are barred from learning General Spells.

General Spells are cast using the Intelligence or Charisma Attribute (caster's choice).

Aegis

You raise an intangible shield, ready to reflect Spells back on their caster.

Cost: 0 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

Once you have cast this Spell, during your turn you may store Actions in your Aegis. Storing Actions does not incur a Multiple Actions Penalty, but stored Actions go away at the start of your next turn.

If someone Throws a Spell at you, you may spend a stored Action and pay the

incoming Spell's Cost in Magic Points to attempt to deflect it.

When you attempt to deflect a Spell, make an Opposition Roll using your Magic Lore: General + INT or CHR (your choice) against the caster's Throwing + REF. If you succeed, the attack is deflected. If you beat the attacker's roll by 6 or more points, you may Throw the Spell at another target within 15 yards. This new target can be the original attacker.

You may *not* attempt to dodge Spells you fail to deflect.

Example: Joe throws an Arcane Bolt at Todd. Todd has his Aegis ready and stored one Action during his turn. Joe rolls his 2d6 Throwing and adds 2 Reflexes for a total of 6. Todd rolls his 3d8 Magic Lore: General and adds his 4 Intelligence for a total of 12. Todd beats Joe's roll by 6, so not only is the Spell deflected, but Todd gets to choose a new target. He smiles and chooses Joe.

Alarm

You set an occult security measure, alerting you to anyone who trespasses in an area.

Cost: 4 points

Duration: 8 hours

Range: Touch

Notes:

Roll Alarm + INT or CHR (your choice) to set the TN for your alarm.

There is no obvious sign that the Alarm Spell has been set on an area. Alarm covers a ten-yard radius and mentally alerts the caster whenever someone enters that area.

When casting Alarm, you may specify which things you would like to trigger

alerts. If you do not specify, your Alarm will activate for every human or supernatural being that enters the area—but not for dogs, rodents, insects, cats, etc.

Your Alarm is not deactivated after it has been triggered. If you would like to deactivate it, you must to the location where the Alarm has been set and perform a short 1-minute ritual.

You may increase the Duration of an Alarm by spending +2 MP for every additional 8 hours you would like it to last.

Alter Plant

You twist a plant into any shape you choose.

Cost: 1 point

Duration: Permanent

Range: Touch

Notes:

You reshape a plant no taller and wider than 2 yards over the course of a single Action.

For +2 MP, you may reshape a plant no taller and wider than 6 yards over the course of a Round.

For +4 MP, you may reshape a plant no taller and wider than 12 yards over the course of the next five minutes.

For +7 MP, you may reshape all the plants in an area no taller and wider than 24 yards over the course of an hour.

Supernatural plants may attempt to resist this Spell at the GM's discretion, forcing you to make an Opposition Roll.

Arcane Bolt

You flick a glowing missile at your enemy.

Cost: 2 points

Duration: Instant

Range: Range penalties apply. 10 yards is short range, 25 yards medium range, 50 yards long range

Note:

You deal 2d4+1 damage. For +1 MP you may instead deal 2d6+2 damage, or for +2 MP you may deal 2d8+2 damage.

Alternately, you may use this Spell to enhance your weapon attacks with arcane force. When you cast Arcane Bolt on a weapon you are holding, you give that weapon a damage bonus on its next attack. For 1 Magic Point it gains +1d3 damage, for 2 Magic Points it gains +1d4 damage, and for 3 Magic Points it gains +1d6 damage. When the weapon leaves your hands, it loses this bonus. This bonus does not stack.

Binding

You tie your fate to another person's.

Cost: 10 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Touch

Notes:

You and your target now share Scene Points and Magic Points. You may spend your target's Scene Points and Magic Points and they may spend yours. You may only use this Spell on a willing target.

Blade of the Damned

You dredge the souls of the damned from Hell, temporarily fusing them into a blade made of darkness.

Cost: 2 points

Duration: Turn

Range: Self

Notes:

The blade does 3d4 damage (plus your Damage Bonus) and costs 2 Magic Points per Round to sustain. For every 3-damage dealt with it (after accounting for Protection and Damage Resistance), you also drain 1 Magic Point from your victim.

Cold

You send the temperature plummeting into the negatives.

Cost: 2 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Range penalties apply. 10 yards is short range, 30 yards medium range, 60 yards long range

Notes:

You decrease the temperature in a 2-yard radius by 25 degrees Fahrenheit. You may expand this radius by 2 yards or lower the temperature another 25 degrees by spending +2 MP each.

This maxes out at a 20-yard radius and a temperature of -50 degrees. At -50 degrees, there is a five-minute frostbite risk and hypothermia risk for anyone without proper cold weather gear.

Cold can also be used on a person, in which case it follows them wherever they go until the Duration runs out. However, Cold only lowers the ambient temperature and does not snuff out sources of heat. It also doesn't instantly chill peoples' blood, freeze the sap in trees, or anything *other* than cool the air. Fires can still be kindled inside the radius and warm clothing helps to protect from the Spell's effects.

Cure Wound

You restore bodily humors and mend broken limbs.

Cost: 1 point

Duration: Permanent

Range: Touch

Notes:

Your target heals 1 Hit Point. You may spend up to +5 MP to heal an additional Hit Point per MP spent.

If your target has a broken limb, you may restore it to full functionality for +5 MP.

If your target is asleep or unconscious, you may wake them for +1 MP.

Darkness

A cloud of oppressive darkness descends on the area.

Cost: 5 points

Duration: 2d3 turns

Range: Range penalties apply. 20 yards is short range, 40 yards medium range, 80 yards long range

Notes:

You create pitch-black conditions in a 5-yard radius. Anyone using a Spell or ability that lets them see in the dark can make a Tough Observation Skill Test (TN 12) to peer through it with difficulty. You can see in this darkness just fine.

Mundane light sources are instantly blotted out and absorbed by the darkness. However, if the Sunlight Spell is cast on the affected area, it triggers an Opposition Roll between the two mages using their Darkness and Light Spells plus relevant Attributes. If the Sunlight Spell's caster wins, the darkness is immediately dispelled.

You may extend the Spell's radius to 10 yards for +2 MP or to 20 yards for +4 MP.

Enlarge Plant

You force a plant to grow at an accelerated rate, turning trees into towering kudzu.

Cost: 2 points

Duration: Permanent

Range: Touch

Notes:

You grow a plant by 2 yards over the course of a single Action.

For +3 MP, you grow a plant by another 6 yards over the course of a Round.

For +8 MP, you grow a plant by another 12 yards over the course of the next five minutes.

Supernatural plants may attempt to resist this Spell at the GM's discretion, forcing you to make an Opposition Roll.

Entangling Roots/Branches

Nearby plant-life explodes into action, winding itself around your foes.

Cost: 4 points

Duration: 2d3+1 turns

Range: Range penalties apply. 5 yards is short range, 10 yards medium range, 25 yards long range

Notes:

Make an Opposition Roll using Entangling Roots/Branches + INT or CHR (your choice) +2 against the Strength Saving Throw of every corporeal being within a 3-yard radius. Anyone who fails may no longer spend Actions on Movement until they have hacked their way out of the 10 Hit Points worth of thicket that will have grown up around them.

You may enhance your roll with a -1 TN bonus by spending +2 MP, and you may do this multiple times (up to a total of -5 TN).

You may also enhance this Spell's radius by +3 yards for every additional +2 MP you

spend (up to a total of 12 yards).

There must be living plants (even small potted plants) within the Spell's radius for it to work.

Hardened Skin

Your skin takes on the color, texture, and durability of cement.

Cost: 4 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

You gain +3 Protection to all Hit Locations. This effect does not stack with itself or with any other Spell or effect that hardens your skin. You may still wear armor over your Dragon's Skin.

Health of the Creator

You can take a little extra punishment—at least for a time.

Cost: 6 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Touch

Notes:

Increase your target's Health by +1 and their maximum Hit Points by +10.

You may pay +2 MP to increase their Health by another +1 and their maximum Hit Points by another +10, up to a maximum of +2 Health and +20 Hit Points.

This Spell may increase a character's Health above 5 but increases to their Health from Health of the Creator do not effect their maximum Hit Points.

This Spell does not stack with itself.

Hellfire

You cut open a momentary infernal rift and let slip a stream of hellfire.

Cost: 3 points

Duration: Instant

Range: Range penalties apply. 5 yards is short range, 15 yards medium range, 30 yards long range

Notes:

You deal 3d4 damage and your target Ignites for 1d6 damage for the next 1d6 Rounds.

For +1 MP you may increase this Spell's base damage to 3d6, or for +2 MP you may increase it to 2d12.



Lesser Presence

You fade into the background, becoming just another part of the scenery.

Cost: 4 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Line of Sight

Notes:

Thugs (see the Adversaries section) or NPCs with an Intelligence of 2 or less immediately stop paying attention to you,

provided you were not doing something extremely conspicuous (firing a gun, setting a bomb, cursing out their mother) at the time this Spell went off. You can still be seen by NPCs with an Intelligence of 3 or more, and you still show up on electronic security systems. Attacking someone, firing a gun, or taking any other drastic, highly visible action ends Lesser Presence's effects.

Lightning

Lightning leaps from your hands and grounds itself in your target.

Cost: 2 points

Duration: Instant

Range: Range penalties apply. 20 yards is short range, 40 yards medium range, 100 yards long range

Notes:

Draw a line between you and your target. Anyone within 2 yards of that line takes 2d8-1 damage. For +1 MP, you may increase that damage to 2d8+2, or for +2 MP you may increase it to 2d12.

Lock

You can open, change, or create a lock.

Cost: 1 point

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Notes:

Under your touch, you may cause any mundane lock to spring instantly open—or reconfigure it so that it opens in a different way. If the lock is complex or electronic, you must pay an extra +1 MP. If the lock is magical, you must pay an extra +3 MP and make a Skill Test with Lock. The GM will set the difficulty. If you fail your Skill Test, you cannot attempt to open or change this lock again.

You may also use this Spell to apply a

magical lock to an object. Spend +3 MP and roll Lock + INT or CHR (your choice) to set its TN. You may also choose a condition that releases the lock (for example: fresh blood is spilled, someone says the Lord's Prayer, or a specific person touches the object.)

Night Sight

Your eyes glow as you peer into the dark.

Cost: 4 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Touch

Notes:

You suffer no penalties for peering through mundane darkness.

Magical Darkness only imposes a +2 TN penalty on you and restricts your vision to 10 yards.

Reduce Size

You dwindle in size, making you much harder to spot.

Cost: 5 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

You shrink to six inches, your clothes and any objects on your person scaling with you. As long as you remain shrunk, you receive a -3 TN bonus on Stealth rolls. At the same time, your damage, Movement, and the attack ranges of any weapons that shrunk with you are reduced by ¼.

For an extra +3 MP, you can shrink to 3 inches, with a -5 TN on Stealth and a ½ reduction in your damage, Movement, and ranges. Or, for an extra +6 MP, you can shrink to half an inch tall, with a -7 TN on Stealth and a ¾ reduction in your damage, Movement, and ranges.

Your weight and lifting ability scale to match your size. You may not casually pick up cars, even if you could at your regular height. Your Hit Points, however, are unaffected by your transformation.

You may end this Spell's Duration at any time by spending an entire Round concentrating.

Revealing Eye

Your vision sharpens, allowing you to see beyond the veil.

Cost: 4 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Touch

Notes:

Increase a target's Observation dice by 1. They can now see ghosts, Ley Line energy, and magical residue. This Spell does not stack with itself.

Share Language

You may transfer your knack with languages to others.

Cost: 4 points

Duration: One Scene.

Range: Touch

Notes:

Pick a language you know. Your target can now speak it at the same Language Fluency.

Stone Shards

Stone fragments fire like rifle bullets from your palm.

Cost:

1 point per attack for a 2d4.

2 points per attack for a 2d6 attack.

3 points per attack for 2d8

Duration: Instant

Range: Range penalties apply. 5 yards is

short range, 15 yards medium range, 25 yards long range

Notes:

You may attack multiple times in a turn with Stone Shards *without* needing to roll to cast the Spell again. You must still spend an Action and pay the MP cost each time and Multiple Action Penalties are incurred as normal.

Sunlight

You conjure pure, bright sunlight—even indoors.

Cost: 2 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Range penalties apply. 20 yards is short range, 40 yards medium range, 80 yards long range

Notes:

The sunlight fills a 5-yard radius. You can increase the radius to 10 yards for +1 MP or to 20 yards for +3 MP.

If a Darkness Spell is cast on the affected area, it triggers an Opposition Roll between the two mages using their Darkness and Light Spells plus relevant Attributes. If the Darkness Spell's caster wins, the sunlight is immediately snuffed out.

Sword of the Creator

With a snap of your wrist, you conjure a sword wreathed in purifying fire.

Cost: 2 points

Duration: Turn

Range: Self

Notes:

The blade does 2d6 damage (plus your Damage Bonus) and costs 2 Magic Points per Round to sustain. It does full damage to supernatural creatures, and if used against a demon, cultist, or undead, the creature suffers a +1 TN penalty on all Skill Tests,

Opposition Rolls, and Saving Throws until the end of its next turn—regardless of whether the attack hit. This penalty does not stack with itself.

Triton's Wrath

You lash out with a jet of pressurized water. It has enough force behind it to cut stone.

Cost: 1 point

Duration: Instant

Range: Range penalties apply. 5 yards is short range, 15 yards medium range, 25 yards long range

Notes:

Deal 1d6 damage, AP 1, and make an Opposition Roll using Triton's Wrath + INT or CHR (your choice) against your target's Strength Saving Throw. If you succeed, they are knocked down.

For +1 MP, the damage becomes 1d8 AP 2 and you get a -2 TN bonus on the Opposition Roll, or for +2 MP the damage becomes 1d10 AP 3 and you get a -3 TN bonus on the Opposition Roll.

You may attack multiple times in a turn with Triton's Wrath *without* needing to roll to cast the Spell again. You must spend an Action and pay the MP cost each time, however, and Multiple Action Penalties are incurred as normal.

Vermin Swarm

A cascade of rats, insects, or other vermin forms to do your bidding.

Cost: 3 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

Pick a type of vermin that can be found in the nearby area (centipedes, rats, pigeons,

etc.). At the end of this Round, a swarm of that type of vermin coalesces next to you. The swarm has 10 Hit Points, a Brawling Skill of 3d6, an Intelligence of 1, and all other Attributes at 3. It has 1 Action per turn.

On your turn, without spending an Action, you may direct the swarm to perform a task or attack a target. It will keep trying to perform that task or attack that target until told to stop.

Your swarm may go no further than INT or CHR (your choice) x 20 yards away from you without dispersing.

Walk on Air

Air becomes solid underfoot.

Cost: 1 point

Duration: One Scene

Range: Touch

Notes:

This Spell effects the air in a flat plane underfoot. This means you can use it to walk between two rooftops that are about the same level, but not to dash at a 45-degree angle up into the sky.

You may end this Spell's Duration at any time you choose.

Zephyr Winds

Hurricane force winds blast from your hands.

Cost: 2 points

Duration: Instant

Range: Range penalties apply. 15 yards is short range, 30 yards medium range, 45 yards long range

Notes:

Make an Opposition Roll using Zephyr Winds + INT or CHR (your choice) against

your target's Reflexes or Strength Saving Throw (their choice). If you succeed, they take 1d6 damage and are knocked off their feet.

For +1 MP, you may increase the damage to 2d4 and add a -2 TN bonus to your roll, or for +3 MP you may increase the damage to 3d4 and add a -4 TN bonus to your roll.

You may attack multiple times in a turn with Zephyr Winds without needing to roll to cast the Spell again. You must still spend an Action and pay the MP cost each time and Multiple Action Penalties are incurred as normal.

MIRACLES OF FAITH

Miracles of Faith are available only to the Templar Archetype.

Miracles of Faith are different than Spells. No Spell roll is needed to cast a Miracle and the Templar do not need to pay Skill Points to acquire Miracles.

Templar begin play with one Miracle and may never have more than two Miracles total.

Blessing

You can share a little bit of the grace protecting you.

Cost: 10 points

Duration: Instant

Range: Self

Notes:

Your allies within a 20-yard radius

instantly gain a Scene Point. This may not raise anyone over their maximum Scene Point total.

Furthermore, you may pick one of your allies. They gain a -2 TN bonus on their next Skill Test or Opposition Roll.

This power only affects the good and the faithful. The GM decides which of your allies qualify.

You may only use this power once per Scene.

Divine Protection

A shepherd protects his flock. You are a shepherd to those around you.

Cost: 7 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: 30 yards

Notes:

Your target gains +8 Damage Resistance to all Hit Locations.

You may only use this ability once per Scene.

Holy Mantle

You will be led not into temptation.

Cost: 5 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

Pick a Saving Throw. For the rest of the Scene, you receive a -4 TN bonus on that Saving Throw.

Holy Wrath

You become an instrument of divine fury.

Cost: 5 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Touch

Notes:

A weapon of your choice becomes magical (if it was not already). Increase its damage dice by 1 (i.e. 3d6 damage becomes 4d6 damage).

You may power on the same weapon once per Scene.

Insight

Your faith gives you insight into life's subtle mysteries.

Cost: 5 points

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

You can see magic—either as colors, light, or disturbances in the air. Before the Spell's Duration runs out, you may ask the GM a single yes or no question related to what you are seeing. The GM will answer honestly.

Laying On of Hands

With a touch, you restore the wounded to health.

Cost:

5 points (healing)

5 points (minor illness)

10 points (serious illness)

30 points (terminal illness)

Duration: Permanent

Range: Touch

Notes:

You restore 10 Hit Points to your target. You may do this once per person, per day.

Instead of healing, you may cure the target of an illness. The GM will determine how serious the illness is, and some conditions (such as the Terminally Ill Complication) may require a series of major acts of devotion before they can be cured.

This power can be used to cure magical illnesses.

Repel Undead/Unholy

You scatter the dead and the unholy like a farmer threshing wheat.

Cost: 5 points

Duration: Instant

Range: Self

Notes:

Make a Willpower Saving Throw with a -3 TN bonus against the Willpower Saving Throw of the cultist, demon, or undead creature with the highest Willpower in a 20-yard radius. If you succeed, all cultists, demons, and undead in that radius take 1d6 damage (AP all) and are forced to retreat on their next turn.

PETTY MAGIC

Petty Magic is available to Scribes and to any mage that takes the Petty Magic Talent. Templar and Ungifted may not learn Petty Magic.

Petty Magic Spells are cast using Magic Lore: Petty Magic + INT and they do not need to be purchased individually with Skill Points.

If you have the ability to cast Petty Magic, you know all Petty Magic Spells.

Breeze

You never need air conditioning.

Cost: 0

Duration: 5 minutes

Range: 20 yards

Notes:

You create a draft that is strong enough to

blow out candle flames or knock single sheets of paper around. You may choose the direction the breeze blows in. For +2 MP, you may increase the Duration by 1 hour.

Clean/Polish Item

For you, tidying up is a snap.

Cost: 0

Duration: Instant

Range: Permanent

Notes:

You remove stains from an object or piece of clothing.

Color

You can alter the colors of a person or object.

Cost: 0

Duration: 1 hour

Range: Touch

Notes:

You can work very subtly with this Spell to create an effect that looks perfectly natural. Or you can turn someone bright pink. The possibilities are endless.

You may not affect objects any bigger than a truck.

Create Light

A ball of light follows you, illuminating your way.

Cost: 0

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

Your lantern companion may go no further than 20 yards from you. You may dim or brighten its light with a mental command.

Dry

You cause water to evaporate rapidly in

the target area.

Cost: 0

Duration: 5 minutes

Range: 10 yards

Notes:

This Spell affects a 1-yard radius. The evaporation is intense, comparable to Death Valley in the summer, but it doesn't heat whatever it's evaporation. Casting it on a bathtub full of cool water, for example, will quickly fill a small room with cold mist.

Faire Music

You are your own soundtrack.

Cost: 0

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

The music can be heard by anyone in a 40-yard radius of you. It is bright, jolly, and sounds exactly like what you'd hear at a renaissance faire.

Freshen Food

You can live like a king off of dumpster scraps.

Cost: 0

Duration: Permanent

Range: Touch

Notes:

A piece of food you touch becomes fresh and appetizing. If left out, it will begin to spoil at the usual rate.

Heat

You can warm clothes, heating pads, or dinner.

Cost: 0

Duration: One Scene

Range: 20 yards

Notes:

You may heat an object 50 degrees Fahrenheit. You may not use this Spell on a

living thing.

Hide Item/See Item

You render a small item invisible or detect a small invisible item.

Cost: 0

Duration: One Scene

Range: Touch

Notes:

This effects an item such as a credit card, handgun, bible, or packet of drugs. The item can still be detected by bumping into it, or with Spells or supernatural senses.

Invisible Cook/ Server

A magical being coalesces to fix you a meal.

Cost: 0

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

You may only have one Invisible Cook/Server active at a time. An Invisible Cook/Server does not provide its own ingredients. An Invisible Cook/Server will only perform tasks related to cooking or serving. It will not walk into traps for you. An Invisible Cook/Server has 1 Hit Point.

Levitate

You float lazily up into the air.

Cost: 0

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

You can slowly rise into the air at a rate of 2 yards per turn to a maximum height of no more than 20 yards above where you lifted off from. You may also descend slowly, at a rate of 2 yards per turn, or very quickly by releasing the Spell.

This Spell only levitates up to 300 pounds

of weight.

Long Distance Whisper

Your words cross distances and slither into people's ears.

Cost: 0

Duration: Instant

Range: Line of Sight (200 yards)

Notes:

You whisper a message to your target. They may be able to recognize your voice, but they do not automatically know which direction the message is coming from.

Minor Alarm

You set up the magical equivalent of a primitive motion sensor.

Cost: 0

Duration: 1 hour

Range: Touch

Notes:

Designate an area, up to 30 yards in radius. The alarm covers that area and triggers when it detects movement, mentally alerting you that something has breached the area. It then deactivates, forcing you to go back to the area and recast the Spell every time you wish to reset the alarm.

Minor Illusions

You temporarily change the way an object looks.

Cost: 0

Duration: 3 turns

Range: 10 yards

Notes:

You may not use this Spell to create free-standing, independent illusions or illusions with sound, but you can change the words on a piece of paper, add bloodstains to someone's clothing, make someone's face look unfamiliar, or commit other small

mischiefs. To affect someone with one of these illusions (for example, to trick someone into thinking you're not the person on the wanted posters), you may still need to make an Opposition Roll at the GM's discretion, although the GM should award you a bonus.

Moisten

You can soak fabrics with water.

Cost: 0

Duration: Instant

Range: Touch

Notes:

Every object in a 1-yard radius becomes saturated with water.

Page Turner

You are the ultimate couch-magician.

Cost: 0

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

An invisible force turns pages and holds books up at eye level, responding to your mental commands. You may only have one Page Turner active at a time, and it goes into hiding if a fight breaks out.

Perfume

An indefinably pleasant scent surrounds you.

Cost: 0

Duration: One Scene

Range: Touch

Notes:

You receive a -1 TN bonus on all Opposition Rolls and Skill Tests, provided the people they are interacting with can smell them. This effect does not stack with itself.

Prestidigitation

You can move a small object at a distance.

Cost: 0

Duration: One Scene

Range: Line of Sight

Notes:

Prestidigitation can exert up to 2 pounds of force and can move an object 1 yard per turn. It cannot be used on people, animals, or any other being and it can only affect one object at a time.

Repel Insects

Insects avoid a warded area.

Cost: 0

Duration: 8 hours

Range: Touch

Notes:

This affects a 10-yard radius, repelling all normal, mundane bugs. Vermin swarms, supernatural insects, and other exceptional creepy-crawlies may make an Average Willpower Saving Throw (TN 9) to enter.

Seduction Charm

A normal person would just light some candles, but *you* have magic.

Cost: 0

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

You receive a -2 TN bonus to all attempts to flirt or seduce. You may not cast Seduction Charm if you are already benefiting from its effects.

Soil

You spray magical garbage-water all over an area.

Cost: 0

Duration: Instant

Range: 10 yards

Notes:

Everything in a 3-yard radius is coated with oily, foul-smelling filth.

Smoke Cloud

You take a deep breath and exhale a cloud of thick, inky smoke.

Cost: 0

Duration: 2d3 Rounds

Range: 20 yards

Notes:

A 15-yard radius around your target is filled with dense smoke. You can see in the smoke without issue. Everyone else suffers a +3 TN penalty on all attempts to see through the smoke (unless they can echolocate, feel vibrations through the earth, etc.).

Summon Small Flame

You flick your fingers and produce the flame of a lighter.

Cost: 0

Duration: Instant

Range: Touch

Notes:

You can easily convince people that this is stage magic, not actual magic.

Swarm of Butterflies

Butterflies appear out of thin air, wrapping you in a hurricane of bright colors.

Cost: 0

Duration: One Scene

Range: Self

Notes:

Attempts to hit you with a Melee or HTH attack are at a +1 TN penalty. This effect does not stack with itself.

Throw Voice/Sound

You can create sounds at a distance.

Cost: 0

Duration: Instant

Range: INT x 10 yards

Notes:

To affect someone with a sound (for example, to convince a security guard to turn around and look at the statue that just whispered to him), you may still need to make an Opposition Roll at the GM's discretion.

Tie/Untangle/Untie

Ropes, cords, and strings weave themselves in and out of complex knots at your command.

Cost: 0

Duration: Permanent

Range: Touch

Notes:

A knot created with this Spell can only be undone through magic. This does not change the properties of whatever the knot is made from, however, and it can still be cut, burned, or slipped out of by a clever prisoner.

Write/See Invisible Messages

You write with extremely invisible ink.

Cost: 0

Duration: Permanent

Range: Touch

Notes:

Your messages are visible only to other people with this Spell.

SAMPLE CHARACTERS

The following characters are pre-made and ready to play.

WARLOCK

RENZO GIRODANA

Bloodline: Pure Blooded

Arcana: The Emperor - Dominant leader

ATTRIBUTES

Strength: 2	Health: 3
Reflexes: 3	Willpower: 4
Charisma: 3	Intelligence: 4

DERIVED ATTRIBUTES

Hit Points: 24	Heal Rate: 6
Move: 8	Magic Points: 45
Dam Bonus: -	Scene Points: 3
Languages: English 4, Latin 3, Enochian 3, Russian 3, Spanish 2	

TALENTS & COMPLICATIONS

Bloodline Benefit: You cast Dragon's Flame at -1 TN.

Spell Slinger: Once per game session, you can cast two Spells at the same time without a Multiple Action Penalty.

Esoteric Knowledge: You have studied the arcane so deeply that you can access two other areas of magic. You can select Spells from two additional Archetype lists.

Petty Magic: You have access to all of the Spells on the Petty Magic List. You cast them using Magic Lore: Petty Magic + INT.

Foul Tempered: Once per Scene, the GM can call for a Challenging Willpower Saving Throw (TN 9). On a failure, you fly off the handle and take a +2 TN penalty on Leadership, Seduction, and Persuasions rolls for the rest of the Scene and a -2 TN bonus on Intimidation and Interrogation rolls for the next Scene.

SKILLS

Alchemy	1d6
Athletics	1d6
Augury	2d8
Brawling	1d6
Computer Operation	1d6
Dodge	2d6
History	3d10
Leadership	2d10
Magic Lore: Warlock	2d10
Magic Lore: General	1d8
Magic Lore: Witch	2d10
Magic Lore: Petty	2d6
Observation	2d6
Occultism	2d10
Persuasion	2d8
Police Sciences	1d8
Seduction	2d6
Stealth	2d6
Streetwise	2d6

SPELLS

Dragon's Flame	2d8+1
Dragon's Skin	2d8
Heal Self	2d8
Divination	2d8
Flight	2d8
Alarm	1d6

BACKGROUND

Renzo Girodana grew up in the projects in Detroit. Early on, he was seen as odd and had trouble fitting in. At around the time he was born, the Girodana family was well-off, but shortly after that their fortunes began to decline. Whatever caused this must have been painful, because his mother was never able to talk about it.

In time, Renzo would come to guess that whatever it was, it was linked to his absent father.

Eventually, when Renzo was an early teen, he was approached by a group of men and women who offered him a scholarship to an exclusive private school: Hawthorne Manor. The Manor was an academy for the magically gifted, and there Renzo discovered his family's powers.

Early in his first year, Renzo met and befriended a mischievous child named Thaddeus Pierce and together the two earned a campus-wide reputation for getting into trouble and somehow wriggling back out again.

School was easy for Renzo due to his natural talent and he rose through the ranks at an unexpected pace. He became lettered early, to the envy of his classmates. Unfortunately, Renzo was also a hot-headed youth, a trait he had kept from his time in the projects, and he made enemies among both students and faculty. As best friends, Thaddeus and Renzo stood their ground together against their foes.

By the time he graduated, Renzo was a

fully accomplished Warlock, but the Manor knew the magic they had taught him would not serve him well in the mundane world, so they set him up with a job as a History professor at a small university.

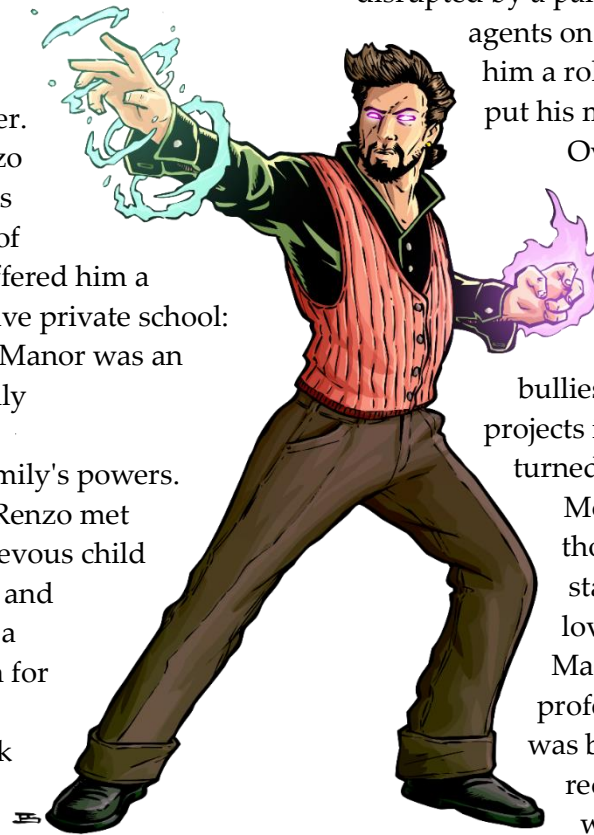
Over time, Renzo's life settled into a comfortable rhythm. He would teach, research, and perform the occasional small task for the Manor or its parent organization—the Hermetic Order. It wasn't until years later that that peace was disrupted by a pair of Onyx Syndicate agents on his doorstep, offering him a role where he could *really* put his magic to use.

Over the course of a few weeks they tempted him with promises of power and other pleasures, but Renzo saw something of the bullies he had known in the projects in the agents, and he turned them down.

Months went by and Renzo thought the issue done. He started to date and found a lovely woman named Marsha Weston, a fellow professor. Just as their love was blossoming, Renzo received an anonymous warning that she was a

Syndicate spy. He confronted her delicately about it and was surprised by her reaction. She revealed that she was also a mage and made no attempt to deny his claims.

He broke the relationship off in disgust and formally joined the Hermetic Order not long after, and he has been taking increasingly dangerous jobs for them ever since.



DEMON HUNTER

AUGUSTINA BELLO

Bloodline: Half Blooded

Arcana: The Hanged Man - Finds redemption in sacrifice and loss

ATTRIBUTES

Strength: 3 Health: 4
Reflexes: 4 Willpower: 3
Charisma: 3 Intelligence: 3

DERIVED ATTRIBUTES

Hit Points: 53 Heal Rate: 8
Move: 11 yards Magic Points: 20
Dam Bonus: +1d3 Scene Points: 4
Languages: English 3, Yoruba 4,
Enochian 2, French 3

TALENTS &

COMPLICATIONS

Angelic Blade: 2d8+2, AP 2 magic blade. Damages anyone else who tries to use it. Demons may not heal its damage with their magic. Blade vanishes if you die.

Supernatural Snitch: CHR times per session, you find a snitch with relevant information.

Improved Defense: The TN to hit you is increased by +2.

Bad Reputation: Rolls to get someone to trust you or work with you suffer a +2 TN penalty, and you may be subject to

rumors, exclusion, or even attacks purely because of your reputation.

SKILLS

Athletics	2d8
Blades	3d8
Brawling	2d8
Demolitions	2d8
Dodge	2d10
Drive: Car	2d8
Fast Talk	2d8
Intimidation	2d8
Magic Lore: Demon Hunter	2d10
Magic Lore: General	2d8
Observation	2d8
Occultism	3d8
Pistols	2d8
Primitive Ranged Weapon	2d8
Security	3d8
Stealth	2d10
Streetwise	2d8

SPELLS

Divine Aura	2d10
Healing Touch	2d8
Mask Self	2d8
Hunter's Sense	2d8
Arrow of Righteousness	2d8
Hardened Skin	2d8

BACKGROUND

Mysteriously left on the doorstep of a Nigerian mission house, newborn Augustina was adopted and named by the nuns who ran the mission. She grew up happily enough in their care, and in time they shared with her their secret: they were part of an ancient church order: The Ordo Draconis.

The Ordo was small, but effective. They were assigned missions from high up to hunt down and destroy demons. The nuns decided that it was fate that Augustina had been brought to them, for they saw that she was innately gifted in all the skills a member of the Ordo might need. They trained her to be a hunter and, at the age of eighteen, the nuns realized that her abilities had surpassed theirs.

Unable to teach her any further, they sought out a master to continue her training. She was sent to New York to meet with a man by the name of Curtis Butler. He was only twenty-eight years old, but already well accomplished within the Ordo Draconis.

Curtis taught her how to track and hunt demons and other foul creatures.

Over the course of her training, the two fell in love—which would have been a blessing, had relationships among members of the Ordo not been completely forbidden by the church.

For the next few years their romance was kept a secret, but then Curtis came across the trail of a terrible cult that worshiped a

foul demon named Molach. He disappeared following a lead linking the cult to a New York District Attorney, and days later his body washed up from the Hudson River.

Augustina was devastated. Filled with anger, she tracked down the DA and caught him in the middle of a ritual. In a rage, she killed as many members of the cult as she could and executed the DA in his own home.

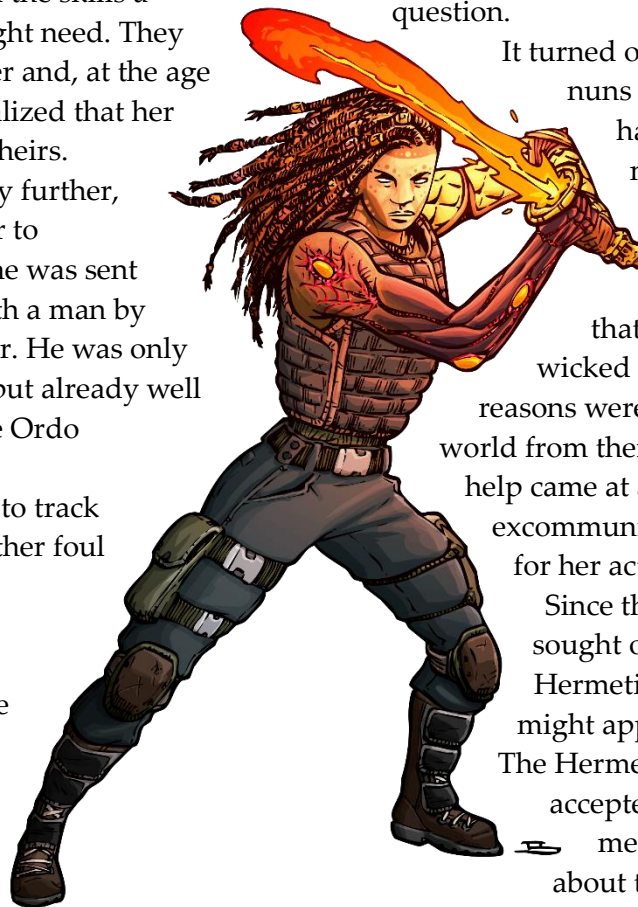
There was a witness left to identify and testify against Augustina, so she was caught by the police. They attempted to prosecute her, but not only did key pieces of evidence vanish, but the witness suddenly found himself unable to recall the event in question.

It turned out that one of the nuns from her childhood had contacted local members of the Ordo and asked them to help Augustina. They understood that she had wiped out a wicked cult, however her reasons were not to purify the world from their treachery, so their help came at a price: she was excommunicated from the Ordo for her actions.

Since then, Augustina has sought out allies within the Hermetic Order hoping they might appreciate her talents.

The Hermetic Order has accepted her, but some of its members are still leery about this hunter with a

questionable reputation. Augustina is trying hard to reclaim her honor and she continues to hunt foul creatures and their allies that haunt this world.



GRUNT

JEROME HAWKINGS

Bloodline: Demon Blooded

Arcana: The World – Travel's rewards

ATTRIBUTES

Strength:	4	Health:	5
Reflexes:	3	Willpower:	3
Charisma:	2	Intelligence:	3

DERIVED ATTRIBUTES

Hit Points:	77	Heal Rate:	10
Move:	10 yards	Magic Points:	25
Dam Bonus:	+1d6	Scene Points:	3
Languages:	English 4, Latin 3, Enochian 2, Spanish 3		

TALENTS &

COMPLICATIONS

Bloodline Benefit: You roll Brawling with a -1 TN bonus.

Mystic Fist: When you throw a punch, roll 2d4 instead of 1d4 for damage. It affects supernatural creatures.

Physical Adept: Before making an HTH or Melee attack, you may choose to spend up to 6 Magic Points. If the attack hits, for each point spent, you deal +1 damage. However, if your attack misses, you may not use this ability again this Round.

Bad Ass: You roll Brawling with a -3 TN bonus.

Haunted: The spirits of two Onyx Syndicate mages still torment Jerome for killing them.

SKILLS

Athletics	3d10
Brawling	2d10+3
Club	2d10
Fast Talk	2d6
Forgery	2d8
Improvised Weapons	2d10
Interrogation	2d8
Intimidation	3d10
Magic Lore: Grunt	2d10
Mechanics	2d8
Observation	2d6
Police Sciences	2d8
Security	2d6
Stealth	3d8
Streetwise	2d10
Throwing	3d10

SPELLS

Titans' Strength	2d10
Armor of the Gods	2d8
Speed of Hermes	2d8
Super Leap	2d10

BACKGROUND

Jerome Hawkins was raised by his godfather “Uncle Luther” in Harlem due to a tragic car accident involving his mother and father. Most of Luther's family referred to the man as an odd one, but to Jerome he seemed just as normal as anyone else. The two got along well and Jerome was happy to follow the rules his uncle set down.

When it came to school work, Jerome was satisfactory, but he never found the passion to excel in any of his subjects. He spent most of his time daydreaming about who he would like to be, until one night when he saw his uncle up late in their restricted study room. Disobeying his uncle's instructions, Jerome peered in and saw that Luther was looking deep into a swirling dish of colorful water.

Intrigued by what he saw, Jerome snuck up behind his uncle to see what had him so captivated. What Jerome saw was a glimpse of a terrifying future. In the water, he saw his uncle being killed by strange cloaked men with shadowed blades. Uncle Luther realized that the Jerome was there just in time to pull him away, but not before realizing that he would have to explain everything—his library, his guests, and most of all his powers—to the inquisitive child.

Jerome took to the idea of a secret world inhabited by powerful mages like a fish to water, and in time Luther found himself teaching the boy the basics of magic. Jerome carried the family's gift and was a much quicker study at magic than he had ever been in school.

Luther soon realized that Jerome's talents were geared toward physical magic, much like Jerome's fathers were, and in an incautious moment he let slip the truth about Jerome's parents: they had died at the hands of the Onyx Syndicate.

Jerome dedicated himself to the study of physical magic, and as he did so his uncle

taught him that his powers should make him a protector of the people and not a tyrant. Even though he might not always see eye to eye with the Hermetic Order, he was taught that they should be respected.

One day, while at his job at the family garage, Jerome noticed that his Uncle Luther had missed the start of his shift. Not long after, he was visited by the police and told that his uncle had been shot at a convenience store by some unknown hoods.

Saddened and angered, Jerome decided to look into it on his own. He found that the murder had been committed by members of the Onyx Syndicate. Maddened, Jerome tracked them and rubbed them out. The Hermetic Order, who had been keeping an eye on the Syndicate members, quickly questioned Jerome, but—without prying into his thoughts—they were not able to prove he was guilty.

Of course, since they would have had to turn him over to the Syndicate as a peace offering if they had, perhaps they didn't try too hard in the first place.

In any event, the Order offered to take Jerome on as a freelancer, hoping to keep him in reserve as a weapon against the Syndicate. Jerome remembered his uncle's words and only barely stopped himself from turning them down.

Since then, he has been performing clandestine missions for the Order, hoping every time for a chance to do some damage to the Syndicate. At the same time, the ghosts of the two Syndicate mages he killed haunt him. One day Jerome will figure out a way to rid himself of them once and for all.



SHADOW

AUDREY HALFORD

Bloodline: Half Blooded

Arcana: The Devil - Filled with seductive power

ATTRIBUTES

Strength: 2	Health: 3
Reflexes: 5	Willpower: 3
Charisma: 2	Intelligence: 3

DERIVED ATTRIBUTES

Hit Points: 29	Heal Rate: 6
Move: 12 yards	Magic Points: 20
Dam Bonus: -	Scene Points: 4
Languages: English 4, Russian 3, Enochian 2, Spanish 3	

TALENTS & COMPLICATIONS

Striking Shadow: Instantly, as part of an attack, you can spend 1 Magic Point to form a 2d4+1, AP All shadow blade.

Shadow Duplicate: 2 times per session you can create a shadow copy of yourself that lasts for one Scene. It cannot interact or be interacted with physically, but you can see and hear with its senses and can talk through it. If the shadow duplicate is attacked with magic or other supernatural powers, this affects you.

Fine Looks: You get a -2 TN bonus on all social Skill rolls where the other party can see you.

Hedonist: Once per session, the GM can present you with an obvious trap that is baited with your chosen vice. You must make a Tough Willpower Saving Throw (TN 12) in order to resist this temptation.

SKILLS

Athletics	2d8
Blades	2d8
Brawling	1d6
Computer Operation	2d8
Computer Hacking	2d8
Dodge	2d10
Fast Talk	2d8
Forgery	2d8
Magic Lore: Shadow	2d10
Magic Lore: General	2d8
Observation	2d8
Pistols	2d6
Security	2d10
Seduction	2d8
Sleight of Hand	2d8
Stealth	2d10
Streetwise	2d8

SPELLS

Trick of the Light	2d6
Walk on Walls	2d8
Create Door	2d6
Glide	2d8
Combat Teleport	2d10
Arcane Bolt	2d8
Lock	2d8

BACKGROUND

Audrey Halford was raised by a pair of lousy parents in an abusive household and it wasn't long before she learned to keep quiet, keep out of sight, and be where no one else thought to look. At an early age, she took to spending more time away from her parents' apartment than in it, and she began stealing to keep from needing to return home in order to eat.

She *kept* stealing, however, because she liked the thrill.

Audrey's thefts were only sometimes punished. Her father was a dealer, even if he squandered most of his profits, and the local convenience store owner knew better than to risk his temper. Unfortunately, one day while Audrey was out "earning", her father tried to move up the criminal food chain and instead ended up angering the gangster on whose turf he was operating. The gangster ordered Audrey's parents executed and moved his own people into their vacant apartment, leaving Audrey on her own.

Without a family or a place to go, she decided that society was not going to help her. With the little money she stole, she started living like a nomad.

Her luck ran out one day when she broke into a retail outlet selling cell phones. She was caught red handed by the police due to a silent alarm. Her trial was short, and she

was sent to a juvenile detention center. With little inclination to get along with any of the other kids, she would have been in for a rough stay were it not for a correctional officer named Meredith Wood.

Meredith was a Praetorian Guard with the Hermetic Order and when she met Audrey she saw the potential for magic within her. Taking a professional risk, she pushed for an early release with herself as Audrey's her legal guardian. The Order pulled a few strings and the release was granted.

Under Meredith's supervision, Audrey was taught manners, how to keep a low profile, and finally enrolled in a remedial Hermetic Order school for the magical arts.

There it was uncovered that Audrey's specialty was Shadow magic.

The school staff was intrigued because of her rare skill, and upon graduation Audrey was asked to join the Hermetic Order as a Praecursor, one of their spies. She turned the position down. Although she was willing to help them when they needed it, she disliked the idea of having her actions constantly be under their scrutiny.

Currently, Audrey works as a security consultant for mid-sized companies. In her spare time she offers what assistance she can to girls in abusive situations and freelances on certain jobs for the Order.



SEER

SIMONE STRONG

Bloodline: Angel Blood

Arcana: The Hierophant - Wise and a giver of good advice.

ATTRIBUTES

Strength: 2 Health: 3
Reflexes: 3 Willpower: 5
Charisma: 3 Intelligence: 4

DERIVED ATTRIBUTES

Hit Points: 24 Heal Rate: 6
Move: 8 yards Magic Points: 40
Dam Bonus: +0 Scene Points: 5
Languages: English 4, Latin 4, French 2,
Enochian 4, Spanish 2

TALENTS & COMPLICATIONS

Fine Looks: You get a -2 TN bonus on all social Skill rolls where the other party can see you.

Third Eye: 3 times per game session, you can view someone's aura and get a strong sense of what motivates them.

Foresight: +1 Scene Point.

Lucky Bastard: +1 Scene Point.

Debt: Phineas Nott, Councilman of the Onyx Syndicate, could destroy Simone's father with a word, but he hasn't. Yet.

SKILLS

Alchemy	2d8
Athletics	1d6
Augury	2d8
Brawling	1d6
Fast Talk	2d6
History	2d8
Interrogation	3d10
Law	3d10
Leadership	2d8
Magic Lore: Seer	2d10
Magic Lore: General	2d8
Observation	2d8
Occultism	2d10
Persuasion	2d8
Police Science	2d8
Seduction	2d8
Stealth	2d6

SPELLS

Telepathy	2d8
Mind Blast	2d8
Telekinesis	2d10
Charm	2d8
Sunlight	2d6
Cure Wound	2d8

BACKGROUND

Simone Strong was born into wealth and opportunity. However, even though she had every tangible thing the world could provide, she was plagued with a disturbing reoccurring nightmare. The dream was always the same--her family was in turmoil because her father had been murdered by a man in a gray pin-striped suit.

Eventually, she told her mother about the dream and was startled to find that it scared her mother more than it had her. The same day, her mother invited an older woman to their home to speak with Simone. After some questions, it was announced Simone would become the student of the elderly woman: Artemissia.

Artemissia taught Simone all that she knew of magic, focusing particularly on spells that influenced the mind. Over time, she also explained to Simone's family that Simone's dreams were her tapping into her untrained psychic gift and glimpsing a potential future. When Simone heard this, she desperately wanted to change the future, but by then she had been dreaming of it for years. It was too late to prevent it from coming to pass.

Still, her father remained among the living. As Simone continued training, eventually the dreams stopped. Her father, who had made his peace with death, was relieved to find that it seemed to be in no hurry to find him. One day, while on a

break from college, she was having coffee with her father when the man in the gray pin-striped suit stepped into view.

It seemed the man was a fellow broker who worked with her father, but something about him felt off and he looked at Simone like he knew what she was capable of.

Terrified for her father's life, she pulled the man aside and pleaded with him to leave her father be.

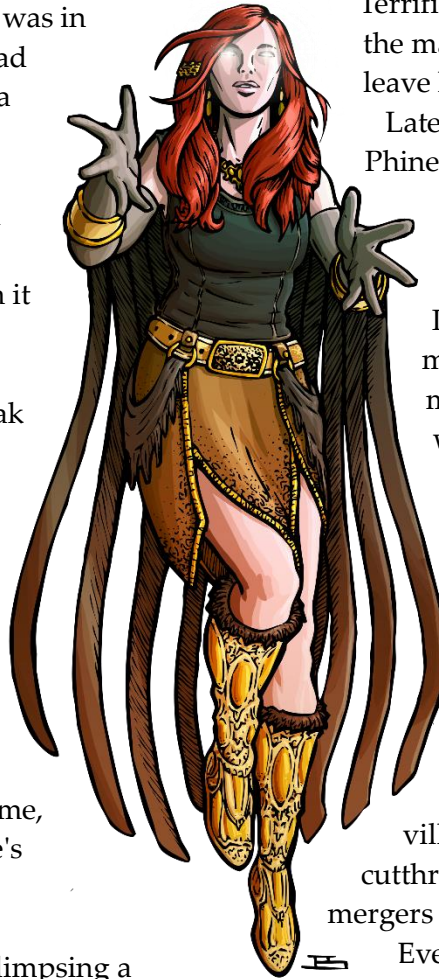
Later she shared with her father that Phineas Nott, the man in the pin-striped suit, was the same man from the dream--but her father explained that he had known Phineas since college. Simone was mistaken. Phineas must have merely looked like the man that would kill him.

Simone ignored him and, trusting her gut, decided to do some digging into Phineas' history. Mr. Nott had no criminal record and, to all appearances, lived a quiet life of considerable wealth.

However, in his business dealings, Mr. Nott was often villainous by the press for his cutthroat tactics during his many mergers and hostile acquisitions.

Eventually, Simone decided to use her powers to access Mr. Nott's mind, but when she did so, she instead found him looking into hers. Phineas, it seemed, was a powerful Seer for the Onyx Syndicate, and he explained quite calmly that he knew about her prophecy. He could make it come to pass, he said, but he didn't see why he *had* to. Not if Simone was willing to do a few simple tasks for him. The first of which was to join the Hermetic Order.

The others would come in time.



SCRIBE

RODERICK PHIBES

Bloodline: Pure Blood

Arcana: The Magician - Mastery of craft.

ATTRIBUTES

Strength: 2 Health: 3
Reflexes: 3 Willpower: 3
Charisma: 2 Intelligence: 4

DERIVED ATTRIBUTES

Hit Points: 24 Heal Rate: 6
Move: 8 yards Magic Points: 40
Dam Bonus: +0 Scene Points: 3
Languages: English 4, Latin 3, Aramaic 2, Enochian 3, Spanish 2

TALENTS & COMPLICATIONS

Bloodline Benefit: You cast Fire Lash at a -1 TN bonus.

Higher Education: +10 Skill Points

Great Library: Twice per game session, when using a Magic Lore or an academic Skill, you get to count two of the dice on a roll instead of just one.

Energy Miser: Reduce the Magic Point cost for all of your Spells by -1. Spells still cost at least 1 Magic Point.

Bad Reputation: Phibes is both a criminal on parole and a lackey to a Praetorian Guard. Skill Tests or

Opposition Rolls to get someone to trust you or work with you suffer a +2 TN penalty.

SKILLS

Alchemy	2d8
Athletics	1d6
Augury	1d8
Brawling	2d6
Computer Operation	2d8
Cryptography	2d8
Dodge	1d6
Fast Talk	1d6
History	1d10
Law	2d6
Leadership	2d8
Magic Lore: Seer	2d10
Magic Lore: General	2d10
Magic Lore: Witch	2d10
Magic Lore: Enchanter	2d10
Observation	2d6
Occultism	2d10
Police Science	2d8
Security	2d8
Stealth	2d6
Streetwise	1d6

SPELLS

False Loved One	2d8
Claws of the Beast	2d8
Fire Lash	2d10+1
Smite	2d8
Armor Up	2d8
Calculated Teleport	2d10
Lock	2d8
Revealing Eye	2d8

BACKGROUND

No mage ever has a normal life, but Roderick's has been stranger than most.

His parents were eccentric, even for mages, and so he was both conceived and born on a Ley Line nexus—something that other mages insisted would have no effect on the child.

They were wrong.

Roderick's home life was mostly happy, but on his tenth birthday his mother tried to strangle him in his sleep. As Roderick

struggled, his father came into the room and tore her off of him. She fled, and Roderick hasn't seen her since.

Although Roderick's father never again spoke of what had happened, on the eve of his eleventh birthday, Roderick received an anonymous gift of a book written in a language that no one in Roderick's household could identify. Its pages were filled with frantic, scrawled lines and disturbing drawings, and his father quickly took it away, turning it over to the Hermetic Order to be either researched or locked away—

whichever they deemed appropriate.

Unfortunately, every year since then, the book has returned to Roderick on the night before his birthday. It is usually followed a day later by frantic members of the Order, demanding that Roderick turn it over to them.

In return, the Order has provided his family with work. These were small jobs mostly, usually research requests that his father would fulfill, but they generated enough money for Roderick to take out a loan and go to college for a few years.

Unfortunately, while he was there, something from one of the Order's projects contaminated his father.

The man fell horribly ill and the only cure that seemed likely to work with both magical, complicated, and expensive.

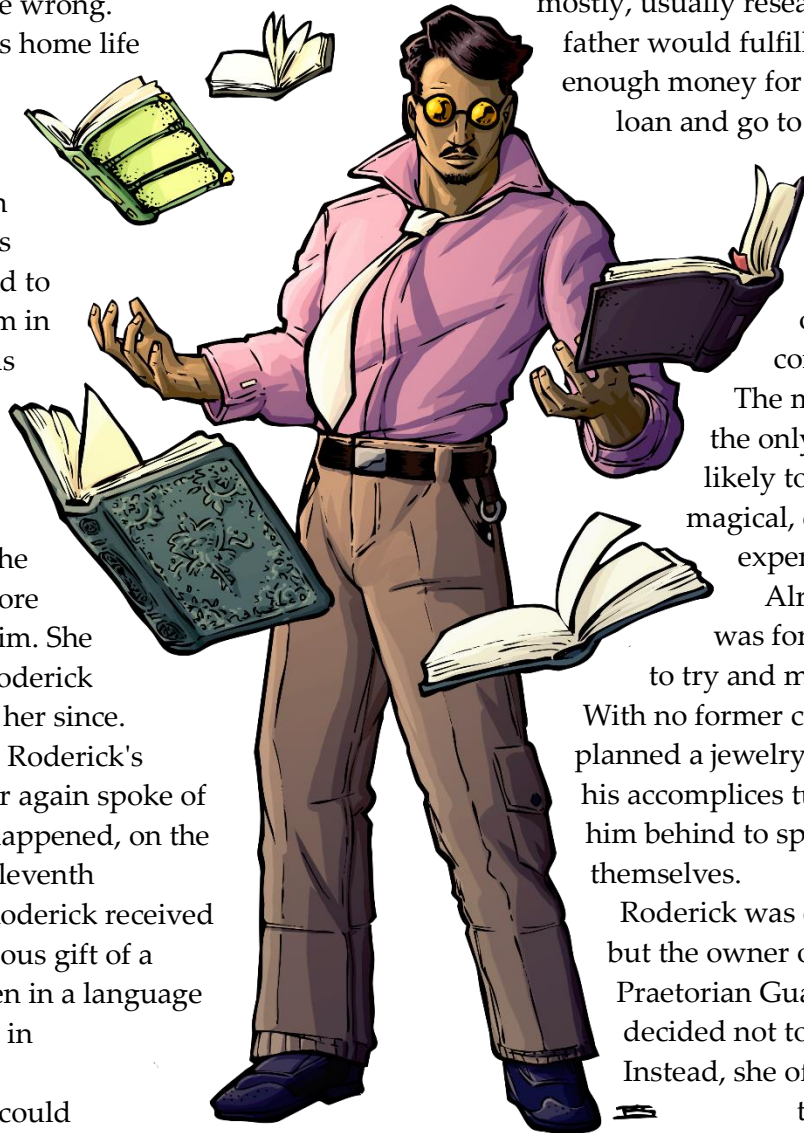
Already in debt, Roderick was forced to use his talents to try and make a quick score.

With no former criminal experience, he planned a jewelry heist—only to have his accomplices turn on him, leaving him behind to split the take between themselves.

Roderick was caught red-handed, but the owner of the store—a Praetorian Guard named Amber—decided not to press charges.

Instead, she offered him a way both to work off his crime and to pay for his father's treatment.

Against the Order's wishes, she took him on as an apprentice.



BLISS PART 7

It's a little after 2:00 AM when we assault the farm. The rain has turned into a low-lying mist that hangs over the dense grass and weeds that crawl the estate. The whole property is a little over half a square mile, but it hasn't been tended any time this decade. The silos and barn are all slouching, leaning things, half-tipped-over in the dark, and the fields are wild and overgrown.

Augustina is at my side, having exchanged her rifle for a handgun so that she can carry a flashlight in her off-hand. We're both hunkering down in the grass. My hands are empty--having left my own rifle in the van--and I'm pressing them to the dirt, willing a steady trickle of energy into the damp ground.

What will happen if we hit them now? I ask the earth.

Divination is easier with a bowl and some ceremony, but any medium will do.

Letters press up through the grass roots, spelling out ACCEPTABLE LOSSES.

"Shit," I mutter, but we've already waited for over two hours for the Order to give us the go-ahead. Backing out now would force them to recalculate *their* odds, and that might delay this operation for days. Weeks, even, if something else goes wrong in the meantime.

Augustina glances at the divination and her brow furrows, but she says nothing. She passes me the flashlight and crosses herself and I can see power flare inside of

her. A moment later her eyes begin to shine with reflected light, just like a cat's.

We've all been issued radios and mine crackles with static--the generally accepted signal that someone is about to speak.

"Have you sorted out your paperwork?" Harcourt asks sardonically, "or do we need to wait until it's all in triplicate? Over."

I thumb the talk button. "We're ready if you are," I say. "Is your team in position? Over."

While the district office has been debating the merits of letting us engage an unknown number of drug-runners in an unscouted location, the Syndicate's killers have been sneaking through the woods, circling the farm so that they can hit it from the far end.

"We're in position," she says. "See you in the middle. Out." The radio crackles with static and falls silent.

The country night is riotous with cicada noise, and the insect drone blankets the little noises of our approach. Flanked by our escort from earlier, Augustina and I scramble over rotting fences and around pools of stagnant water.

I switch my flashlight off, trusting to Augustina's enhanced eyes and the moonlight to guide our way. Frogs fall silent where we pass, and on two separate occasions something slithers out of a stand of marshy weeds and rears up at us. We back away both times, circling wide around its territory.

A few scant clusters of fireflies' dance in the mist, giving an eerie, half-real feeling to our surroundings. A chill begins to creep down my spine, guided by the cold sweat from my exertions.

I'm not in bad shape but walking half a mile in the city is easier by far than crouch-running in fits and starts over swampy, uneven terrain.

In the middle of the plot of land, surrounded on all sides by the rampant fields, is a single massive farmhouse. A thin dirt road connects the edge of its lawn to a gravel path, which in turn leads all the way back to the highway.

We've agreed unanimously not to set foot on the dirt road. It would be the easiest thing in the world to string it up with tripwires and we would be helplessly exposed to anyone in the farmhouse with a high-powered rifle and a night-vision scope.

The building's ground-floor lights are still on, and twice we've seen something glittering behind the attic windows. It could be the barrel of a gun, or it could just be a rack of farming tools.

I'm not keen to find out which.

The house's lawn is a cleared, mown-grass perimeter that goes in about a hundred-foot diameter around it, and we've almost reached the edge when Augustina whacks a hand across my chest, bringing me to a halt.

The breath huffs out of me in surprise and I start to snap, but she jabs me again in the chest with her index finger and points to the ground. Half-concealed within

a seeping pocket of storm water are the rusty jaws of a beartrap.

Had I taken another step, my foot would have gone straight into its mouth.

"Oh, hell," I whisper, looking around for a stick to safely trigger it with.

Augustina shakes her head and leads me past it. She orders me to wait and to gather the rest of the team here while she surveys the path ahead.

The image of that leg full of tetanus is still vivid in my mind, so I obey.

Bit by bit, the escort catches up to me. They're dressed just as they were for the warehouse meet, with flak jackets and automatic rifles and helmets. Unlike the Order's field agents, most of them are probably Halfblooded with only have a lick of magic to call on--just enough to get them an introduction into our world, but not enough to be worth more to the Order than hands with guns in a pinch.

We wait together until Augustina returns. She's wearing fatigues, having swapped out her pantsuit after the warehouse, and the wetlands-camo pant legs are smeared with mud and sopping with water, furthering their authenticity. "Follow my movements exactly," Augustina tells us, her voice deadly serious. "If one of you puts your foot down on something hard, don't pick it back up. Stay right where you are, radio me, and I'll come back and disarm the mine. Understood?"

Heads bob up and down in a cluster of panicky nods.

"Good," says Augustina, and vanishes back into the foliage.

She leads us in a winding loop around the edge of the lawn, seeming to consider three different approaches before finally pushing aside a sheaf of tall grass and stepping out onto the lawn.

One by one, we follow her out. Then we freeze when she stops and sniffs at the air.

"Dogs," she says. "A dozen of them. Maybe more."

I begin to suspect that that spell she cast sharpened more than just her eyesight.

"Where do you think they are?" I ask.

"Unclear," she says. "The barn, maybe? I can't hear their heartbeats."

I think about what that means for a moment. "And you can hear ours?" I ask.

"Like thunder," she says and starts picking her way across the lawn to the side of the farmhouse.

We follow. The moon is bright and full, but it's been spending most of the time half-hidden by clouds. Those few moments when it shines unabated are panic-inducing. We all flatten ourselves to the grass, praying that no one peers out a window or steps out onto the porch for a breath of fresh air and spots us.

Our directions from the Order have given us free reign to use lethal force if we deem it necessary, but captives would be preferred. Some demons only use willing

worshippers, but there are plenty of others that are happy to use thralls. For all we know, every drug runner here might be an unwilling prisoner in their own mind.

Which isn't to say that a thrall would kill us any less dead than a true believer. Just that if we pull the trigger on them, we'd also be pulling the trigger on the person inside.

My heart has settled into a slow, lumbering hammer against my ribs by the time we're pressed up against the side of the house. Above us is a series of three evenly-spaced windows leading into different rooms. Two are lit. One is dark.

To our left is the front porch.

I slink over and touch the side of it, willing a thin stream of magic through the connection. I can feel in my head as the spell settles into place. If anyone crosses it the porch, I'll be able to feel it instantly.

For good measure, I also touch my hand to my chest and let a rush of power slide into me. My skin hardens and wrinkles, taking on the heaviness of kevlar and the texture of alligator hide. I feel my facial features shifting, becoming more reptilian.

I sidle back to the others, and I see a few pairs of eyebrows go up in panic. "It's still me," I say quickly. "I'm making sure we don't get flanked, and I don't die if I get shot."

Augustina looks like she's considering putting a round through my now wrinkled, leathery forehead, but instead she holsters her handgun, straightens, and peers in through the unlit

window. "Living room," she says and, stretching up on her tip-toes, presses her fingertips against the pane. With a soft pop, it slides open. She hauls herself up and climbs inside.

A moment later, she reappears in the frame, holding her arms out to help the other members of our team through.

I'm the last to go. Alone on the lawn, I feel exposed, but I'm under no illusions that the house is a better place to be.

If the raid goes smoothly, we'll pacify the inhabitants of the farmhouse without a fight.

But that wouldn't be what ACCEPTABLE LOSSES means, and my divinations are never wrong, even if they rarely tell the whole truth.

I'm short enough that I have to jump to grab the edge of the windowsill, and Augustina reaches down disdainfully to pull me in. I scramble over the lip to land in what might be the most rustic meth lab I've ever set foot in.

The living room is clearly not a communal gathering area.

I can tell this because the furniture has been overtaken with boxes of baking soda and bags of salt. Two plastic fold-out tables have been flipped open on the far side of the room, and their surface details a chronology of clutter. Containers of salt and baking soda start at one end, followed by plastic baggies, then a closed glass jar full of an iridescent powder, then a series of little squeeze-bottles of what I can only presume to be dye, and finally a tape-dispenser to seal the packets up with.

Off the far side of the table is a tidy stack of full baggies. They make for a tiny mountain on the floor, coming up as high as my knees.

Otherwise, the room is clean.

There are no rubber tubes. No splotched paper plates. No plastic bottles scattered across the floor.

Instead, there are faded paintings of pastoral scenes and rusting farm implements hung on the walls. A badly stuffed deer head cants to one side over the doorway to my right, and an almost certainly unusable shotgun is mounted on a plaque over the door on the left.

The door to the left is open all the way, but the corridor it leads out into is dark and silent.

The door on the right is open a crack and light shines out through it. We can all hear the sounds of conversation drifting through from the other side.

We all freeze, holding perfectly still, straining to hear the sound of footsteps approaching the door, but the sounds continue unchanged. Listening hard, I can pick out individual noises; the sounds of domesticity.

Someone is chopping something on a cutting board. Someone else, an old man, is recounting a thickly accented story in words too muted for me to follow.

Someone else is praying softly. Or singing.

I thumb the talk button on my radio, hoping for a counter-sign from the

Syndicate to signal that someone on Harcourt's team is listening, but there's no reply. I look to Augustina instead. She jerks her eyes towards the door and re-draws her pistol. I nod reluctantly, and together we move to either side of the frame.

Our escort moves with us, silently setting up in kneeling positions to cover the door, their rifles trained on the other side.

Not having a gun, and therefore not having options in between polite conversation and full murder, I take the side of the doorway that will be obscured by the door when it opens. Augustina takes the other, adjusts her grip on her handgun, and then with her fingers counts quickly down from three.

On zero, I yank the door open.

"Hands and knees! Now!" Augustina bellows, standing up in the doorway. "Surrender and no one gets hurt!"

There is no roar of opposing gunfire.

No one rushes the team.

There aren't even any screams.

And no one surrenders.

Instead I hear a hiss of indrawn breath from Augustina.

There is a crack of light on my side of the open door and I peer through it into the room beyond.

An old man is sitting in a high-backed wooden chair, reading from a thick leather-bound tome. Off to his side is a younger woman dressed in shorts and a

ratty t-shirt. Her hands are clasped together in prayer. And beside her, standing over a wooden table, a second woman is cutting with a shiny steel knife at something unrecognizable.

It seems to be a whole roast animal, except that it's so large it spans the entire table.

I stare, and in that moment, I can see her pale hands working a knife through finger joints.

The old man closes his book firmly, not bothering to mark the page. He straightens up and faces Augustina, not even glancing at our team's guns. "Intruders," he says calmly, "you came here to defile our sanctuary. But our lord teaches that in every challenge, there is an opportunity as well. I will not hold this against you."

"Hands and knees," repeats Augustina coldly. "You won't get another chance to comply."

The woman with the knife keeps chopping. The woman in the t-shirt and shorts keeps praying.

"Kneeling," says the old man, "is for people who have something to be ashamed of." He lifts one hand, and holds it out, palm facing us.

Our team opens fire.

The old man jerks as the bullets rip through him, but he remains upright long enough for his outstretched hand to fill with darkness. "Suffer," he says simply, and a blast of ash sweeps out from his palm, enveloping both rooms.

The soot is burning, stinging. It invades the eyes and the mouth. It tastes rancid on the tongue.

All-but-blind, I stumble away, crashing through furniture.

I hear another wave of gunfire rip through the obscuring cloud, and then a shriek from one of our escorts. There's a sickening sound, the kind that can only be produced by a knife invading flesh.

A primal scream follows.

I can't imagine it coming from any human throat, but I also know--with a certainty as deep as my bones--that it came from the woman who had been at the table, carving up the corpse of her prey.

I blunder away from her, crashing past the vague shapes of furniture, feeling my way along the wall until I find the door into the hallway. The ash is thinner here, and I blink furiously, tears running from my eyes.

I can almost see.

The hallway snakes around a switchback turn, then ends in a staircase.

The staircase leads up to the attic.

From somewhere not too far behind me, the old man's voice is rising in a resonant howl.

Without a way to see through the ash, there's nothing I can do to him from here that wouldn't put the rest of the team at risk.

I'm going to have to trust that Augustina and the others can handle him.

In the meantime, maybe I can make sure our flank is clear.

I scramble up the staircase, switching my flashlight back on. The beam bounces over worn wood and mold-damage. The stairs creak hideously underfoot. One buckles but refuses to break.

The attic landing is flat and high-ceilinged. The roof is peaked, and a massive, intricate circle has been chalked in the middle of the area. At the far end, an open window looks out onto the lawn and the road beyond it.

Behind me, something rustles.

I whirl, just in time for a scythe blade to scrape across my chest, shearing through my flak jacket and skittering off of my hardened skin. A pair of knives follows right after it, slapping at the side of my head.

I stumble back as a thing made of sewn-together farming equipment shambles into the light from my flashlight beam.

Downstairs, the gunfire is thinning.

Either the team has overcome their opposition, they've pulled back out through the living room window, or they're beyond mortal help.

Either way, they don't know I'm here. I have no backup coming.

The thresher-golem takes a step towards me and I gather fire in my left hand, shape it, and throw it.

The blast sends hand-rakes and skinning knives flying away, carving a gouge out of the creature's substance. It also blackens the floor and leaves little tendrils of flame licking at the roof.

There's no time to worry about those, because the thing shrieks in the voice of a woodchipper and flings itself at me.

I go down, born off my feet by a heap of metal and rotting wood. Blades flense at me. Tool hafts pelt against my body.

Although there are places in the world where creatures like this sometimes-self-compile, born out of leyline energy and neglect, only another mage could have summoned this one. I think about the old man downstairs, even as I'm bringing my hands up to shield my eyes from talons of rusting iron, and a faint chiming goes off in my mind as the alarm I'd set on the porch activates.

Is the old man running for it, bullet-holes pockmarking his chest?

From the top of the barn, I might have a shot at him, but I need to deal with my attacker first.

Gathering up a double-handful of fire, I jam both hands elbow-deep into the thresher-golem. I let my will soak into my hands, sending the flames cupped in my palms into a fierce blue-white roil.

I wait just a second, and then I let go of containment.

The blast shreds the creature, flinging burning debris across the barn.

It also crisps the outer layer of my skin and hurls a trowel point-first through the skin under my sternum.

The pain is bad enough that I almost pass out, but I hang on until the blackness recedes and little, and then I begin to mend my wounds.

I yank the trowel out, howling in agony.

The puncture closes up behind it. The disquiet in my guts settles down, and then goes away completely.

I pull myself to my feet.

The attic is now clearly on fire. Bits of old, damp straw and little heaps of dust on the floor have caught, and smoke is filling the space at an alarming rate. Rather than try and go back down the stairs, I limp to the window and put a fist through the pane.

The glass skitters harmlessly off of my modified skin, cascading out into the night.

I stare out through the open frame. The moon has come back out from its cloud-cover, painting the farm in pale light.

The woman from the cutting board is racing across the grass. Her hair, gathered up in a dirty-blond ponytail is bouncing with every step. She's holding a blood slick carving knife in one hand and what appears to be a hand in the other.

I start to gather up a third handful of dragon fire, but gunshots ripple out from somewhere just out of sight and the woman staggers and falls. Her feet kick twice, the

head spills from her grip, and then she goes still. Moving into view from the other side of the house, I see Harcourt and her minions striding calmly towards the front door. Two of them are reloading handguns. One of them spots me and gives a two-fingered wave.

A wave of anger, giddy in its intensity, washes through me.

They'd *purposely* held back, waiting for us to breach first, so that they could mop up what was left.

However, the joke seems to be on them. A chorus of high, hideous yips fills the night. Glowing eyes bound out of the thick grass surrounding the barn and a pack of sable shapes comes rushing towards the Syndicate team.

Some of the killers turn and open fire on the feral dogs, but there's too many of the animals to take out in a single volley. The surviving hounds bull into the gunmen. Several of the men are pulled from their feet, kicking and flailing wildly.

The fire behind me is now licking my back, so I scramble out through the window and onto the narrow metal gutter that runs the perimeter of the roof. I inch along it, grabbing greedy lungful of the clean outside air.

I look for a way down.

It finds me.

A board gives way, and I am tipping, tumbling through the air. For a long, sickening second, I fall. Then I slap a hand to my chest and come to a stop, levitating barely a foot off of the ground.

I'm breathing hard as I settle back onto the lawn, and it's from more than just the physical activity. All magicians have a certain innate capacity for will working, and I've just about reached mine.

Back in Granite Lodge we'd train vigorously trying to increase ours, but now exhaustion crowds the edges of my thoughts. I lean against the side of the house wheezing and try to think of what I'm going to do if one of the dogs breaks off from attacking the Syndicate and comes my way.

Unarmed and alone, I'm a sitting duck.

I need to link back up with my team.

I circle around to the front of the house and pull myself up onto the porch. The half-rotten boards sag beneath me as I stumble past stacked firewood and weather-worn furniture, heading for the front door.

It's open, the body of one of the Order escorts lying through it.

I moan, low and under my breath, as the old man from the kitchen steps out. His bullet-wounds all seem to have closed and he is holding in one hand a long blade of crackling, raven-dark energy.

Seeing me, he smiles politely. "Lovely evening," he says conversationally as he stares out across the lawn, taking in the carnage. "Shame you had to come here, and ruin it, but we'll change addresses and rebuild. We always do." His eyes are all pupil. "If you bare your throat for me," he tells me conspiratorially, "I'll make it quick."

I don't have enough energy left for another lance of flames.

If I can get past him, though, I might be able to grab the rifle off of the Order escort.

He's clearly able to tell what I'm thinking, because he walks towards me, the blade rising. I back away, stumbling as I hit the railing. It groans under the sudden weight of my body and then it breaks, tipping me backward off of the porch.

The lawn slaps the breath from my lungs. Footsteps creak across the porch.

The old man stands over me, his expression bland. Then he pauses, his head cocking to the side.

"You've been there, haven't you?" he says, staring at me intensely. "You've visited the master's domain, but only briefly. His touch only grazed you."

"I don't know what you're talking about," I grunt, my hands feeling among the broken wooden shards, fishing for a weapon.

"Would you like to go back?" he asks earnestly. With his free hand, the one not holding the blade, he rifles through his pockets and comes up with a small plastic baggie. I can see in the powder resting within.

He tosses the bag down to me. "Take another hit."

It lands next to me, within easy reach. I have the fingers of my left hand wrapped around a sharp wooden spar, but I grab the bag with my right. It's landed with

its mouth open, spilling half its contents onto the damp grass, but there's more than enough left inside for a dose.

Wherever the drug sent me the last time, I came back.

I could do it again, I think.

Then a pistol barks. The sound rings out, sharp and strident, and the back of the man's head is abruptly gone. He tips forward, falling past me, sword snapping out of existence as he hits the earth to my left.

I deliberately look away from what the handgun round did to his skull.

And, flicking the bag of Bliss aside, I stand up.

Augustina is standing in the doorway. Her weapon is smoking, and her skin and clothes are stained with ash.

Out on the lawn, the last loud pops of the Syndicate team's weapons die away.

A crackling, low and soothing, rises on the air.

I look up and see the top of the farmhouse is wreathed in flames. They cling to it like a crown.

Like a circlet.

Like a halo.

Augustina pulls me away, and we let it burn to the ground.



COMBAT

When the masked killer picks up a hatchet and advances on you from across the room or when the Golem rips open the bulkhead and climbs in after you, it's time for combat.

Combat is like regular gameplay. You'll ask questions, shout commands, and cast Spells—but you'll do it while trying not to be murdered.

To keep combat from being a confusing mess in which everyone tries to act at the same time, characters take turns to describe what they are doing in combat, and the order of these turns is determined by their Initiative.

SCENES

A Scene is any period of time the players spend in the same location or working on the same problem. Exploring an abandoned warehouse might be one Scene. A car chase down the interstate might be another. The GM will announce when an old Scene ends

and a new Scene begins.

Typically, a combat will take place in a single Scene.

TURNS AND ROUNDS

A combat turn lasts two seconds in-game. Out of game, a player may spend a few minutes deciding what they want to do.

Most things that a person could normally do in the middle of a fight (such as firing a gun, swinging a lead pipe, kicking in a door) naturally fit into that two-second time.

If a player wants to do something that takes a little longer (such as reading a relevant section of a spell book, hacking a laptop, or barricading a door), they will need to spend multiple combat turns.

Once everyone in combat has taken a turn, the Round ends and a new Round begins.

INITIATIVE

Initiative determines the order that characters take their turns in a Round. A player character's Initiative is 1d8 plus their Reflexes. The same is true for major NPCs, Lieutenants, and Masterminds. For minor rabble and Thugs, roll 1d6 and add their Reflexes.

Once everyone has rolled their Initiatives, combatants take their turns in order from the highest Initiative to the lowest. When the last combatant has taken their turn, everyone rolls Initiative again and a new combat Round starts.

Certain General Talents, Archetype

Talents, Spells, and other factors can increase a character's Initiative. If a character's Initiative changes in combat, reroll their Initiative (and change the turn order accordingly) at the end of the Round.

NOTE: Because it takes several minutes out of game to cover a few seconds of what happens in combat, when things are tense, but no one is shooting or throwing Spells yet, don't worry about Initiative and combat turns. It's only when violence breaks out that the PCs' adrenaline kicks in, time slows down, and everyone needs to start acting in Initiative order.

Example: Alex is ready to fight a pack of thugs. His Reflex is 3. He rolls a 5 on 1d8. Thus, his total initiative is 8. The thugs have a Reflex 3 and roll a 2. So, their total is 5. It's close, but Alex has the jump on them.

AMBUSHES

If one side is completely unaware of the other when combat starts, it's an ambush. Everyone on the ambushing side gets to take a turn in whatever order they'd like, then Initiative is rolled, and the first Round of combat begins.

Characters that cannot be ambushed may act during an ambush regardless of which side they're on.

ACTIONS

Characters (both PCs and Adversaries) can freely perform 1 Action per turn in combat. An Action is anything you might be able to do quickly in a tense situation. Examples include running, swinging a sword, kicking in a door, setting an

explosive, unjamming a rifle, reloading, standing up, or typing in a password.

Characters are not limited to only taking 1 Action per turn. They can take up to a total of 4, but each extra Action comes at a cost.

At the start of their turn, a character declares how many Actions they are going to take. Each Action beyond the first causes them to suffer a +3 TN penalty on **all Skill Tests and Opposition Rolls they make until the start of their next turn** (see Combat Modifiers at the end of this section.)

This means that if they take a full four Actions, everything they do with those Actions is at a +9 TN penalty.

Example: Augustina is in her car, being chased by cultists in a truck. Augustina wants to split her attention between driving and shooting, so she takes two Actions.

Keeping the car would normally be a 7 TN, but she adds +3 TN because she's taking a second Action. She rolls her Drive and adds her Reflexes, getting an 11. Her car clings to the road.

Next, she leans out the window and opens up with her pistol. Hitting her opponent would normally be a TN 8, but again the Multiple Action Penalty applies for +3 TN. She rolls a 4, missing.

Two seconds later, the cult leader driving the truck decides to return fire. The GM declares that he's taking three Actions to do this. Each Action is at a +6 TN penalty; +3 x 2. The cult leader's first Action, driving the truck, is Easy, but the penalty takes it up to 13 TN. He rolls a 7 and begins veering off the road.

Luckily for him, because his other two Actions are happening more or less simultaneously, he gets to perform them both before he crashes into a telephone pole.

He shoots twice, at +6 TN each, and misses both times.

Augustina adjusts her rear-view mirror as the cultists' truck wraps itself around the pole in a spray of glass and plastic.

MOVEMENT

Outside of combat, characters may move freely.

In combat, on their turn, characters may move up to their total Movement in yards. This does not cost an Action, but it *can* cause penalties or Skill Tests and Opposition Rolls, depending on how far they move.

See the Combat Modifiers table at the end of this section for more information.

ATTACKING AND DAMAGE

When you decide to take a shot, throw a punch, or otherwise try to put the hurt on an opponent, spend an Action and roll your relevant Skill + Attribute.

Which Skill and Attribute you roll depends on what kind of attack you're making.

Hand-to-Hand (HTH) and Melee:

Both sides make an Opposition Roll using Brawling, Blades, Club, or Improvised Weapons + REF or STR. If the attacker rolls higher, the attacker deals their weapon's

damage plus their Damage Bonus.

Ranged:

The attacker makes a Skill Test using a Ranged combat Skill against a TN of 5 + the defender's REF. If the attacker beats the TN, they deal their weapon's damage.

Two-Weapon Attack:

If you have a weapon in each hand, you can choose to attack with both of them at the same time. To do this, make a Ranged, HTH, or Melee attack as normal, factoring in any other penalties you would normally incur (such as penalties for distance, lighting, extra Actions, and the penalty for using your off-hand). Then add the Two-Weapon Attack penalty (+4 TN) on top of that. If you still manage to hit, both of your weapons deal their damage. If either weapon is HTH or Melee, add your Damage Bonus. If *both* weapons are HTH or Melee, add your Damage Bonus twice. If you are using a weapons that require two different skills, roll whichever skill is lower.

DODGE ATTEMPTS

When someone targets you with a Hand-to-Hand or Melee attack and you aren't bodily restrained or completely caught off-guard, you automatically oppose their roll.

When someone targets you with a Ranged attack, you do *not* automatically get to defend yourself. If your Reflexes are high, you stand a better chance of not being hit, but whether or not you end up peppered with bullets depends purely on your attacker's accuracy.

Luckily, as long as you are aware of the incoming attack, you can make a Dodge Attempt.

To make a Dodge Attempt, first declare that you are dodging. You should do this before the attacker rolls to hit you--but if the GM doesn't ask if you want to dodge and just rolls the dice, you can declare it after.

Next, spend an Action from your *next* turn. This can incur a Multiple Actions Penalty, and the penalty applies *during your next turn*.

Finally, roll your Dodge Skill and add the highest die to the TN to hit you. Remember that you are only adding the highest die, so a roll of 1, 2, 4 would only add 4, not 7.

If your attacker can't beat the new TN, their projectiles go whipping cinematically past you.

You may make up to three Dodge Attempts in a Round.

When Dodging, you can easily burn through a turn's worth of Actions, so sometimes it may be better to take a few hits, steady yourself, and fire back rather than blindly trying to dodge every attack that comes your way.

Example: A Syndicate gunman opens fire on Isabelle. Isabelle has a Reflexes of 3. $5 + 3$ means the gunman has to beat a TN of 8 to hit her, and she doesn't like those odds.

Isabelle declares a Dodge Attempt, spends an Action from her next turn, and rolls her 3d8 Dodge, getting a 4, a 7, and an 8. She adds the 8 to the TN to hit her, bringing it up to a 16.

The gunman rolls a 9 and misses her by a mile.

Unfortunately, on Isabelle's next turn, she can only take 3 Actions, and all of them are at a +3 TN penalty from her dodge, so she is not in a strong position to retaliate.

GRAPPLING

There are more ways to neutralize an opponent than just striking them with a Spell, weapon, or a closed fist. Grappling lets a character try and lock down an enemy—pinning them, stripping away their weapons, or simply banging their head repeatedly against the curb.

To start a grapple, make an Opposition Roll using your Brawling + STR against your opponent's Brawling + STR. If you succeed, you grab them, start a grapple, and gain The Advantage.

While in a grapple, you either have The Advantage or your opponent does.

If you have The Advantage, on your turn you can spend Actions to punch or kick your opponent. You do not need to roll to hit with these attacks.

While you have The Advantage, you can also try to rip an item out of your opponent's hands or force them into a pin. To do either of these things, spend an Action and make the same Opposition Roll you used to start the grapple. If you succeed, the item goes flying or you pin your opponent.

If your opponent is pinned, you can handcuff or duct-tape-wrap them by spending another Action. Or you can keep hitting them—whichever suits your style.

To get out of a grapple, you need to get The Advantage. A grappler with the Advantage can end the grapple and stand up by spending an Action on their turn.

To take The Advantage, you need to wait until your turn, spend an Action, and make the same Opposition Roll that was used to start the grapple. If you succeed and you were pinned, you break out of your pin, but you don't gain The Advantage. If you succeed and you were not pinned, you take The Advantage from your opponent. If you fail, there's no change, but you can keep trying as long as you have Actions to spend.

While in a grapple, whether you have The Advantage or not, you can cast Spells so long as you are able to speak and move your fingers. The TN to cast these Spells is increased by +1 if you have The Advantage, +2 if you do not, and +4 if you are pinned.

Yes, you can still cast Spells while pinned.

More than one would-be duelist has thought to become unstoppable by studying wrestling, only to have a point-blank Spell from a restrained mage go off in their face.

COMBAT CRITICALS

Sometimes you won't just succeed. You'll succeed in a way that turns your opponent into a fine red mist.

And sometimes you won't just fail. You'll pull the pin and drop the grenade at your feet.

When you make a Skill Test or Opposition Roll to hit a target, succeed, *and* two or more of your dice come up the same number,

that's a Combat Critical Success.

In combat, a Critical Success on an attack roll deals double damage.

When you roll a Skill Test or Opposition Roll to hit a target and all your dice come up 1's, roll again. If the second roll would succeed, you're safe—although you still fail at whatever you were trying to do. If your second roll fails, however, you get a Combat Critical Failure and your life is in the GM's hands.

The GM should *not* kill your character outright (since this isn't fun), but they do get to throw you a serious curve-ball.

On a Ranged attack, maybe your gun jams or maybe you hit an ally. On a Melee attack, maybe you leave yourself open and your target gets a free counter-attack on you. Whatever happens, it should be interesting and relevant to the roll.

While reading this section, you might have noticed that a character with only one die in a Skill cannot score a Critical Success. They are, however, at much greater risk of a Critical Failure. This is because they may understand the Skill quite well in theory, but they don't have quite enough practice to know when something they do with it is going to blow up in their face.

They may want to hang onto their Scene Points just in case.

Example: Sabrina fires her handgun at an armed thug. She has 3d8 in Pistols and rolls a 2, 8, and 8. Her Reflexes is 4 so her total is 12. The TN to hit was 9, which means she scores a Critical Success.

Sabrina is using a Medium Pistol, which does 2d6 damage. She rolls and gets an 8. That 8 damage doubles to a 16.

The thug, meanwhile, has one hand pressed to his gaping chest wound while he tries to cut at her with a knife. He is not particularly good with Blades and rolls a 3. Sabrina rolls HTH to defend herself and gets an 8. The thug rolls again, trying to beat an 8, and gets a 4. He's critically failed.

Sabrina sweeps his legs, the knife goes flying out of his hand, and he lands on his back on the floor.

SHOTS PER TURN

Each ranged weapon has a ROF (Rate of Fire) listed in its equipment entry. A ROF is written either as one number (1), two numbers (1/2), or three numbers (1/2/3). The first number is how many bullets it fires as a single shot, the second number is how many it fires as a short burst, and the third is how many it fires as a long burst.

Each type of attack—whether it's a single shot, short burst, or long—uses an Action.

A weapon's ROF also determines how many shots can exit it in a single combat Round.

For example, if you are using a Submachine Gun (1/3/10), you may fire a single shot four times, three short bursts, any combination of single shots and short bursts, or one long burst.

Some weapons like pistols can only fire single shots but have an ROF that looks like this: 1 (2). This means that the weapon can

only fire a single bullet at a time, but it can fire twice in a Round.

AUTO FIRE

When you use a short burst or a long burst, your attack is treated a little differently than a single shot.

No matter which kind of burst is being used, you roll your attack as normal, but for every point you roll over the TN, you can turn a bullet in the burst into +2 damage, up to the total number of bullets fired -1.

You cannot use Auto Fire and Call Your Shot together, you cannot Auto Fire more bullets than a weapon has loaded, and Auto Fire does not use the Hit Locations table when it deals damage. It deals its damage directly to the victim's Hit Points.

However, it is still a good way to apply a *lot* of damage in a short time to a target, provided you hit.

Example: Parker opens up with a short burst from a submachine gun, which fires 3 bullets. He rolls and gets a 12 against his enemy's TN of 8. Parker is 4 points over the TN, but he only has 2 extra bullets in his burst, so he can't take complete advantage of that. Still, he spends them both to add +2 damage each for +4 damage total.

The cultist he was shooting at crumples.

RECOIL

Some Ranged weapons have recoil, which imposes a penalty on your shot and on every subsequent shot you take in the same Round.

Penalties from Recoil stack on top of Multiple Action Penalties. If you're not careful, this can quickly turn a hail of bullets into a disorganized mess as your gun tries to kick out of your hands.

Weapons with Auto fire will have three different numbers listed for their Recoil. The first number is the Recoil for a single shot, the second is the Recoil for a short burst, and the third is the Recoil for a long burst.

Example: A short burst with a Submachine Gun is +1 Recoil. If you fire three of those short bursts in a Round, your first burst is at +1 TN, your second burst is at +2 TN, and your third burst is at +3 TN.

Multiple Action Penalties stack on top of this, so the total penalty for spending three Actions shooting short bursts with a Submachine Gun is +7 TN, +8 TN, and +9 TN.

DAMAGE MULTIPLIERS

If you are already doubling your damage and an effect causes you to double it again, you don't double it twice. You triple it. If another effect would double your damage, you quadruple it.

Example: Joe fires his pistol at a sorcerer and hits him in the brain. The brain shot means it's double damage, but Joe also gets a Critical Success, which would also double the damage. Joe deals triple damage and the sorcerer flies

back in an explosion of skull fragments and gray matter.

CALLED SHOTS, HIT LOCATIONS, EFFECTS, AND SHOCK

If a character takes damage to certain areas of the body, they may suffer penalties or need to make additional rolls.

Whenever a character takes damage that isn't from an Auto Fire burst, roll 1d100 on the Hit Chart to see where they were damaged.

Characters may also try to hit a specific area on an enemy's body. This incurs a penalty on the attack (see Calling Your Shots at the end of the section) but can seriously hinder the enemy if the attack hits.

Brain, Eye, Heart, Throat, and Groin/Kidney are all optional Hit Locations and may be included at the GM's discretion.

Some supernatural creatures may not have certain Hit Locations, or may have new Hit Locations (wings, pustules, roots, etc.). New Hit Locations will be detailed as part of their stat block.

Head:

If the victim takes 20% of their maximum HP in one hit to the head, they roll a Tough Health Saving Throw. On a failure, they go unconscious.

Torso:

If the victim takes 50% of their maximum HP in one hit to the torso, they roll a

Challenging Health Saving Throw. If they fail, they go unconscious.

Arms/Legs/ Hands/Feet:

If the victim takes 25% of their maximum HP as damage to a limb, they roll a Challenging Health Saving Throw. On a failure, that limb is disabled until treated with magic or with a Challenging First Aid or Average Physician roll.

Brain:

Any hit to the brain deals double damage. Furthermore, the victim needs to roll a Tough Health Saving Throw. If they fail, they pass out.

Eye:

In addition to treating this as a hit to the head, the victim rolls a Tough Health Saving Throw. If they fail, the eye is lost for good (or until replaced with a prosthetic or repaired by magic.)

Heart:

A shot to the heart forces an immediate Tough Health Saving Throw to avoid dying instantly. If the victim survives, the damage against them is doubled and, until treated with healing magic, an Extreme First Aid, or a Tough Physician roll, they bleed 1d6 HP (ignoring Protection and Damage Resistance) and roll again to avoid death at the start of their turn every Round.

Throat:

This can be a messy section to hit. The victim immediately rolls a Tough Health Saving Throw. Failure means death. If they survive, the victim takes double damage and begins bleeding 1d4 HP each turn (ignoring Protection and Damage

Resistance) until treated with magic, a Tough First Aid, or a Challenging Physician roll. Unlike a heart shot, they do not need to roll to avoid death again every Round.

Groin & Kidney:

These areas are considered one of the most painful areas to be hit on the body. Damage is increased by half and any hit here requires a Tough Health Saving Throw to endure, or else the victim suffers -5 initiative and +3 TN on every roll until the end of their next turn. If the Initiative penalty reduces them to zero or below, they may not take any Actions on their next turn.

EXPLOSIONS

Grenades, some Spells, and other environmental effects offer ways to spread some hurt out over an area. Any character that is caught in a blast makes a Tough (TN 12) Reflexes Saving Throw. On a success, they take half damage from the explosion (round down). Other effects, such as being knocked down or set on fire, happen regardless of the Saving Throw.

KNOCKDOWN

When a character beats their opponent's roll by 4 or more on an HTH or Melee attack, the defender rolls their choice of a Reflexes or Strength Saving Throw against TN 8. If they fail, they are knocked down.

While knocked down, they are at a +3 TN penalty to all physical Skills, including further attempts to defend themselves, until they get back up.

To get up, they must sacrifice a full turn. Alternately, they can spend an Action and

roll a Challenging Athletics Skill Test. The +3 TN penalty does not apply to this roll, but if they fail they are still knocked down.

The GM is free to increase the TN on a knockdown attack or have it push the character back instead if appropriate.

HEALING

There are various ways to get a character patched up, including first aid, Spells, and special abilities.

A character may be healed once per wound with either Physician or First Aid, but not with both.

Similarly, a character can be healed once per wound with magic or a supernatural ability.

A character that tries to game the system by stabbing themselves for 1 HP and then healing themselves forfeits any HP they would have recovered.

Naturally:

Characters that simply wait get their Heal Rate in HP at the start of each day, so long as they rested for at least 7 hours the previous day.

First Aid:

If someone is healed with First Aid, they recover 1d3+1 HP plus their Heal Rate immediately. First Aid may be applied in combat and with very basic equipment. The GM may assign bonuses on the roll for access to good equipment, support, or a safe and sterile working environment.

Physician:

If someone is healed with Physician, they

recover 2d4+1 HP plus their Heal Rate immediately. Physician may not be used in combat, and the GM may assign penalties for a lack of good equipment, support, or a safe and sterile working environment.

DAMAGE AND DEATH SAVES

When a character is reduced to negative HP, but not negative double their HP, they have a chance to survive. They immediately roll a Health Saving Throw at TN 10. If they fail, they die. If not, they cling to survival and consciousness for a little while longer.

If they take any further damage while at negative HP, they need to roll again to avoid death.

If they are ever dropped to negative double their HP or below, they die outright.

PROTECTION, ARMOR PIERCING, AND DAMAGE RESISTANCE

Some targets are magically warded, preternaturally gifted, or just extremely determined not to die. When a person with Damage Resistance takes damage, they subtract their resistance from the damage being dealt. This can reduce incoming damage to zero.

Other targets have Spells or armor that provide them with Protection. Protection works the same way as Damage Resistance, but it can be temporarily reduced or ignored by attacks that do AP (Armor

Piercing) damage. An AP attack ignores an equal number of points of Protection, so AP 1 would ignore Protection 1 or it would treat Protection 2 as Protection 1, etc.

Different kinds of Damage Resistance and Protection *can* stack under certain conditions—although if you do something ridiculous like trying to struggle into three Kevlar Vests at the same time, the GM has explicit permission to tell you to knock it off, apply heavy penalties, or simply have the bad guys aim for your head.

Example: You have the Tough S.O.B. Talent (2 points of Damage Resistance to all Hit Locations), you are wearing a Kevlar Vest (6 points of Protection over the torso), and you cast Hardened Skin (3 points of Protection to all Hit Locations) and someone tries to punch you in the chest. They roll to hit, make contact, and deal 13 damage. It's a solid hit, but your Protection and Damage Resistance absorb 11 points of damage from that punch. That's 9 from your Protection and 2 from your Damage Resistance. You hardly feel it.

If that same person punches you in the head, things might go a little differently, but 5 damage from his punch would still be absorbed.

On the other hand, if your attacker takes out a magical blade with AP All and stabs you in the chest, he ignores all 9 points of your Protection there. The 2 points from your Damage Resistance still apply, but even so this is probably going to hurt.

IGNITION AND DRAIN

Some attacks don't just cut, scald, contuse, pierce, or evaporate the target. They set them on fire. When an attack Ignites

someone, the victim is engulfed in flames and takes burning damage at the start of every new Round. This lasts until the fire burns out or someone spends an Action to extinguish it. Damage from Ignite bypasses Protection, but it can be stopped by Damage Resistance. Ignition can be applied multiple times to the same target, but all of the fires on a target can be put out with the same Action.

Drain attacks are much less obvious. They siphon the target's life-force or magic reserves, funneling it back into the attacker. Drain damage, though usually small, ignores *both* Protection and Damage Resistance.

RANGE MODIFIERS

All Ranged weapons have three numbers listed. The first number is short range, the second is medium, and the last number is the long range. Consult the table below to determine the penalty for attacking at different ranges.

RANGE TABLE

Type	SH -	Med +2TN	LNG + 5TN
Pistol	0-4	5-50	75-200
Rifle	0-20	21-250	251 - 1000+
Shotgun	0-8	9-50	51-100
Sawed Off	0-12#	12-30	31-50
Bow	0-15*	16-40	41-120
Crossbow	0-5	6-30	31-150
Thrown	STR	STR x 2	STR x 5

* Bows are +3 TN at Point Blank range

Sawed Off shotguns are -2 TN at Short range

HIT CHART

1-15%	Head
16%-60%	Torso
61%-70%	Left Arm
71%-80%	Right Arm
81%-90%	Left Leg
91%-100%	Right Leg

OPTIONAL HIT CHART

1-3%	Brain
4%	Eyes
5-15%	Head
16-18%	Throat
19-56%	Torso
57%	Heart
58%	Groin
59-60%	Kidney
61-68%	Left Arm
69-70%	Left Hand
71-78%	Right Arm
79-80%	Right Hand
81-88%	Left Leg
89-90%	Left Foot
91-98%	Right Leg
99-100%	Right Foot

COMBAT MODIFIERS

Penalties

Attacker Knocked Down: +2 TN
 Complete Darkness: +6 TN
 Cover (half exposed): +2 TN
 Cover (quarter exposed): +3 TN
 Dim Light: +3 TN
 Fast Draw: +2 TN
 Moving Target:
 (Half Movement) +1 TN

(Full Movement) +3 TN
 Multiple Actions: +3 TN per additional action until start of the next turn.
 Off Hand Penalty: +3 TN
 Recoil: See Weapon
 Two-Weapon Attack: +4 TN
 Wounded Attacker (Attacker is at a quarter of their HP or less): +3 TN

Bonuses

Aiming: -1 TN for each spent aiming *turn up to max of 3 turns*
 Attacking From Above: -1 TN
 Attacking From Behind: -3 TN
 Surprise: -4 TN
 Target Intimidated: -1 TN

CALLING YOUR SHOTS

Torso +0 TN
 Head +3 TN
 Arm/ Legs +2 TN
 Hand/Feet +4 TN
 Brain +5 TN
 Eyes +5 TN
 Throat +4 TN
 Heart: +4 TN
 Groin/Kidney: +4 TN



EQUIPMENT

Only an arrogant mage relies exclusively on their powers. In this world, a 9mm round can make as much difference as a fireball in a fight, and the modern mage typically packs both a handgun and Spells.

Acquiring equipment—especially items that are magical, illegal, or both—takes time and often requires knowing the right person.

Which items are available to the player characters is ultimately up to the GM to decide.

MAGICAL ITEMS

Magical items are powerful, rare, and temperamental. Each one provides a powerful bonus to the wielder but carrying too many comes with a price. Each magic item causes a certain amount of arcane interference, and that interference can eventually shut down other magic items, cause them to malfunction, or even interfere

with casting Spells.

A mage that has more than 3 magic items on their person will find that the items sometimes misfire, spontaneously stop working when they are needed most, or produce other unintended effects at the GM's discretion. Furthermore, the caster takes an ongoing +2 TN penalty on all attempts to cast Spells until they have ditched enough magic items to get back down to three.

Alchemical items, Scrolls, Rare Books, Components, and any scribed scrolls that a Scribe might be carrying via their Scribe Scrolls Archetype Talent do not count towards the three magic items limit.

PRIMARY EFFECT

DAMAGE

Some magical items boost the damage of a Spell's 'primary effect'. This means that they increase the damage that the Spell deals when it strikes a target, but not any damage it deals afterward (such as by setting the target on fire, dousing them in acid, etc.). Spells that only deal damage as a secondary effect (such as Terrible Whispers) are unaffected by these items.

ALCHEMY

Alchemical items are more refined versions of Components and typically have longer-lasting effects. They are also more palatable, for people who don't like gnawing on handfuls of wriggling crickets or snorting cremated remains.

A mage with the Alchemy Skill can make

any of these items by paying half the item's price in materials, spending an hour brewing it, and finally making a Challenging Skill Test (TN 9). On a failure, the materials are ruined.

Activating an alchemical item costs an Action.

Unless otherwise noted, no Alchemical item's bonus or penalty stacks with itself.

Arcane Sight

For the rest of the Scene, you can see magical energy and supernatural beings in vivid detail.

Cost: \$300 per dose

Armor

These potions may not make you bulletproof, but they do make you more durable. You gain +2 Protection to all Hit Locations for the rest of the Scene.

Cost: \$200 per dose

Charm

For the rest of the Scene, anyone who hears the drinker speak must make a Tough Willpower Saving Throw (TN 12). If they succeed, they are immune to its effects. If they fail, they find everything the drinker says to be very agreeable.

Cost: \$600 per dose

Fire Resistance

A Fire Resistance potion may be poured over people, objects, or areas.

If poured over an area, it makes the area fire resistant. A single dose protects a 3-yard

radius.

If poured over a person or object, that person or object gains Damage Resistance 8 against fire.

All effects from this potion last until the end of the Scene, and multiple doses of this potion *do* stack.

Cost: \$600 per dose

Heal

Chunky and viscous, this potion nevertheless restores 2d8 Hit Points.

Drinking this potion does *not* count as receiving healing for an injury (see Healing in the Combat section).

Cost: \$200 per dose

Power Elixir

With a quick sip, you recover 2d10 Magic Points.

Cost: \$200 per dose

Quarrelsome

This makes the drinker a troublesome and quarrelsome person. They find fault in everyone and everything and must voice their opinion of it in the most rude way possible—at least until the end of the Scene. A target who is unwittingly dosed with this potion receives a single Tough Health Saving Throw (TN 12) to resist this effect. People

under the effect of Quarrelsome are immune to the influence of someone using a Charm potion.

Cost: \$300 per dose

Reverse Wasting Disease

This expensive potion is brewed with the same rare, highly controlled fungi as the dreaded potion of Wasting Disease. A Wasting Disease victim who drinks this potion is immediately cured of the disease



and recovers 1d8 Hit Points on the spot.

Cost: \$2,000 per dose

Slow

A Slow potion may be administered by splashing a person with it. Anyone who is doused with Slow suffers a -4 penalty to Initiative and Movement (to a minimum of 0 Initiative and 1 Movement) until the end of the Scene. If a target is reduced to 0 Initiative, they skip their next turn.

Cost: \$450 per dose

Speed

A single gulp of Speed (the potion, not the amphetamine) will put some serious spring in your step. For the rest of the Scene, your Movement and Initiative are increased by +4.

Cost: \$450 per dose

Strength

You gain +1d4 Strength for the rest of the Scene. This cannot take you over 5 Strength, and it does not effect your maximum Hit Points.

Cost: \$200 per dose

Wasting Disease

This diabolical potion has only one purpose: to deliver a horrid, slow, creeping death to its unlucky drinker. Anyone who takes a single dose must make an immediate Tough Health Saving Throw (TN 12). If they fail, they begin losing 2d8 Hit Points at the start of each day. While affected, their flesh rots and beings to putrefy, and damage caused by this potion's effect may not be healed normally. Magical healing only restores half the usual number of hit points to the afflicted, and the only way to cure this affliction is with a potion of Reverse Wasting Disease.

Wasting Disease can be administered by

injection or even by slathering it on a blade, although the latter reduces the difficulty of the Saving Throw to Challenging (TN 9).

Possession of a potion of Wasting Disease or the obscure magical fungi needed to brew a potion one is illegal in Hermetic Order territory and treated as premeditating a murder.

Cost: \$2,000 per dose

Water-Breathing

For the rest of the Scene, you can breathe underwater without issue. You may drink multiple doses, causing the potion's effect to last for multiple Scenes. At the end of the potion's effect, you will need to cough any remaining water out of your lungs.

Cost: \$200 per dose

COMPONENTS

Components are consumable ways of getting a little bit more effect out of a Spell. In this case, 'consumable' is not *always* literal, but there are plenty of mages out there that have made their peace with downing a vial of frog eggs before casting Hardened Skin.

While many Components can be harvested from the natural world by a savvy mage, they are also sold by specialist vendors in decrepit shops around the globe.

To use most Components, simply declare that you are using it when you cast a Spell. If the Component needs to be eaten or snorted, you must spend an Action to activate it.

Unless otherwise noted, no Component's bonus or penalty stacks with itself.

Ashen Remains From a Corpse

While these *can* be obtained legally, using them in spellcasting is generally considered distasteful and the Order has a blanket ban on harvesting or using corpse ash.

Snorting a packet of corpse ash increases your maximum Magic Points by +15 for the rest of the Scene and increases the damage from your Spells' primary effects by 50%. Using a packet of corpse dust, even with permission from the deceased, stains your aura immediately and the stain takes a month to fade.

Cost: \$500 per packet

Crickets

Technically a snack food, some mages will pan-fry their crickets and add spices to help with the taste. Others will eat them live. When you down a handful of crickets, flip a coin. If it comes up heads, add +1 damage to your Spells' primary effects for the next 3 Rounds. If it comes up tails, add a -1 TN bonus to your Opposition Rolls vs Saving Throws for the next 3 Rounds.

Cost: \$8 per bag

Diamond

Coating your hands with this dust reduces the Magic Point cost of your Spells by 50% (round down) for the next 3 Rounds (or 3 spellcasts, whichever comes first).

Cost: \$100 per packet

Dragon Tooth/Claw

Often mistaken for fossils, a dragon tooth or claw is a rare find and usually also a costly one. Each Dragon Tooth/Claw comes with 10 charges. A mage can spend a charge to reduce a Spell's Magic Point cost by 50%

and increase the damage from its primary effect by +2. Only one charge can be spent per Spell. At 0 charges, the tooth or claw crumbles into dust.

Cost: \$15,000

Emerald

Coating your hands with *this* dust makes it easier to summon the energies for a Spell. You receive a -3 TN bonus on all rolls to cast Spells for the next 3 Rounds (or 3 spellcasts, whichever comes first).

Cost: \$130 per packet

Eye of Newt

More revolting than frogs' eggs, but only slightly. Swallowing an Eye of Newt gives you a -1 TN bonus to cast Spells for the rest of the Scene.

Cost: \$30 per eye

Faery Mushrooms

Downing a single dose of Faery Mushrooms doubles your Magic Recovery Rate for the day. Downing a second dose during that same day quadruples your Magic Recovery Rate but gives you disturbingly vivid hallucinations. Downing a third dose in one day is not recommended.

Cost: \$50 per dose

Frogs' Eggs

Downing a vial of these increases the Protection bonus from a Spell by 50% (round down).

Cost: \$10 per vial

Faery Parts

Over time, a diet of Faery Mushrooms causes some interesting compounds to build up in the bodies of the small Faeries that feed upon them. Eating one of those

Faeries gives you considerable advantages: for the rest of the Scene, your Spells cost 50% fewer Magic Points and their Duration is doubled.

The Hermetic Order has declared Faery harvests illegal in its territories, but this has not stopped avid connoisseurs. Eating Faery Parts more than three times in a month causes a permanent dark stain to form in your aura. The bonuses from Faery Parts do not stack with any Spell or effect.

Cost: \$350 per dose

Frogs' Feet

This bundled of dried frogs' feet magically combusts, increasing your Spell's Duration by 50% (round down).

Cost: \$5 per bundle

Gryphon Eggs

Not many people want to eat these raw, but that is the only way to gain the help they offer. A single Gryphon Egg adds +20 to your maximum Magic Points for the next 24 hours.

Cost: \$500 per egg

Morning Dew

Pouring a vial over your hands increases the Duration of your Spells by 50% for the next 3 Rounds (or 3 spellcasts, whichever comes first.)

Cost: \$10 per vial

Ruby

Coating your hands with this very expensive dust increases your Spell's damage from its primary effect by +2 and penalizes any Saving Throws against it by +2 TN for the next 3 Rounds (or 3 spellcasts, whichever comes first).

Cost: \$300 per packet

Spider Web

Wriggling your hands into a thick ball of spiderweb while casting renders your Spell invisible to arcane sight. The webbing of the banana spider is slightly harder and causes this effect to persist for 4 Rounds but is twice as expensive.

Cost: \$5 per bundle

Unicorn Horn

Part of a unicorn's soul resides in its sawed-off horn. That soul is highly reactive with magic, enhancing both the ease and power of its holder's spellcasting. Carrying a Unicorn Horn gives you an additional pool of 30 Magic Points that you can cast from. This pool refills at the start of every day. Furthermore, all Spells you cast while holding the horn have both their Range and the damage from their primary effect doubled. Carrying a Unicorn Horn for a single day stains your aura noticeably and carrying one for more than a week stains it permanently. Unicorn Horns are considered contraband by the Hermetic Order, who according to rumor have a storehouse full of horns that have been confiscated from mages.

Cost: \$10,000 per horn

RARE BOOKS

Rare Books are coveted occult treasures, rich in information on both Spells and magic lore. When a mage finishes poring over a Rare Book, they benefit from the book's effect. This benefit is permanent.

A mage may *not* benefit from the same book's effect more than once, and just keeping a Rare Book around tends to attract the attentions of predatory, power-hungry mages.

Rare Books cannot give Spells to Templars or the Ungifted.

Mysteries of the Elements

Keepers of the elemental secrets have much to say in this book. Its dense, cramped writing unlocks the secrets of natural metaphysics.

Time to Study:

5 months

Effect:

Increase your Magic Lore (General) by one die type (0 to 1d6, 1d6 to 1d8, or 1d8 to 1d10). You learn 1d4-1 General Spells (the GM decides which ones) at the 1d6 level. You may spend experience points to raise these Spells to 2d6, 1d8, etc.

The Whispering Void

This book delves into the understanding of Spells relating to the Warlock's realm of knowledge. There are various editions, and some say this text was originally written in volumes.

Time to Study:

4 months

Effect:

Increase your Magic Lore (Warlock) by one die type (0 to 1d6, 1d6 to 1d8, or 1d8 to 1d10). You learn 1d4-1 Warlock Spells (the GM decides which ones) at the 1d6 level, even if you are not the Warlock Archetype. You may spend experience points to raise these Spells to 2d6, 1d8, etc.

RINGS

Somewhere in between a Talisman and a Wand in how they operate, Rings are very

expensive but provide potent active and passive effects.



A character *may NOT* wear multiple Rings of the same type to stack their bonuses unless otherwise noted.

Extra Energy

This Ring contains a reservoir of 15 Magic Points. The reservoir refills every night at midnight. While wearing the Ring, you can drain its Magic Points with a thought. This does not cost an Action.

Cost: \$6,000

Upgrade:

+\$2,000 to attune it to a specific user

Guardian

You gain +3 Protection to all Hit Locations. Guardian Rings do not stack with other Guardian Rings.

Cost: \$6,000

Upgrade:

+\$2,000 to attune it to a specific user

Inviolate Will

This Ring guards your mind against outside interference. Any Saving Throw you must make against a mental Spell or supernatural effect, you make at a -3 TN bonus.

Cost: \$8,000

Upgrade:

+\$2,000 to attune it to a specific user

Jaunt

By spending 4 Magic Points and an Action, you may teleport yourself to any location within range and within Line of Sight. You may carry one person with you for +2 MP.

Range: 30 yards

Cost: \$7,000

Upgrade:

+\$2,000 to attune it to a specific user

Ring of the Falcon

While wearing this Ring, you can fly at *exactly* 100 mph in a straight line. This Ring does not protect you against wind-burn, centrifugal forces, or collisions and you must spend 1 Magic Point per turn of flight. To change directions, you must stop and turn your body around in mid-air, then activate the Ring again.

Cost: \$7,000

Vanishing

When you put on this Ring, you immediately become invisible. For every

turn that you keep the Ring on, you spend 2 Magic Points. If you are reduced to 0 MP while wearing this Ring, it breaks.

Cost: \$7,000

Upgrade:

+\$2,000 to attune it to a specific user

SCROLLS

A Scroll, as any Scribe will tell you, is a kind of canned Spell. Traditionally they are rolls of crumbling vellum, but in the modern age they can take just about any form, from a clay tablet all the way to a memory card.

Activating a Scroll costs 2 Magic Points and requires no roll to cast the Spell inside. However, the user still needs to roll to Throw or Touch with the Spell and the Spell itself may still call for a roll as part of its effects. If a roll is required, the GM will determine the Skill Level of the Spell stored in the Scroll.

Using a Scroll destroys it utterly.

Spell: Any

Cost: GM choice. Generally, between \$50-\$2,000.

TALISMANS

These are worn items, such as crosses, herbal bundles, or other occult relics. With a few minutes of concentration, a Talisman can be attuned so that it only works for a specific person.

A character *may* carry multiple Talismans of the same type to stack their bonuses, unless otherwise noted.

Devastation

Devastation Talismans are a highly specialized version of spell foci. Instead of making a Spell easier to cast and throw, however, a Devastation Talisman increases the damage from its primary effect by +2.

Each Devastation must be keyed to a specific Spell, and each Devastation increases the cost of the corresponding Spell by 1 Magic Point.

Cost: \$800

Heal Accelerant

Not every mage can patch themselves up easily, nor is every injury easy for the human body to bounce back from. Wearing a Heal Accelerant increases any healing the wearer receives by +2, no matter the source.

Cost: \$900

Ley Line Handler

Interacting with Ley Lines can be tricky, and sometimes a little occult help goes a long way towards avoiding disaster. The wearer of these gloves can alter any roll they make on the Ley Line table by up to 3 points in either direction.

Cost: \$800

Magic Sight

When wearing this item, you may spend 1 Magic Point to see magic currents and residue for a single turn. Talismans of this type are commonly made of glass.

Cost: \$500

Personalized Wards

Personalized Wards, worn either as jewelry, tattoos, or discreet charm bundles, are a way of discharging magical energy before it can influence the owner. Anyone wearing Personalized Wards receives a -1 TN bonus on all Saving Throws to resist the

effects of Spells. Multiple sets of Personalized Wards do not stack.

Cost: \$500

Shield

A less subtle version of Personalized Wards, a Shield allows you to reduce damage from both magical and mundane attacks. Simply keeping a Shield on your person gives you +2 Protection to all Hit Locations. Furthermore, when you are hit with an attack, you may spend any number of Magic Points to increase your Protection versus that attack by the same amount.

For example, if someone throws a fireball at your head for 15 damage, you can spend +13 MP to bring your Shield up to 15 Protection and survive the attack unscathed. If that same person throws another 15-damage fireball at your head, you need to spend that same 13 MP again, or else this time you'll take damage.

Shield Talismans do not stack with other Shield Talismans.

Cost: \$1,000

Spell Focus

A Spell Focus is a Talisman that provides a little extra kick when you cast a particular Spell. Each Spell Focus is keyed to one Spell, but you *can* receive a bonus from carrying multiple focuses for the same Spell. Each Spell Focus gives you a -1 TN bonus to cast that Spell and a -1 TN bonus to Throw or Touch with it. Each Spell Focus also increases the cost of the Spell by 1 Magic Point.

Cost: \$600

Warning

This Talisman shakes, glows, heats up, or otherwise alerts you to danger nearby. You

cannot be ambushed while you carry this Talisman.

Cost: \$400

WANDS

Wands, like other magical items, are crafted with a specific purpose. Often this purpose is the same as a gun's. Unlike a gun, a Wand's designer can attune it so that it only works for one person, however most Wands aren't picky and allow anyone with magic to use them.



To activate a Wand, you need to hold it in your hand and spend an Action.

Attacking with a Wand is treated as a Ranged attack that uses the Wand-wielder's Magic Lore. Any Magic Lore Skill can be used for this purpose.

Bulwark

This Wand projects a dome-shaped shield of pure force in front of it. When you are targeted by an attack from someone standing in front of you, you can spend an Action *from your next turn* to activate this Wand. If you do so, you immediately gain +10 Protection against that attack. Any damage that this does not prevent is deducted first from your Magic Points.

You may wield a Bulwark Wand in each hand, if you so desire, in which case you may spend an Action from your next turn to activate both for +20 Protection.

Range: 5 yards

Cost: \$4,000

Caster's Aid

Some mages need a little help channeling their energy into a Spell. It's nothing to be ashamed of. This Wand gives its owner a -2 TN bonus when casting or trying to hit a target with any Spell.

Cost: \$5,000

Upgrades:

+\$3,000 to increase the bonus by -1 TN

+\$2,000 to attune it to a specific caster

Fire

Wanna cook something? Or someone? This is your firestick.

If you hit your target with this attack, they Ignite for 1d6 damage for 3 Rounds.

Damage: 1d12+1 or 2d10+2

Range: 25 yards

Magic Point Cost: 2 or 3

Cost: \$3,500

Upgrades:

+\$2,500 +1 bonus to hit and damage.

+\$2,000 to attune it to a specific caster

Ice

This Wand launches a volley of razor sharp ice shards at its target—perfect for assassinations, since all evidence of the attack will have melted by the time the authorities arrive.

A target that has taken damage from the Ice Wand also suffers a +1 TN penalty on all physical Skill Tests and Opposition Rolls for

the next 3 Rounds. This effect does not stack.

Damage: 3d3 / 2d8

Range: 30 yards

Magic Point Cost: 1 / 2

Cost: \$3,500

Upgrades:

+\$2,500 -1 TN bonus and +1 damage

+\$2,000 to attune it to a specific caster

Stun

Sometimes you don't want to destroy someone. You just want to subdue them. This Wand is a little gentler than a stun gun, but not by much.

You must spend 3 Magic Points every time you make an attack with this Wand. If you land your attack, make an Opposition Roll using your Magic Lore (Any) + INT against your target's Willpower Saving Throw. If you succeed, the target is stunned for the next 1d6 turns. While stunned, their Movement is reduced by half (round down) and they suffer a +4 TN penalty on all Skill Tests and Opposition Rolls.

Range: 15 yards

Cost: \$4,500

RESTRICTED ITEMS

The following items may not be purchased. They are available only to characters that take the appropriate Archetype Talent: either Ungifted's Heirloom Magic Item or Knight Templar's Holy Relic.

HEIRLOOM MAGIC ITEMS

These items have either been in the family longer than anyone can remember, or they just showed up one day and refused to be discarded. The effects that they produce are powerful but very specific, and they seem to be attached to their intended owner. If taken away, they will inevitably find their way back.

An Antique Chair Covered In Unsettling Carvings

Falling asleep in this chair produces troubling dreams, but upon waking the sleeper can pick any one Skill to use at 2d8 for the next 6 hours.

A Massive Iron Cauldron

Once per week you may spend 1 hour to brew up a huge batch of spaghetti in this cauldron. The batch is large enough to feed several families. Anyone who eats the spaghetti while it is still piping hot and fresh out of the cauldron receives +20 maximum Hit Points for the next 12 hours. This effect does not stack with itself.

An Old, Frayed Net

The net practically seethes with a need to grab and entangle, and, in poor lighting, it seems to crawl on its own across the floor. To use the net, spend an Action and make a Ranged attack with Throwing against a target. If the attack hits, the net attempts to grapple the target. Treat the net as having 2d10 Brawling, 7 Strength, and 30 Hit Points. The net does not attempt to pin or

damage the target, but it does try to keep The Advantage. After the grapple ends, even if the net has been ripped to shreds, the net begins regenerating at a rate of 1 Hit Point per Round until it has put itself back together.

A Pair of Dented, Horn-Rimmed Glasses

Anyone who wears these glasses can see magical energy, ghosts, auras, and invisible objects or people. The glasses do not produce any magical energy of their own and other people cannot tell that they are enchanted.

HOLY RELICS

Over time, the Templar have gathered a number of holy items from around the world for safekeeping by their order. These items are *not* always Christian, a point that makes some Templar uncomfortable, but they have each been thoroughly vetted and declared to be potent forces for good.

According to the Vatican, these are not *real* relics like the Veil of Veronica or the Shroud of Turin. They don't even belong to real saints.

The Templar have politely declined to share what they think of that statement.

Fingerbones of Saint Eduardo Panzera

This monk was a truly blessed and beloved man. The son of a wealthy merchant in 1870 Italy, Eduardo never was in need of anything.

Although his father was cold-hearted, often Eduardo would be found trying to help out those less fortunate than himself. His mother insisted he attend mass regularly and Eduardo found a

sense of peace and comfort in the noble professions of those who served God full-time. When he was of age he joined the church and sought to become a monk.

His father was furious over his decision and threatened to cut Eduardo off. Eduardo tried to call his bluff, but it turned out the old man wasn't bluffing. Eduardo was left penniless, but he found a certain peace in that. His eyes could no longer be clouded by wealth.

Eduardo continued studying and eventually joined a holy order. He was shipped overseas to Africa to work in a mission house.

Sometime after, a local warlord demanded that the mission house be torn down by the people of the nearby village. Both the monks and villagers refused, and so the warlord's men raided the mission house and the village.

Rather than resort to violence, Eduardo decided to hurt the warlord where it mattered. He stole the warlord's wealth and freed the man's captive wives. Then, rather than keep the money for himself, he gave it to a rival leader.

Eduardo attributed the success of his theft to divine power, and the warlord's rival was intrigued. He placed both the village and the church under his protection, keeping them safe from further retaliation.

Emboldened by this success, Eduardo spent the rest of his lifetime going to dangerous areas and trying to convince dangerous men to change their ways.

Bonus: Eduardo's divine luck lingers in the bones. Once per real-world hour of gameplay, you may re-roll any roll.

damage.

Knife of Saint Otto Arber

In 1450 there was a soldier by the name of Otto Arber who lived in Germany. Born to a large, poor family he joined the military early and excelled at fighting. His family was very devout, and he felt conflicted about using violence, but it seemed to come naturally to him.

During the Margrave War, Otto was injured and taken in by a priest. While his wounds were being tended to, he noticed that the church also ran an orphanage. The children there found Otto fascinating and liked the stories he told them.

One day the enemy marched into the small town and their soldiers descended on the townsfolk.

Otto was still injured and tried to negotiate with them, but the soldiers ignored his arguments. They hung him—or at least they tried to. Instead of breaking his neck, the rope broke, and Otto stumbled away from the surprised soldiers, heading for the church.

When he got there, he found that it was being robbed. Otto prayed for guidance, but when he heard the cries of the children he put down his hands and took up his knife. Legend has it he rid the town of the enemy armed with only that knife. It was said he fought with a holy vengeance and the town was saved.

After this, Otto became a man of the cloth and took to creating a safe orphanage for children all across Germany. No miracles occurred after his death, so he was never publicly declared a saint, but the Templar held a more private ceremony sainting him and kept the knife as his holy relic.

Bonus: This knife deals 2d6+1, AP 2 magic

Abbot's Beads

Originally belonging to an abbot of the Vacant Sky temple in Tibet, these beads have been strung together as a rosary by Templar antiquarians. Meditating upon them purifies the mind and the body and bestows visions of the abbot's life of simplicity.

The Vacant Sky officially considers the removal of these beads from their temple to be a crime against their faith, but the Templar do not always inform the current holder of the beads of this little detail.

Bonus: Praying with the beads restores WLP x 2 Magic Points and HLT x 2 Hit Points. This may be done 3 times per game session.

The Queen's Cane

Once a year, on October 31st, at the exact time of her death, this cane appears sticking out of the supposed grave site of Queen Orianne, a healer and wise woman from pre-civil-war Louisiana. Despite being blind, Queen Orianne's reputation was for powers of perception, and pieces of her prophecies regarding the descendants of local families are still coming to pass.

Queen Orianne's present-day heirs are currently in an extended legal battle for "ownership of the oddly similar-looking canes that are left once a year at the grave of Queen Orianne" with a shell company run by the Templar that owns and maintains the land that includes the grave site.

Bonus: Once per day, you may ask the GM a yes or no question and a short follow-up

question. The GM must answer truthfully, and they must provide a three-word hint for the follow-up question.

SPIRITS & INVISIBLES

While not exactly equipment, Spirits and Invisibles are both resources that mages with the right Talents can call on. Spirits are weaker and more limited in their knowledge than Invisibles but are much easier to interact with. Invisibles are more self-aware than Spirits and are also prouder and more idiosyncratic.

Both Spirits and Invisibles are invisible to mortals, provided they don't choose to reveal themselves and the mortals don't have a way of detecting magic.

SPIRITS

There are millions of Spirits in the world. Some live in natural features like trees or pools or waterfalls. Others watch over families or specific people. Still others roam, according to their nature, and follow mortal society from a distance.

While not precisely ghosts, Spirits are often very close in appearance to specific dead people. They also define themselves by their jobs and many Spirits don't even have names. They simply think of themselves as 'the fisherman' or 'the farmer.'

Spirits are limited in their understanding of the world by these roles and a Spirit of a hunter, for example, knows how to track

prey from one side of the city to the other, but does not understand how to turn off a modern security system. A Spirit of a thief, on the other hand, knows which cameras to break and which wires to cut.

Spirits are free to communicate with mortals and interact with their environment in small ways—however they cannot directly harm living creatures. A Spirit can carry a small package or make marks on a hard surface, and it can cut a cord that triggers a trap beneath a zombie's feet, but it cannot fly at a necromancer and slash him across the chest.

If a Spirit is detected and cornered, it *can* be harmed through magical means. If this happens, use the stats for Ghost under Adversaries to represent the Spirit's Attributes and Hit Points. The Spirit does not share the Ghost's weaknesses, nor does it have access to the Ghost's offensive abilities.

A few example Spirits are included below.

Healer

Skills: First Aid 3d8+2, Physician 2d10+2, Observation 1d10+3

Hunter

Skills: Tracking 3d10+4, Navigation 3d10+4, Observation 3d10+4

Magician

Magic Lore: All 2d10+4, Observation 3d6+4, Alchemy 3d8+3

Thief

Skills: Security 3d10+3, Streetwise 2d10+4, Observation 3d10+5

INVISIBLES

Invisibles are the Spirit equivalent of saints. There are fewer Invisibles than Spirits, but individual Invisibles are worshiped in much greater numbers.

Mages with the Patron Invisible Talent can enter a state of holy possession with their chosen Invisible. While possessed, they receive a bonus unique to that Invisible's 'family'. This bonus can temporarily raise their Attributes over 5, but none of the bonus's changes to their Attributes cause their Hit Points or Magic Points to change in any way.

While possessed, a mage still has control over their actions, so long as they follow the Invisible's Impulse. If the mage disobeys that Impulse, the Invisible may immediately withdraw from the possession (or assume tighter control, GM's choice) at the beginning of the Round *after* the Impulse is disobeyed.

Being possessed by an Invisible does not block mages elsewhere in the world from being possessed by that same Invisible—or by another member of its 'family.'

Invisibles have their own wills, preferences, personalities, and beliefs, and a possessed mage can generally choose to end the possession at any time by asking the Invisible to depart. However, if an Invisible refuses to exit a body, the possessed may attempt to throw it out by making a Tough Willpower Saving Throw (TN 12). If the possessed fails, they must wait another 1d6 minutes before trying again.

A few common families of Invisibles are provided below.

Agriculture

Associations: Farming, the harvest, surplus, laborers, food, alcohol.

Bonus While Possessed: +1 STR, +2 HLT

Impulse: Work tirelessly, ignoring opportunities to recover or rest.

Crossroads

Associations: Decisions, meetings, travel, the intersections between worlds.

Bonus While Possessed: +1 REF, -1 TN

bonus on social rolls, +5 Movement

Impulse: Dive into unfamiliar situations without considering the consequences.

Death And Fertility

Associations: Conception, funerals, celebration, mourning.

Bonus While Possessed: +2 CHA, all your attacks deal +1 Drain (HP)

Impulse: Feel emotional extremes.

Rain And Magicians

Associations: Storms, sorcery, knowledge.

Bonus While Possessed: +1 INT, +1 WLP, -2 TN on all rolls to cast Spells.

Impulse: Pry into secrets, demonstrate magical power.

MUNDANE EQUIPMENT

Even the most dedicated mage needs more than just magic to get by. Listed below are a variety of firearms and other important tools of the trade.

FIREARMS BASICS

Rate of Fire:

A weapon can only discharge so many bullets in the short period of time that makes up a single combat Round. A gun's rate of fire is written with up to three numbers: the first for how many bullets it discharges in a single shot, the second for how many it discharges in a short burst, and the third for how many it discharges in a long burst.

A Rate of Fire that's written like this "1 (2)" means the weapon fires a single shot at a time but can fire up to two shots in a Round.

For more information, see Rate of Fire in the Combat section.

Recoil:

The kick from discharging a firearm can make it harder to place your shot. Each firearm has a Recoil, written as up to three numbers. The first number is the Recoil for a single shot, and the others (if there are others) are for short and long bursts respectively.

For more information, see Recoil in the Combat section.

Range:

Past a certain distance, a gun becomes difficult to use accurately. Different types of firearms (handguns, submachine guns, etc.) have different ranges, and using a weapon at a certain distance can provide bonuses or penalties to the shot.

In most cases, anything within 4 yards or less can be assumed to be Short Range and takes no penalty, but there are some exceptions.

For a weapon's exact range increments, see the Range Table in the Combat section.

Capacity:

A weapon's Capacity is how many bullets it typically holds. Weapons may be modified to have a higher Capacity at the GM's discretion.

Damage:

A weapon's damage is how much hurt it doles out on every attack. A weapon's damage can be boosted with Auto Fire (see Auto Fire in the Combat section), or by other means such as enchantment.

Weapons may be modified to have a higher caliber and deal more damage at the GM's discretion.

Cost:

While it's possible to get most items for free by knowing the right people (or by robbing the right people), mages care just as much about money as mundanes do and these items cost just as much to a mage as they would to a mundane. The price for each item is a suggestion, and the GM is invited to change it based on where a PC is buying it, when they need it by, and how illegal the item is in that area.

RELOADING FIREARMS

Unless a firearm says otherwise, reloading requires a single Action.



HANDGUNS

Light Pistols

Damage: 2d4
Rate of Fire: 1 (2) Recoil: 0
Capacity: 10 Cost: \$200

Med Pistols

Damage: 2d6
Rate of Fire: 1 (2) Recoil: +1
Capacity: 8 Cost: \$300

Heavy Pistols

Damage: 2d8
Rate of Fire: 1 (2) Recoil: +3
Capacity: 7 Cost: \$400



SUBMACHINE GUN

Damage: 2d6
Rate of Fire: 1/3/10 Recoil: -/+1/+3
Capacity: 30 Cost: \$6,000

TACTICAL SHOTGUN

Damage: see Shotgun Shells
Rate of Fire: 1 (2) Recoil: +2
Capacity: 7 Cost: \$400

SAWED-OFF SHOTGUN

Damage: See Shotgun Shells
Rate of Fire: 1/2/- Recoil: +2/+4/-
Capacity: 2 Cost: \$200
Note: When firing a short burst (i.e. both barrels), roll twice as many damage dice if you hit. For example: Birdshot would go from 2d6 to 4d6.

ASSAULT RIFLE

Damage: 3d8
Rate of Fire: 1/3/10 Recoil: -/+2/+4
Capacity: 30 Cost: \$600

BATTLE RIFLE

Damage: 2d10+4
Rate of Fire: 1/3/10 Recoil: -/+2/+4
Capacity: 20 Cost: \$700



SNIPER RIFLE

Damage: 2d12+3
Rate of Fire: 1 Recoil: N/A
Capacity: 4 Cost: \$10,000
Note: Sniper Rifles use the Rifle entry on the Range Table in the Combat section, with the following changes. Their short range is +2 TN, their medium range extends to 500 yards and is +0 TN, and their long range extends to 2,000 yards and is +2 TN.

HEAVY MACHINE GUN

Damage: 2d10+4

Rate of Fire: -/-/10

Capacity: 250+

Recoil: -/-/+4

Cost: \$12,000

AMMUNITION

All prices for ammunition are per box of 50.

Standard:

Nothing special about this. It simply goes bang.

Cost: \$10

Armor Piercing:

Ignore half of your target's Protection.

Cost: \$25

Hollow Points:

Double your target's Protection against this attack. Any damage that makes it through is increased by 50% (round up).

Cost: \$50

Shotgun Shells:

Shotguns may be loaded with any one of the following ammunition types:

Birdshot: 2d6 damage Cost: \$15

Buckshot: 2d8 damage Cost: \$50

Slug: 2d10+5 damage Cost: \$100

Tracer:

A target that has been hit with a tracer shot is at -1 TN to hit by *everyone* for the rest of the Round. This does not stack with itself.

Cost: \$70

GRENADES & EXPLOSIVES

Not every mage bothers to learn how to throw a fireball, especially in a world that has moved past black powder and on to plastic explosives. However, throwing a grenade uses the same rules as throwing a Spell (see the Spells section), so mages that are already good at one will tend to be good at the other.

The advantage to grenades is that they do not cost Magic Points. However, because they tend to be hard to obtain legally, they cost a small fortune each.

40mm Grenade

4d8+5 damage in a 20-yard radius. When firing this round, use the Skill for the weapon it is attached to, but use the Rifle's Range (see Range Table in the Combat section) for determining modifiers to the shot.

Cost: \$500

C-4

¼ Brick: 3d10+8 damage, 5-yard radius,

½ Brick: 4d12+8 damage, 10-yard radius

Full Brick: 6d12+16 damage, 15-yard radius

Cost: \$20 per brick legally, \$1000 otherwise

Claymore Mine

3d12+8 damage in a 50-yard cone from the dangerous end.

Cost: \$1500

Concussion Grenade

2d8 damage in a 6-yard radius and victims must make a Challenging Health Saving Throw (TN 9) or be stunned (*no attack*)

Actions, and a +3 TN penalty to all Skill Tests and Opposition Rolls) for 1d4 Rounds.

Cost: \$450

Flash Grenade

No damage, but everyone within a 10-yard radius must make a Challenging Reflexes Saving Throw (TN 9) or be blinded (+6 TN penalty for tasks involving sight) for 1d4 Rounds.

Cost: \$150

Fragmentation Grenade

4d6+5 damage in a 6-yard radius

Cost: \$300



LAWS Rocket

5d10+10 damage in a 10-yard radius.

Cost: \$2500 with launcher

Mortar Shell

4d8+10 damage in a 30-yard radius. Firing a mortar uses the Heavy Weapons Skill, a lot of calibration, and some guesswork.

Alternately, you can use a mortar with Throwing by removing the firing pin, whacking it on a hard surface, and chucking it. This is not recommended.

Cost: \$1200

Smoke Grenade

No damage, just smoke.

Cost: \$40

Tear Gas Grenade

No damage, but everyone within an 8-yard radius must make a Challenging Health Saving Throw (TN 9) or cough for 1d4 Rounds (*suffering a +2 TN penalty to all Skill Tests and Opposition Rolls*).

Cost: \$80

Thermite Grenade

2d10+3 damage in a 6-yard radius and Ignites for 1d10 damage for 1d6 Rounds.

Cost: \$400

MELEE WEAPONS

Melee weapons, unlike guns, add your Melee Damage Bonus to their damage when you land a hit with one.

Melee weapons, unless they represent high-end sports gear, typically cost \$40 or less. Punch and Kick, of course, are free.

Punch	Damage 1d4
Kick	Damage 1d6
Brass Knuckles	+3 damage
Throwing Knife	Damage 1d4+1
Hunting Knife	Damage 1d6+1
Combat Knife	Damage 1d6+2
Fencing Sword	Damage 1d8+2
Short Sword	Damage 1d8
Broad Sword	Damage 1d10+2
2 Handed Sword	Damage 1d12+2
Billy Club	Damage 1d6+1
Collapsible Baton	Damage 1d6
Baseball Bat	Damage 1d8
Hand Ax	Damage 1d8+3
Wood Ax	Damage 1d12+5

OTHER WEAPONS

Although not as widely used as firearms, these weapons are cheap, legal, and quiet.

Bow

Damage 2d6+2; ROF 1. *Takes 1 Action to reload.*

Cost: \$300

Crossbow

Damage 2d8+3; ROF 1. Takes 2 Actions to reload.

Cost: \$100

Dart Gun

Damage 1d3; ROF 1. May be loaded with a drug or poison. Effects depend on the substance loaded.

Cost: \$400

Garrote

Damage 1d6 + Melee Damage Bonus; *When you attack and hit a target with a garrote, you immediately enter a grapple with them (see Grappling in the Combat section). While in this grapple, you may spend Actions to deal your garrote damage directly to the target—regardless of whether or not you have The Advantage, and with no roll required. Assuming your target needs to breathe, each Round they remain in this grapple, they must also make an Average Health Saving Throw (TN 7). Furthermore, for every Round after the first, the TN increases by a cumulative +1. If they fail once, they start to gray out. If they fail twice, they lose consciousness.*

Cost: \$5 cheese-wire, \$100 deluxe replica

Mini Crossbow

Damage 1d6+1; ROF 1. Takes 1 Action to reload.

Cost: \$40

Shuriken

Damage 1d4 + Melee Damage Bonus

Cost: \$2

OTHER EQUIPMENT

Basic First Aid Kit

This kit provides all the basics to patch someone up. First Aid Skill Tests made with the kit handy are at a -1 TN bonus.

Cost: \$20

Binoculars

Perfect for birdwatching and espionage.

Cost: \$20

Bugs (Listening or Tracking)

Individually tagged electronic tracking devices, these can be monitored either through an app on your phone or with a laptop.

Cost: \$50

Compass

Better than nothing, this compass can help you orient yourself in the wild. -2 TN bonus to Navigation Skill Tests to find your way.

Cost: \$5

Cutting Torch

Torch, tank, hoses, and kit included. If used with Improvised Weapons, it inflicts 2d6+5 damage.

Cost: \$300

Detonating Cord

Also called primer cord, this thin tube filled with explosives is actually a fuse. Of course, if you ball up 20 feet of it and light it, it will deal 1d10+5 damage in a 3-yard radius.

Cost: \$5 per foot

Detonator (Plunger)

Much more old school, but still does the trick. A fuse is run from the explosive to the plunger box. Once the box lever is pushed

down, it sends a charge through the cord to set off the explosive.

Cost: \$50

Detonator (Radio)

Used to set off explosives at a safe distance, this device has a 1-mile effective range. It can be set to detonate several different charges either individually or all at once.

Cost: \$50, if you can get it legally

Detonator (Timer)

A timer that sets off explosives when it hits zero. Actual explosives not included.

Cost: \$30

Electronic Repair Kit (Small)

A nice compact kit needed for electrical work. -1 TN bonus on any Skill Test these tools might reasonably apply to.

Cost: \$70

Electronic Repair Kit (Large)

What the other electronic kit doesn't cover, this one specializes in. Unfortunately, it also fills a backpack. -3 TN bonus to any Skill Test these tools might reasonably apply to.

Cost: \$400

Evidence Collection Kit

A budget model, this nevertheless provides everything needed to bag, label, and transport evidence away from a crime scene. Forensic laboratory not included. -3 TN bonus to Police Sciences Skill Tests.

Cost: \$200

Flashlight

Illuminates the environment.

Cost: \$5

Gas Mask

Protects against breathable toxins. This does not protect against toxins that can go through the skin.

Cost: \$100

Glow Sticks

Shake, snap, and light. These are high-intensity, twelve-hour duration sticks.

Cost: \$2

Handcuffs or Zip Ties

Restraints a target's hands and/or secures them to an object. A person can attempt to slip these by taking 1d4 damage, AP all, and making a Strength Saving Throw (TN 13) to break out of the ties or a Reflexes Saving Throw (TN 13) to slip the cuffs. The Escape Skill can be used in place of either Saving Throw.

Cost: \$20 (1 Handcuffs or 10 Zip Ties)

Hypodermic Syringe

Used to apply various chemicals through the skin.

Cost: \$15

Infrared Mini Camera

A mini camera with an adjustable thermal mode.

Cost: \$25

Kevlar Vest

+6 Protection, covers torso.

Cost: \$200



Laptop

Computer (used)

Heftier than a tablet, this is still preferred by modern mages.

Cost: \$300

Laser Sight

Attached to a gun, bow, or crossbow, this sight gives you a -2 TN bonus on all Skill Tests and Opposition Rolls with that weapon. This bonus stacks with bonuses from other optics.

Cost: \$100

Lock Picks

A set of picks and a torsion wrench for when you need to get in the quiet way. -2 TN bonus on Lock Picking Skill Tests.

Cost: \$50

Mountaineering Equipment

This package contains all the necessary tools to scale a mountain or high-rise. -3 TN bonus on Athletics Skill Tests to climb or descend.

Cost: \$400

Parachute

A fabric device with cords and harness that, when deployed, allows the user to safely float down from a great height.

Cost: \$3000

Scuba Gear

This comes complete with a wet suit, flippers, goggles, weight belt, and breathing gear.

Cost: \$700

Silencer

On those occasion when you don't want to alert the whole world to your gunfire, a silencer comes in real handy. More correctly called a 'suppressor', since it only makes a weapon less loud, a silencer will make your gun's report and muzzle flash harder to detect at a distance. Large weapons, such as machine guns, do not generally have commercial silencers available, but heavy

weapon silencers can still be jury-rigged out of things like automobile oil filters and pillows. Using an improvised silencer adds a +1 TN penalty to all Skill Tests and Opposition Rolls with the weapon.

Cost: \$600

Targeting Scope

When looking down-scope, you may spend a single Action aiming to get -3 TN bonus on all Skill Tests and Opposition Rolls to hit targets at medium range or longer. This bonus persists until you change targets, take damage, or reload. This bonus stacks with bonuses from other optics.

Cost: \$100

Tool Box (Small)

Everything from an adjustable wrench to an electric drill in a convenient, compact package. -1 TN bonus on any Skill Test these tools might reasonably apply to.

Cost: \$70

Tool Box (Large)

When the smaller tool box doesn't cover it, the large tool box does and then some. Not a box you can lug around, it is still technically portable thanks to the rollers it's been mounted on. -3 TN bonus on any Skill Test these tools might reasonably apply to.

Cost: \$700

Video Drone

This is the small "Techno Shack" type. It has a camera (low resolution) and can be used for easy surveillance.

Cost: \$100

BLISS PART 8

Harcourt and her men are gone by the time Frederick and Mallory arrive. In the meantime, we watch the Syndicate take several objects from the burning house, moving with the speed and precision of practiced looters.

They stay out of our way while we get the surviving members of our team to safety, so we stay out of theirs.

If the Order wants what they took, the Order can negotiate for it.

Eventually, Frederick gives us our debriefing, but only after the mines have been disarmed, the bear-traps safely triggered, our wounds treated, and the fire safely contained.

EMS and a few fire trucks show up briefly, but the Order is good at dealing with mundane interference. Papers are flashed, and the emergency service men and women leave in silence.

When they're gone, Frederick tells us that another team will take over the investigation from here.

Augustina shoots me a critical look as he says it, but I ignore it, reveling in the fact that I'm still alive.

It's better than Bliss. Better than coffee. Better than magic.

It's the purest high.

Despite the flames, despite the warm morning air, I feel a chill in my bones, and so when someone eventually hands me

a thermal blanket, I take it gratefully, wrapping it around myself.

I'm exhausted and the focus of the scene seems to have shifted away from me, so I let my eyelids fluttered and close.

The last thing I see before consciousness ebbs away is an imprint of bright red, like the spots that linger after you've stared at the sun. I remember it in the flames of the burning farmhouse, in the feel of the powder against my fingers, and in Wade's voice when he said that he had tons of repeat buyers.

It looks like a goat, but it stands like a man.

It looks achingly familiar, although I can't remember why.

A moment later I'm gone into dreaming and the concerns of the waking world are lost to me.





THE WORLD OF WICKED PACTS

For the most part, the world of Wicked Pacts is our own. There are drones. There is crime. There are foreign wars. Infrastructure crumbles. Families need to eat.

Compassion and sacrifice fight against convenience and necessity in every city and every home across the world.

But on top of that, there are demons. There are angels. Other worlds touch our own and the shadows are alive with movement.

The world of Wicked Pacts is like our own, but with a little bit *more*.

This section covers that *more*.

HIDDEN FACTIONS

Vast and intricate conspiracies lie beneath the skin of mortal society. These are a few of the biggest ones.

THE HERMETIC ORDER *OCCULTA SAPIENTIAE HONOREM SECRECY. WISDOM. HONOR.*

The Hermetic Order was put together long ago, following the near-extinction of mages at the hands of the mundanes. The Order's stated goal is to keep the peace of the hidden world, preventing supernatural problems from spilling over into the public eye. In practice, however, they sometimes behave more like a bureaucracy, and there are messy political rivalries within the Order that are hundreds of years old.

The Hermetic Order is led by a triumvirate. The Triumvirate serves over the Senate, who can depose any one of them with a two-thirds majority vote. When a member of the Triumvirate dies, retires, or is removed, they are replaced by a member of the Senate.

Senators are appointed from Hermetic Order territories across the globe. Each Senator's role is to represent their own territory to the Triumvirate. Because Senators spend much of their time away from their territories, the actual administration of the territories is left to the

Praetorian Guard, the Arbiters, and the Praecursators. The Praetorian Guard enforce the Order's laws, the Arbiters interpret the Order's laws and conduct internal investigations to ensure that everyone is in compliance, and the Praecursators infiltrate other factions, feeding information about potential threats to the Arbiters and the Guards.

There *is* overlap between the roles of these departments, and in any given territory it is not unheard of for the Guard to be conducting its own intelligence work, the Arbiters to be kicking down doors and dragging out traitors, and the Praecursators to be skirmishing against a heavily armed enemy. However, this can sometimes lead to jurisdictional disagreements between the departments, and more than once the Triumvirate has needed to send outside troops into a territory to keep the local Guard and Arbiters from going to war against each other.

Fortunately, while individual territories may have small differences in their legal cods, there are six inviolate laws that every territory agrees on.

- 1: No showing off powers.
- 2: No needless killing of mortals.
- 3: No permanent altering of minds.
- 4: No trapping of souls.
- 5: You may challenge a superior to his post but once per year.
- 6: Neutral ground will be respected. You may not initiate violence there.

To help keep order in particularly troubled territories, the Praetorian Guard is licensed to conscript other magic users into their service. This conscription is technically

voluntary, and the work of the conscripts is well-compensated, but refusing conscription usually gets the attention of the Arbiters, so not every mage is in a position to say no.

Apart from the work they do to govern their territories and uphold their laws, the Order also has a keen interest in the education of fledgling mages. Many magical schools are Order-run or Order-financed facilities, and particularly promising students are groomed for positions in the Order. On the other hand, especially disruptive, incompetent, or unstable students are given little support or even expelled, leading to a popular Order belief that the Onyx Syndicate is made up of their rejects.

THE ONYX SYNDICATE *RESPECT YOUR BETTERS*

A counter-organization to the Hermetic Order, the Syndicate is partly made up of those spellcasters that the Order deemed either unfit, unworthy, or too dangerous to belong in their own ranks. However, it has also attracted mages from powerful independent families—ones who would rather rule over their own holdings than live by the Order's laws.

The original Syndicate was formed shortly after the Order was, and it was intended to provide free-thinking mages with a place where they could study and work outside of the Order's stifling regulations.

Unfortunately, the near-extinction of all mages at the hands of the mundanes was still a little too fresh in the Order's minds, and every member of the Syndicate that could be found was immediately hunted down and exterminated.

It took a quarter of a century for the Syndicate to form again, and this time it was more careful. Working in secret and trusting only the mages that could *prove* the Order would sooner kill them than recruit them as a Praecursor, it began carving out small holdings for itself. As time wore on and the Order became embroiled in its own internal politics, the Syndicate grew, bit by bit, until finally it was able to announce itself again.

The Order promptly declared war on the new Syndicate, then realized that there was no way to have that war without alerting several billion mundanes to the existence of magic. The Order never formally renounced their declaration of war, but they amended it to a peacekeeping action: they would punish all illegal activity that occurred on Order territory. Illegal activity included being a voluntary member of the Syndicate.

The Order also announced that they would intervene in Syndicate affairs whenever they suspected the following:

- Forbidden knowledge.
- Training of unstable mages.
- Manufacturing or trading of illegal magical aids or items.
- Manipulation of mundanes.
- Use of human sacrifice to create magical hotspots, haunted or cursed locations, or to power certain artifacts.

The Syndicate, laughing, made a counter-proposal: they would accept any mage unwilling or unable to find a place in the Order. They would train any student that came to them. They would allow any mage to research and practice their craft as they wished—so long as they obeyed their superiors and worked to build a stronger Syndicate.

The Syndicate has been growing rapidly ever since.

Although the Syndicate likes to present itself as a place where mages can go to be free, its internal structure is a very strict hierarchy. Every mage has a master, every master has a master, some of those masters control entire holdings, and at the top of the food chain is the Syndicate Count.

Syndicate masters have absolute authority over the mages underneath them—including the right to sentence them to death. However, if a master dies, one of their subordinate mages moves up. If the master's *superior* dies, the master moves up. Many Syndicate mages die under unusual circumstances. Formal dueling, as is used in the Order, is also allowed, but it is more commonly used as a tool used to put a subordinate in their place. There are no recent stories of anyone attempting to duel the Count but doing so would almost certainly be suicide. No one could rise to the top of the Syndicate without being a very powerful mage.

Directly below the Count is the Council. There is one member of the Council for each Syndicate holding, although many of these holdings must operate in secret as they are on territories that the Order has claimed for

themselves.

Turf wars have erupted in the past between the Order and the Syndicate, but generally the Order tries to keep each of these limited to a quick series of clandestine operations. The Syndicate is less concerned with throwing around its power recklessly, especially since that forces the Order to waste its own resources on the cleanup, but it also has unpleasant memories of the last time the mundanes realized that magic was real. It doesn't want to trigger another round of witch-hunts any more than the Order does (at least, not until it's suborned the heads of as many mortal governments as it needs to blunt the mundanes' military response) so the Syndicate forcefully cleans up incidents where the existence of the supernatural becomes visible to mortals.

To help keep the rank and file members of the Syndicate in line, the Count, the Council, and the holdings each have Soldiers who do their grunt work and dirty deeds. The Syndicate is also always on the lookout for fresh talent and each holding has Recruiters dedicated to finding new potentials and bringing them in.

Training for new casters is done in small groups, with one teacher to probably three or four students at most. Teachers typically hand over their students to other masters at the end of their training, but some teachers take on their own pupils, presiding over small armies of underlings.

ORGANIZED CRIME

THE BOSS WANTS A WORD WITH YOU

Mobsters are dangerous people and they don't get to where they are by being stupid. They know how to find an advantage and squeeze it for all it's worth, so it's no surprise that many criminal outfits have discreetly learned about the supernatural or attracted the attention of a twisted mage who needed back up.

The marriage of the two outfits is perfect, and many criminal organizations either have someone working for them who is gifted, or the person heading the organization is a mage.

Some of these groups even supply supernatural black-market goods or other cheap, dangerous "charms" to people. Because of the crossover between mundane crime and magical crime, the Hermetic Order often finds itself enforcing mundane laws.

Consequently, there have been more than a few times that the Praetorian guard has gone toe to toe with the mob.

VATICAN

DEUS VIDET

The Vatican has been in the monster-hunting business for a long time. To combat the spread of easy-to-perform demonic rituals, they have taken to publicly denying or downplaying the existence of the supernatural, but they have deep archives and a long history of encounters with the

occult.

Formed at the same time as the First Council of Nicaea was convened, the organization that would eventually become the Vatican was created under the direct supervision of Pope Constantine I. Constantine, concerned by a surge in demonic activity, gathered together an eclectic group of monster-hunters and charged them with the holy persecution of the forces of Hell. Of note, not all of these monster-hunters were Christian—and not all of them focused exclusively on inhuman monsters. Many worked specifically on the extermination of mages.

As the organization grew, steps were taken to educate and train new hunters in recognizing and combating evil in the lay world. Furthermore, the church began amassing information on magic and demonology to better understand their enemy. Some of this knowledge proved to be dangerous—and in a few cases, actually corrosive to the mind—and so the Shunned Vaults were created to contain it.

The general feeling in the Vatican is that if the public had easy access to magic and miracles, it would be like giving a child a loaded gun. Over time, however, they have come to see the Hermetic Order as tentative partners in their work. Although there have been covert wars between the church and the Order, the last of those was a hundred years ago, and it was more an accident of politics than any actual antipathy between the two organizations.

The relationship between the church and the Templars is more complex, since the Templars broke from the church a long time

ago because of church persecution and the wound has never fully healed. Knowing that the Templars are fighting the good fight, members of the Vatican see them as brothers and sisters, but the Templars are cautious around the more politically savvy Vatican and that feeling of kinship is not always returned.

In the modern world, the Vatican's work is mostly clandestine. They seek out potential field agents, train them, and send them on sacred missions in the name of God. In order to keep knowledge of the occult contained, most priests know nothing of these operations—much less the practical applications of magic and demonology. However, the Vatican has safehouses all over the world, and more than one of their operative-training facilities masquerades as a remote church, convent, or orphanage.

TEMPLAR KNIGHTS *AND THE ORDO DRACONIS* *DEUS VULT*

Long ago, the Knights Templar were the shining beacon of the church. They were devout worshipers, fanatical fighters, and clever bankers. Unfortunately, their success engendered jealousy in the other holy orders. Every coin that went to the Templars was one less in the coffers of their contemporaries. In time, this jealousy turned to resentment, and the resentment to scheming.

What the other orders didn't realize was that the Templars were the hand of the Vatican. They were a literal army against evil. Those Templars that knew about this

were forbidden from discussing it with outsiders, causing many of them to become insular and withdrawn. This did not endear them to the secular authorities of the time and eventually they were disbanded during a political coup. Many Templar were hunted down, tortured, and forced to confess to crimes that would have gone against their very nature. Others escaped, went into hiding, and planned the re-founding of the order.

When the Templar re-emerged, it was independent from the Vatican. Unable to trust that they hadn't been sabotaged by their superiors, the Templar took upon themselves the sole responsibility of standing against the forces of darkness.

Although they had been a strictly mundane organization before, the Templar realized that there had been magically gifted members among them all along. Unsure how to treat these mages, the Templar fell back on their military experience and partitioned them off into their own division: the Ordo Draconis. The Ordo, named after Saint George the Dragon slayer, would work in conjunction with the Templar, their magic supporting the Templar's holy miracles. Thus, each group was able to focus their skills and purpose toward whatever helped them be better hunters.

Still, fearful of what had happened in the past, the Templars have maintained a strict and watchful eye to ensure that history does not repeat itself.

So far, they have done this with dignity and honor.

THE FRATRICIDAL ORDER OF BAPHOMET *ANATHEMA SIT*

Also known as the Sovereign Knights of the Fratricidal Order of Baphomet--or, among their members, as the Frat--the Fratricidal Order was founded shortly after the establishment of the Knights Templar. It began as a difference in philosophy between the Templars' founding members, but as Papal support for the Templar grew, that difference in philosophy quickly turned septic.

The founding members of the Frat felt that the Templar should be an order of beggars; that the money and privileges being given to them from all across Christendom could only corrupt them in the eyes of the Lord. Their arguments were first rebuffed, then ignored, as all the while the Templar grew richer. Perhaps the two orders would have eventually separated, both becoming powerful forces in the service of the church, if not for the discovery of the being living underneath the Temple of Solomon.

The entity, identifying itself only as "Baphomet", was found in a bricked-up storage room, trapped in several layers of carefully drawn ritual circles. The members of the Fratricidal Order who found it had been looking for a place to meet in secret. Before they could run and tell anyone else, the entity told them that it was bound to serve the owners of the temple and that it was a powerful being with a great

knowledge of many things. It offered its finders a glimpse into the future of the Templar--and it showed them every lapse of faith, every lavish excess that the organization's worldly wealth would bring. It told the shaken knights that they were too late to save the Poor Brothers, but they were *not* too late to limit the damage that the Templar would do to the faithful.

At first the knights did not want to believe, but soon they realized they had no choice. They freed Baphomet from its ritual circles and, with its help, turned their attention to destroying the Templar from within.



Baphomet took good care of its early followers, giving them unnatural strength, exceptional senses, and a powerful

resistance to aging. They were true believers in the rightness of their cause but, in order to tear down the Templar, they recognized that they would need more than just a handful of knights. They began to recruit anyone they could bribe, blackmail, or tempt from the ranks of the Templar. These recruits were ordered to sabotage military actions, poison relationships with friendly powers, and introduce calculated bits of heresy into the Templars' traditions and, by the time the king of France was burning Templar at the stake, the Fratricidal Order was composed almost entirely of hedonists, psychopaths, and reckless heretics. Not long after, the pope formally disbanded the Templar, but this was not the end of the Fratricidal Order.

Because the Templar persisted in secret, so too did the Frat. Most of its original leadership remained, clinging to their purpose, but the rest of their order had been thoroughly subverted by Baphomet's influence. The Frat's new brothers desired wealth, worldly pleasure--and above all else the extermination of the Templar, whom they had been conditioned to hate with a searing intensity.

Today's Fratricidal Order is powerful and covert, with holdings all across Europe and the United States. Unlike the competing masters of the Onyx Syndicate, and in complete contradiction to the "Fratricidal" part of their name, members of the Frat do not hesitate to cooperate with and support one another. Some serve as infiltrators, working their way into the ranks of the Templar. Others

act as financiers, holding and controlling land, corporate assets, and small political factions. When the time is right, the Fratricidal Order stages nation-scale acts of sabotage against the Templar, turning their members by the hundreds or razing their holdings to the ground. The founders are rarely seen, but where they are sighted, bloodshed quickly follows.

Most of the time, members of the Fratricidal Order dress for whatever role they are playing. However, when flying their colors, they wear black cloaks with gold crosses.

In deference to the changes in warfare that occurred between the 1300's and the 2000's, they also wear black BDUs and flak jackets, but the higher-ranking members carry ceremonial swords alongside their more functional Belgian-made automatic rifles and sidearms.

The Templar are sworn enemies of the Fratricidal Order--when they will actually admit to its existence--but the Hermetic Order has a more complicated relationship with them. As long as the Frat abides by the Hermetics' rules, the Hermetics won't pursue armed violence against them. Meanwhile the Frat, not wanting to open up a second front on their war with the Templar, does its best to keep the worst of its crimes non-magical and out of the public eye.

The Syndicate's relationship with the Fratricidal Order varies from Syndicate member to Syndicate member, but it is rarely cooperative. The Syndicate take a dim view on being suborned by demons, and in private they consider the Frat as a

whole to be full of losers. The Frat returns that antipathy tenfold, seeing the Syndicate as useless and corrupt, and it is not unusual for Frat teams to hit Syndicate holdings as targets of opportunity while they are out on another op.

THE RED CIRCLE

THE SPIRITS EXIST TO SERVE US

In dealings with the spirits, there is a good way and then there is an easy way.

The good way is show the spirits proper respect, to make offerings that enrich them, to channel their powers to heal and correct injustices, and to strengthen your community with their support.

The easy way is to coerce the spirits into doing your bidding, to supplicate only the Invisibles that bring you power, to sell your talents to the highest bidder, and to trap your community in service to your desires.

The Red Circle are devotees of the easy way. They kill, coerce, subvert, and appeal only to the darkest natures of the Invisibles. Even mentioning their name to a Vodou mage is enough to get shops closed, shutters rolled down, and doors slammed in the questioner's face.

Vodou mages hate what the Red Circle is commonly used as: an excuse for others to dismiss their entire school of magic as evil. On the other hand, the Vodou mages who are actually aware of the Circle's continued existence are in a desperate battle to ensure that it is eradicated for good.

It has already been destroyed twice, but it

has a habit of rising from its own ashes.

The Circle's original creator is thought to be a noble, Jean Mazarin, who moved to Haiti during the period of French colonial rule. Having left behind rumors of unsavory practices at home, Mazarin established a remote plantation, seeming to pay little attention to matters of soil fertility or what his new estate actually grew. He hired only a handful of domestic staff, but he purchased the services of a surprising number of guards. For slaves, he took a special interest in old practitioners of the local religion, and he spent most of his time on the estate asking questions of them.

When it became clear that he was trying to develop a shortcut to power through Vodou, and when his questions began turning to matters of human sacrifice, both his slaves and the domestic staff rebelled, burning the plantation house down with him still inside. Unfortunately, not only did he survive, but the catastrophe fueled him. Within months, he had both rebuilt the plantation and inducted a few other nobles into his cult, promising them riches, immortality, and worldly power; even a restoration of the French monarchy with them on top. Together, they slaughtered a sickening number of people, ultimately corrupting an Invisible with their sacrifices.

Fortunately, before Mazarin's plans could come to fruition, his escaped slaves came back, armed to the teeth, and he and his followers were lost in the violence of the Haitian revolution. The idea of the Red Circle then lay dormant until the late 1950's, when Francois Duvalier came to power. Though not a mage, Duvalier was an enthusiast for the ideas and imagery of

Vodou--particularly when they could be used to solidify his rule over the people of Haiti. He revived the methods and practices of the Circle and shared them with members of his secret police--the Tonton Macoute--some of which were mages.

The second Circle is thought to have ultimately annihilated itself in an outright war between its members, but due to the secrecy of the Macoute, not everybody can be accounted for.

Today, to most mages, the Red Circle seems hardly more than a ghost story. Its powers are insidious but easy to attribute to ghosts, demons, or simple bad luck. Unfortunately, it is very much still in play, and whoever is at the head of this third circle seems to be gearing up to make an exceptionally large sacrifice.

How large?

State-sized.

NIGHT'S BLADE

IF IT BLEEDS, WE CAN KILL IT

When the Hermetic Order was formed, and the world's surviving mages retreated into the shadows, knowledge of magic slowly faded from the mundanes. They forgot that there were mages. They forgot that they had killed them. And they forgot about the kinds of creatures that the mages had kept in check.

Night's Blade agents typically refer to this period of time as The Slaughter.

Unprotected, the mundanes were fed upon by every type of supernatural creature imaginable. With nothing to keep them from turning invisible, editing memories, or slipping silently through the shadows, creatures like vampires infiltrated mundane society utterly. In place of the rule of the mages, there was almost a dominion of night.

Fortunately, a few mundanes remained who remembered the eradication of the mages, and they were quick to adapt their techniques to take on the monsters.

The hunted became the hunters. Groups of ungifted shared information and trained together. Then they built a network to alert each other to changes in the occult world. They watched those they felt could be a danger and hunted down anyone or anything that had done or was likely to ever do wrong.

Hunter lodges were established, with dues to finance training, weapons acquisition, and living expenses for the lodges' members. Those lodges have persisted to this day. Although many of the originals have been purged by the creatures they were trying to destroy, new lodges are constantly being founded to take their place.

Attrition is high in the war against monsters, and the Hermetic Order treats Night's Blade as a tentative ally for this very reason. Although the Blade can and

will kill mages that it suspects of wrongdoing, it devotes most of its attention to the types of creatures that the Order is also threatened by.

Relations between the Blade and the Syndicate are less rosy, with members of both factions sometimes killing each other on sight. The Blade's view of the Red Circle is even less hospitable, and the Blade goes well out of its way to disrupt the Circle's pet projects whenever it can.

HALF BLOODED

STEEL IS STRONGER THAN IRON

Despite the genetic problems that plague the Pureblooded, problems that often have to be fixed with expensive rituals or rare artifacts, Half Bloods are snubbed by much of magical society. In a system where a person can legitimately advance in rank by magically dueling their boss, the people with the most innate magical ability tend to rise to the top--and when one of those people isn't a Pure Blood, the Pure Bloods often try to close ranks and shut them out anyway.

Despite having a healthy mix of mundane genetics in their own bloodlines, Angel Bloods and Demon Bloods also tend to have a certain amount of prejudice towards Half Blood mages. There are more Halfblooded than any other magic lineage, but other mages tend to consistently under-value their power and assign them less prestigious jobs because of it—enforcing a stereotype of Halfblooded as secretaries, messengers, and squads of heavily armed

backup.

Because of this kind of treatment, many Halfblooded have banded together to support one another and challenge the way that mage society views them. Their group is only mid-sized, but it is growing.

Although they also provide emotional support, career advice, and financial assistance to Half Blood mages in the Order, ½ Blooded's biggest success to date has been setting up a series of schools to teach mages from almost purely mundane bloodlines; ones whose parents would never have suspected that magic was a thing people could be born with. Pureblooded scholars scoff at these schools as training camps for dabblers and hedge witches, but their students are flourishing. Some graduate and join the Order, but more and more often these students are becoming independents.

Officially, relations between the Order and ½ Blooded are positive. Even the most arrogant Pure Blood knows that the Order's ranks are full of Half Blood mages, and that antagonizing them badly enough could provoke a very messy change of power.

Unofficially, things are more strained. The Order doesn't particularly want to change its ways and habitual prejudice runs deep in some the Pure Blood families.

An outside force could try to exploit this, but they are just as likely to provoke ½ Blooded as they are to cause any meaningful damage to the Order, and so thus far none have tried.

ALCHEMISTS' GUILD

EPPUR SI MUOVE

For as long as man can remember, there have been those who brew and bottle the natural world. Herbalists, philosophers, shamans, and early doctors were all fascinated with this art—a power which could be used independently from the gift of magic.

This series of techniques and principles is known as Alchemy.

Although Alchemy can technically be learned by anyone, knowledge of it is closely and jealously guarded. The ingredients that fuel the most powerful of its potions are hard to find and relying too much on its powers can have side-effects on the human body—such as surplus limb growth or mercury poisoning. Fortunately, almost every licensed Alchemist has a potion for fixing these little chemical errors.

There *are* independent practitioners of Alchemy, but most Alchemists are a part of the Alchemists' Guild. The guild regulates not just the kinds of potions that a person can brew, but the ingredients that can go into them, the level of education an Alchemist needs to qualify for membership, and when and how the Alchemist can sell the finished product. In return, it gives licensed Alchemists a captive market.

The Alchemists' Guild operates as a functional monopoly, driving freelancers out of business and ensuring that only their own products can make it to market. This has seriously reduced the number of

scammers and snake-oil peddlers who would otherwise try to pose as legitimate businessmen, but it has also slowed innovation to a crawl, as it takes a long time for new formulae to be approved by the Guild.

Many schools and organizations have tried to open themselves up to new ways of perusing the Alchemical arts, but the Guild has always come down hard on anyone who tries to compete. Even the Hermetic Order's schools are only allowed to teach a watered-down version of Alchemy, and their license to teach it is revocable if they fail a single Guild inspection.

The unfortunate truth is that the best potions and ingredients are all run through the Guild. A mage can brew potions for personal consumption but selling even a few tipples for pocket change is *forcefully* discouraged. This has caused some Order mages to reach out to Syndicate contacts, tentatively inquiring about making a few cheap purchases. Their contacts' response, if it can be believed, is that the Guild has them just as badly over a barrel.

Supposedly, even the Syndicate masters have to deal with regular Guild inspections.

LABYRINTH

A RUMOR. NOTHING MORE.

Even among the magic-using community, there are conspiracy theories. In the case of this shadowy group, the theories are regrettably true.

Labyrinth, as far as the rumors go, is an ancient organization. It does not involve

itself in obvious political maneuvers and it does not partake in the war between the Order and the Syndicate or the war between the Templar and the Frat. In fact, it is either involved in nothing at all, or it has its fingers in every major event that happens in the world.

There seems to be no middle ground.

If Labyrinth has an operational structure, it is cell-based. Small groups operate in almost complete isolation from each other, working towards a shared final objective. Individual groups have their own preferences for the kinds of tools they use, but they seem to have no hesitation in mixing magic, monsters, artifacts, and mundane means to achieve their inscrutable ends.

Supposedly, Labyrinth agents can be identified by a ring or other piece of jewelry with a maze pattern hidden somewhere on it. This would be bad trade-craft, especially for such a secretive organization, but rumors of this have caused some brash young mages to sew, tattoo, or engrave labyrinths onto their own jewelry, clothes, or skin, so perhaps it is a more sophisticated camouflage than it would first appear to be.

The only reports of alleged Labyrinth agents being captured are frustratingly short and usually involve the person biting down on a false tooth and releasing an alchemical solution inside. What remains of the agent is unsuitable for resurrection.

Most organizations have no desire to become involved with this group. Without a clear sense of Labyrinth's motives and goals, even the Syndicate prefers to leave

well enough alone.

UNSEEN TERRITORIES

For as long as it has existed, human civilization has been steeped in the supernatural.

Certain long-lived entities, vestiges from ancient times, can recount most of this history--from the periods of occult rule that predominated until 500 C.E. to the *firm* establishment of mundanes as the most dangerous animal on the globe by the late 1700's.

Because many supernatural beings do not live a standard human lifespan, the regions they call their own often transcend or outright ignore the borders of mundane nations. A lich that underwent ritual death and rebirth during the middle of the Pax Romana is likely to still think of France as Gaul and consider it a province of Rome, even if it does not say this aloud.

Similarly, the silhouettes of supernatural empires still linger in the world, their power structures and networks not completely dispersed by the rise and rule of the mundanes.

Included here are a few areas of interest.

KINGDOMS OF THE CARPATHIANS

Range: Modern day Austria, Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine, Romania, Serbia

The Carpathian Mountains--with their extensive territory, high and forbidding peaks, and incredible expanses of pristine, undisturbed forest--have the three critical elements that an overtly supernatural society needs to survive in the modern world. On top of that, by moving through the Carpathians, creatures of any sort can cross national boundaries without checkpoints or paperwork. Finally, the area around the range is historically rich with armed conflict and periods of civil unrest. The chaos and infrastructure damage caused by these periods makes excellent cover for the operations of predators.

Combined, all of these factors have ensured that the range is crawling with undead.

The oldest vampires and liches in the Carpathians live in lairs deep in the mountains, either relying on minions to bring them sustenance or else foraging on hikers. Younger and less powerful undead live in or near the small towns that rest in the foothills. Many of these undead serve as information brokers or procurers to the mountain aristocracy, acting as a point of contact in between the peaks and the cities.

The cities, meanwhile, are occupied by the mortal agents of the mountain powers, although a few minor undead still do make

a home here. These often work in concert with mortals, engaging in arms smuggling, human trafficking, and forgery to keep their masters in the mountains happy.

Only rarely does a lich or vampire from the deep mountains visit a city, but this is treated by the city undead as something in between being visited by a mob boss and being visited by a nuclear weapon.

And speaking of which, when the Soviet Union dissolved, a surprising number of researchers from their less-well-publicized projects took shelter here. Some were taken in by the undead, given a grounding in Alchemy, and turned into brilliant fleshwrights. Others stuck together, forming small communities in the old Soviet bunkers that remain in the range.

This second group does not seem to have produced anything yet, but in the towns and cities a black market in corpse parts is quietly booming.

MYSTERIES OF THE CRADLE

Range: Modern day Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya, Uganda, Sudan, South Sudan, Eritrea, Djibouti, Yemen

Humanity's birthplace is a land of old magic and long-buried powers. Disrupted by Europe's rush for colonization, and with key pieces of its own history forgotten, the Cradle nevertheless endures.

Angel-sightings in this region are common, and it is claimed that the Angels

have a particular interest in this place. So, does the Ordo Draconis, and a surprising amount of its worldly power is concentrated here; a remnant of the spread of Christianity throughout Africa.

Local mages often seem uninterested in both the Ordo and the Angels, but they also appear equally disinterested in the conflict between the Order and the Syndicate. Following traditions that some of them claim have been in practice for over two hundred thousand years, these mages safeguard the land against any that would seek to harm it. As long as the newcomers don't interfere, they leave them alone.

In spite of all this--or perhaps because of it--supernatural creatures are rare in the Cradle. Some stories circulate about reptilian shapeshifters in the river basins or the occasional totemic spirit wandering the flatlands, and very rarely a lich crosses into the area from deeper in the continent, but mostly it is assumed that the Angels seek out and destroy intruding entities. A few information brokers argue that it is the work of the Templar instead, or that the touch of the sacred land burns away lycanthropes and the undead, but neither theory has been proven.

A fringe belief, that supernaturals avoid the Cradle because there is something vast that is already living there, seems better fodder for ghost-stories than actual fact.

Of course, no one would argue that the Cradle isn't important. The land thrums with magic and its Ley Lines are some of the strongest in the world. The largest line in Uganda pulls several times the energetic flow of the deepest lines on the North

American continent, and many of the Cradle's Ley Lines are simply too powerful to be tapped. An average mage trying to draw on the current from one of these lines would be like a mosquito trying to drink from an artery. Nevertheless, Cradle mages guard the lines closely, fearful of what could happen if one were ever disrupted.

On a somewhat lighter note, one of the wilder stories about the Cradle purports that it is the gate to the Garden of Eden. The Ley Lines, the story goes, are keeping it shut. This theory, while appealing to some locals, is nevertheless unprovable. Only the craziest of mages would ever try to divert the lines to see if it causes militant Angels to swarm out of the nexus.

SPIRIT CIRCLES

Range: The Arctic Circle, as well as modern day Alaska, Queen Elizabeth Islands, Greenland, Iceland, Norway, Russia

Low population density, stretches of unspoiled wilderness, and relatively inhospitable conditions have made the countries bordering the Arctic Circle a refuge for the supernatural. Displaced from much of Europe, Canada, and Northern China by mundane technology, weapons, and surveillance (as well as by hunting and persecution from mages), lycanthropes, trolls, and undead are found more frequently in this territory than almost any place further south.

Their migration has largely eradicated the local vodyanoi, rusalki, wendigo, and other beings native to the land, and the surviving native supernaturals are fiercely isolationist and xenophobic as a result.

Mages are not welcome in this land and are violently discouraged from traveling too far north. In recent years, attacks on Syndicate, Order, and unaligned mages moving through the region have only increased.

An additional concern to traveling mages is the annual vampire migrations. Driven by the tantalizing prospect of winter weeks without sun, the haemophagi that gather in the arctic circle are nevertheless forced to flee back south during the summer months when the nuclear death-furnace refuses to quit the sky. With limited resources and feeding as they go, these retreating vampires trigger a small wave of violent assaults and murders in the northern hemisphere during the spring of every year.

Mages that are native to the north are put in a very precarious position as a result of all of this. Surrounded by their enemies, they forge tight-knit communities and generally decline membership in outside organizations like the Order and the Syndicate.

It is by these mages that the region is named. According to them, the boundaries between the worlds of the living and the dead are particularly thin in the arctic. With only a little magic and the right rituals, a person standing under the aurora borealis can commune with the spirits of those who were closest to them in life, asking for guidance and information.

Of course, not all these spirits are benevolent. A bond with an enemy can be just as close as a bond with a friend, and more than a few well-intentioned mages have returned home possessed by bitter

rivals.

THE ALTAR OF THE SKY

Range: Modern day Tibet, Nepal, Jammu, Kashmir

Detailed studies by the mages of the Order have not been able to determine whether the monks produced by the Bright Heavens, Vacant Sky monastery in Tibet are ever-so-slightly Halfblooded, or if they are the beginnings of an entirely new Bloodline.

Located in a remote area of the already predominantly empty plateau, the Vacant Sky temple is known for having been miraculously undamaged during China's Cultural Revolution. Despite this, there are a number of accounts claiming that it was shelled to rubble on both separate occasions.

Vacant Sky is not the only temple with a reputation like this in the region. However, only rarely do monks of these temples leave to travel any further than the next town, so the legends remain mostly local. Occasionally, one of the plateau's monks is assigned a task that requires a visit to the outside world, and less often one of them is excommunicated, but historically these wanderers are few and far between.

On the rare occasions when the traveling monks have been pushed to violence, they have demonstrated powers not unlike those of a Grunt--with a few noteworthy changes. For example, they seem to be able to strike someone from across a room without actually crossing any of the intervening

distance.

No matter their home monastery, these monks all refer to this region as the Altar of the Sky. Who that altar might be to is unclear, and the monks have not shown a willingness to explain.

In unrelated news, the other major rumor currently coming out of the Tibetan Plateau is of isolated homes and villages emptying out overnight. The structures are found days later by curious neighbors, who note that the empty buildings are covered in thick sheets of a gauzy, tarpaulin-like substance—but of the original residents, there is typically no sign.

TRADE ROUTES OF THE MESOGELIOS

Range: Modern day Spain, France, Monaco, Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Montenegro, Albania, Greece, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Malta, Cyprus--all where they touch the Mediterranean Sea.

The Mediterranean--with its temperate climate, abundant sea life, and myriad of islands--was an almost perfect cradle for the civilizations that grew to prominence on its shores. The sea's navigable currents and clear trade routes aided the Phoenicians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Egyptians, and eventually the Caliphates in their conquests. In time, the Ottoman Empire collapsed and control over the sea fractured back into the hands of a plurality of nations, but the sea's true ruler, commerce, has never been

unseated from its throne.

Nowadays, the Mediterranean is still a place where the great powers of the world go to trade. Those powers just happen to be supernatural.

Beings from all over the globe travel to the Mesogeios to buy artifacts, court alliances, and solicit information from trusted brokers.

They also go to the Mesogeios to buy other supernaturals.

On a private estate in Corfu, the ultra-rich make offers on lycanthropes for private dogfights. In Venice, they bid on automata. And in Valencia, rumor says they sell mages.

For the less morally bankrupt, a gray market in artifacts, alchemy, and occult mercenary work can also be found in almost any port on the sea--with the choicest items being the ones drawn from the waters of the Mediterranean. The price for local artifacts is high, but it is also reflective of the risks in treasure-hunting here.

Sirens, both of the tiger shark and the lamprey subtypes, have long memories and still hold a grudge for their near-total extermination by the Ottoman Empire. Cults on remote islands worship spirits of storm and catastrophe. And claim-jumpers follow rival crews and ambush them as soon as they've hauled a promising find to the surface.

Worst of all, the depths of the sea are thick with ghosts. These spirits do not trouble those on the surface, but divers are in

particular peril.

Across history, more people have died in the Mediterranean than in any other sea in the world. As such, the area is also something of a mecca for exorcists and necromancers.



NEUTRAL GROUND, LEY LINES, AND DEAD ZONES

NEUTRAL GROUND

In every city with a mage presence, there are Neutral Territories that have been agreed upon for meetings between the Order and the Syndicate. Generally, these territories are magic dead zones, and typically they are uninhabited. On rare occasions, they are administered by powerful beings who disliked armed

conflict—which has roughly the same effect. A Neutral Ground is meant to be a place where even rival mages don't take potshots at each other—although this has not always *completely* prevented violence from breaking out there.

Generally speaking, any party that initiates an armed conflict in a Neutral Ground loses face with their superiors, so mages only do this when they have very good reason—or when they're desperate.

LEY LINES

Ley Lines are natural, super-charged highway of magical energy. They run in a branching lattice across the globe, sometimes crossing each other. The places where they meet are called Ley Line Nexuses. There, raw power can be found that is entirely beyond mortal control.

Characters may try to locate a Ley Line with a Tough Occultism or Magic Lore test (TN 12). Once they find it, they may step into it and see what happens. Anyone who enters a Ley Line must roll 1d20 and consult the following table.

In addition, anyone who steps into a line must draw a Tarot card. This could be good or bad, depending on whether the card is drawn right-side up or in reverse.

Roll 1d20

1	Full Recharge
2	Recharge $\frac{3}{4}$ Magic Points (round up)
3	Recharge $\frac{1}{2}$ Magic Points (round up)
4	Recharge $\frac{1}{4}$ Magic Points (round up)
5	Recharge $\frac{1}{2}$ Magic Points (round up) and become stained for 2d6 hours with energy

from the Line. Only those with supernatural senses can see this energy, but the stain cannot be concealed.

6 Recharge $\frac{1}{2}$ Magic Points (round up) and draw an extra Tarot

7 Gain 2 Scene Points. This may temporarily take you over your maximum.

8 Recharge $\frac{1}{4}$ Magic Points (round up) and you may tap into the cosmos for answers. You may ask the GM one yes or no question about the current scenario. The GM must answer honestly.

9 Full HP and MP Recharge

10 Recharge $\frac{1}{2}$ Magic Points (round up) and you abruptly unlock a universal mystery. Instantly gain 3 Experience Points.

11 Nothing

12 Recharge $\frac{1}{2}$ Magic Points (round up) and receive a headache that lasts one day. All your Skills and Spells are at a +2 TN penalty until the headache wears off.

13 Amnesia: Lose access to 1d6 Skills and Spells (half of them, round down, are picked randomly) for 1d4 hours.

14 Haunting: A ghost has latched on to you. The GM determines what type of ghost this is, but it is obsessed with you for the next 1d4 days.

15 Spell Misfire: GM picks a Spell from your list and does not tell you which one was selected. The next time you try to use that Spell, you receive 2d3 damage and reduce your roll to cast the Spell by half.

16 Nothing

17 Supernatural Marking: For the next 24 hours, a radiant nimbus calls evil creatures to you. It is like a dinner bell for the foul and the hungry.

18 For the next 1d6 hours, all Spells that you try to cast fail.

19 Energy Backlash: Immediately take 2d6 damage.

20 Mystical Meltdown: Immediately take 3d6 damage. For the next 24 hours, all Spells you cast fail—as does any magical healing used on you.

DEAD ZONES

The opposite of a Ley Line, a Dead Zone is a place where Spells cannot be cast at all. All but the most powerful enchantments flicker and fade when they are taken into a Dead Zone, only resuming function when they are brought back out—if they do so at all. Magical items similarly tend to become inert in Dead Zones, and magical creatures may find their abilities being dampened or their bodies degrading the longer they stay in the zone.

Dead Zones are generally avoided by the magical community, but they are sometimes sought out as neutral ground for important negotiations between rival factions. When these negotiations happen, both sides tend to show up heavily armed, and it is not unusual for them to devolve into gunfights.

OTHER REALMS

Alongside this world lie several others. While their inhabitants are not usually good for mortal life expectancies, some mages have nevertheless made a detailed study of these neighboring dimensions.

That many of these mages are, in fact, cultists have not escaped the notice of the Order, who keep a detailed watchlist of high-profile mages that are known to have traffic with the other realms. This does not entirely prevent demon incursions, but it does sometimes help predict them.

THE THICKET

The best way to think about Faerie is this: there is an alley that leads off of the main street. It is dark, it is crowded with garbage, and it has a terrible reputation. People go into the alley and they don't come back out.

In physical terms, the Thicket looks exactly like its name suggests. It is a sprawling maze of cluttered tunnels that weave through a dense, ancient bramble. Tiny, weak rays of sunlight filter down through the thorny canopy and there is an ever-present litter of bleached bones underfoot. Deeper into the Thicket, the knotted briars become less oppressive, opening up into huge, mile-wide clearings. Inside these, the courts of Faerie can be found, with towering palaces made of marble, gold, and glass. There are bones here too, but they are arranged in neat, massive rings around the outskirts of each territory.

In metaphysical terms, Faerie is a place that lies side-by-side with the mundane world. Usually, short of activating a powerful artifact or conducting an elaborate ritual, that distance is impossible to cross. However, in locations where the natural magical energies are strong--such as along Ley Lines--the borders can become thin and things from the other side can slip through. When they do, abductions follow.

The things that live in Faerie are not intentionally cruel. It's more like the idea of morality would never occur to them. Weaker Fae live at the edges of the Thicket, taking captives for brief periods of time--say, a few thousand years--before growing

bored and disposing of them. Time flows much more quickly in Faerie than in the mundane world, and even a week of mortal time translates to an eternity in the Thicket.

Stronger Fae live closer to the center and are organized into courts, all of which are organized around different concepts. The oldest, strongest courts are the Seasons: Autumn, Winter, Spring, and Summer. However, other concepts have powerful courts as well. There are the Sensates (pain, gluttony, exhaustion, despair), the Materials (scissors, bells, thread, millstones), and the Modernists (romanticism, tragedy, hubris), and a host of lesser courts that serve as the vassals of these powers. Most of the legends about Faerie (such as dances that never end, tasks that cannot be completed, and beauty so vast that it horrifies) are about the Modernists. They are one of the newer courts, dating back to only a few thousand B.C.--although in Thicket-time, this still means they are millions of years old.

The biggest threat to the inhabitants of Faerie is boredom. The Fae do not die of old age and they are alarmingly difficult to kill with conventional weapons, so the thing that is most lacking in their lives is novelty. Many Fae kidnap mortals as part of a struggle against ennui, finding mortal behavior more entertaining (at least for a short time) than the company of their peers. A few Fae have even been known to take abductees *because* they will be missed, in the hopes that other mortals will mount a rescue. Hunting is much easier, after all, when your prey comes to you.

HELL(S)

What surprises people the most about Hell, after the initial wave of horror wears off, is how *specific* everything is. There is a Hell for every religion, every philosophy, every deeply held belief, and every unconscious fear. Some Hells are ancient, organized around the fears of the Middle Ages. Others are quite modern, and for every couple pits of acid or fire, there is a simple hospital waiting room with a clock that never moves and a diagnosis that is sure to be terminal.

This is bad--but like everything involving Hell--if you wait a moment, it gets worse.

Hell is not just where the bad folks go when they die. All it takes for a person to be damned eternally is for a demon to have a claim on their soul. This could mean a contract signed in blood, but it could also mean taking the wrong drug, accepting the wrong EULA, or even praying in a place where something from below could hear and answer. Many demons are consummate players of games, and the idea of a 'reasonable claim' is always interpreted in their favor.

Some mortals, when they realize this, try for a Faustian gambit: they live as virtuously as possible, in the hopes that Hell cannot claim them. This is a mistake and it does. Other mortals, deciding that the only way out is through, try to bargain with their demons. Demons love this behavior and encourage it whenever they can, offering to let mortals off the hook in return for additional souls, worship, or good service. Inevitably, this leads to the creation

of cults, and only rarely does the bargainer escape their brimstone fate.

Journeying through Hell is something that all mages are cautioned against, but sometimes through sacrifice and ritual parts of Hell can be temporarily merged with the mortal world. Demons can force this effect by exerting tremendous pressure from the other side, but they do so only rarely because it leaves them open to attack by their rivals.

Perhaps the only good thing about Hell is that its demons are intensely political, constantly vying for power against one another. Loosely organized into factions based on the seven deadly sins, they can each be played against one another, weakening Hell overall. Unfortunately, anyone doing so usually ends up forfeiting their soul, and that is a staggering price to pay for such a small victory.

HEAVEN

Everyone who is not already claimed by Hell goes to Heaven. This makes for a small but steady trickle of the virtuous and the lucky through the pearly gates, past the armed hosts of Angels that stand watch outside. The borders of Heaven are militarized, making entry by anyone but the sanctified dead impossible, but the souls that are admitted find Heaven to be a little bit more substantial than just a field of mist and clouds.

Heaven is a city, with apartment living, nightlife, a successful theater district, and the best cabbies in any of the realms. Those who live there do not experience any

physical or mental needs but tend to spend a lot of time socializing because they genuinely enjoy each other's company. Just outside of the city, there is a fortified alabaster pyramid that no mortal has ever been inside, and it is a popular pastime in Heaven to gossip about what might be inside. The leading theory is that it is some kind of Angelic armory, but a close second is that it is the resting place of God.

Angels are found everywhere in Heaven, scheduling time off from their work to see the sights, stop at one of the hundreds of kebab stands for a bite to eat, or watch a play. They rarely chat with dead mortals--possibly due to orders from on high intended to prevent any more Angelic bloodlines from happening--but they can be seen everywhere in charcoal-gray suits, with their wings respectfully folded.

Very few mortals see the city before their allotted time is up, but this has not stopped some demons from running a very profitable scam by promising to smuggle mages into Heaven.

CARCERIS

A labyrinth of high stone halls, crumbling lichen-dappled audience chambers, and deserted corridors that run into the misty distance, any mage could be forgiven for thinking that Carceris is a forgotten, abandoned, and empty place.

Unfortunately, only one of those things is true.

Mages don't usually last long in Carceris.

Entrance to the realm is difficult to obtain, with the most common method being through one of a handful of antique stone puzzle-boxes. These puzzle-boxes sit in private collections around the globe, and the Hermetic Order actively tracks mages that display an interest in obtaining one, eliminating them if they get too close.

The second most common way into Carceris is by ritual, and there are five known cults that have demonstrated the ability to open a temporary Carceris doorway. None of these cults have been seen in the past century, and it is the sincere hope of the Order that they succeeded in wiping out the last of them.

The third and final way to get into Carceris is by research, and this is by far the most perilous method. Demons refuse to answer questions about Carceris. Angels kill anyone who asks. The Fae hiss and shrink back in fear from the word. Only mundanes seem not to exhibit a strong reaction, and the repeated questioning of certain mortals by highly motivated mages has led to some very popular works of horror fiction.

The reason that the rest of the supernatural world wants to keep the routes to Carceris closed is because it is a prison and the thing that it holds is older than the earth. The being's children--all of which are formless, gibbering things--are trapped with the dimension, mortared up behind towering walls of stone. *Their* children, however, have free run of the halls of the labyrinth, and have spent eternity searching for a way out.

Encounters with this third generation are typically messy and brief, with no human

survivors, but there are reports of one Carcerian that is capable of conversing with the mages it encounters. Referring to itself as Masquerade, it offers advice and powerful secrets at no apparent cost.

Whatever game it might be playing, the Hermetic Order doesn't want it finding its way here in case it leaves the door open for the rest of its brothers and sisters to follow.



ADVERSARIES

It's hard to have heroes without someone for them to thwart. Adversaries in Wicked Pacts take all sorts of shapes, from mundanes to mages to powerful occult creatures. However, every Adversary falls into one of three distinct categories.

Thugs are foot-soldiers, hired muscle, or other low-level Adversaries. Alone, they don't pose much of a threat—and they know this. As a result, Thugs typically work in packs.

No matter how many Thugs there are in a pack, they all share the same pool of Scene Points. This pool is the same as the number of Scene Points that *one* of those Thugs would have. So, a pack of five Thugs with one Scene Point each does not have a pool of five points. It has a pool of one point, and when that point is used up, the whole pack is out of points.

In some cases, a Thug who survives multiple run-ins with the PCs may be promoted, playing a bigger role in the story as a recurring villain.

After Thugs, the next highest rank of Adversaries is the **Lieutenants**. Lieutenants have names, histories, and a little bit more staying power in combat. They also have their own individual pools of Scene Points. A Lieutenant may be able to call on a squad of Thugs, and they can typically go toe-to-toe with the PCs. It is not unusual for the PCs to face a Lieutenant at the end of a scenario—although particularly strong monsters also count as Lieutenants and it is not unusual for the PCs to face multiple Lieutenants in a single scenario.

The last kind of Adversary that the PCs can encounter is the **Mastermind**. A Mastermind is capable of directing multiple packs of Thugs, several Lieutenants, and generally has a broad, long-term goal that poses a serious threat to the PCs. Of course, a Mastermind doesn't get this high in rank by being lazy and unskilled, and they are absolute powerhouses in and outside of combat. Like Lieutenants, Masterminds have their own dedicated pools of Scene Points to use as they see fit.

ADVERSARIES AND SCENE POINTS

Like the PCs, the bad guys have Scene Points and they can spend them in any of the same situations where a PC would use one.

Unlike PCs, Adversaries also get to spend Scene Points on abilities specific to their Adversary type. An Adversary can use any of the abilities related to their Adversary type (Thug, Lieutenant, etc.)—as long as they're able to spend the Scene Points for it.

While PCs (usually) all start sessions with 3 Scene Points, Adversaries tend to start with smaller numbers. An Adversary's Scene Points are listed under the Derived Attributes in its profile.

Recurring Adversaries recover Scene Points just like PCs do—at the start of each session.

ADVERSARY ABILITIES

Different types of Adversaries use different types of special abilities; however, all Adversaries have some way to spend Scene Points.

The GM does not have to use Adversary abilities in every combat, but they *are* a way of adding more challenge to the game and more drama to the PCs' lives, so the GM shouldn't hold back on using them either.

ANY ADVERSARY

Automatic Hit

Got a pack of goons who can't hit the broadside of a barn? Spend a point and an enemy's attack automatically connects. This attack cannot be prevented from landing. You may not combine this ability with Lucky Shot or Maximum Damage and you cannot use it with a Called Shot (see Called Shots, Hit Locations, Effects, and Shock in the Combat section).

Buying Down Damage

When an enemy takes damage, you may spend a point to cut that damage in half (round up) or two points to cancel it completely.

Maximum Damage

Sometimes you want your players to hate your NPCs. This will accomplish that nicely. After you succeed with an attack, you may spend a point to automatically increase the damage to its maximum possible value. You may not combine this ability with Automatic Hit or Lucky Shot and players can still spend their own Scene Points to buy down this damage.

THUGS ONLY

Cockroaches!

Sometimes it's like you've got a room full of nasty roaches that just won't die. When you activate this ability, spend a point and add 2d3 new Thugs to an existing pack. This does *not* increase the Thugs' Scene Points. You may use this ability once per Scene.

Evil Jim

Among the ranks of the Thugs there is one guy that is bigger and badder than any of his companions. When combat begins, spend a point to upgrade a regular Thug into this heavyweight badass.

Evil Jim has twice his original Hit Points and gets a bonus to all of his combat Skills equal to his maximum Scene Points. So, a Thug with 12 Hit Points and 2 Scene Points would become a 24 Hit Point Jim that adds a -2 TN bonus on all of his combat Skill rolls.

Each pack of Thugs may only have one Jim.



Jinx

Bad luck strikes like lightning, setting the PCs' plans on fire. Once per Scene, you can spend a point and introduce an unexpected complication. For example, a tire blows out during a car chase or police arrive, taking the side of the Adversaries.

Strength in Numbers

These Thugs are used to working together as a group. By themselves they are rubbish,

but in a group, they can be deadly.

During combat, on a Thug's turn, spend a point *and* an Action to have a group of up to five Thugs all focus their fire on a single PC. Each Thug in the group must be able to reach that PC with an attack.

Next, make a roll for the Thug that is leading the attack. That roll gets a -1 TN bonus for each additional Thug in the group (i.e. five thugs would add -4 TN). If the attack hits, it deals the weapon's normal damage, +1 for each extra Thug.

Why Won't You Die?!!

This pack of goons just refuses to lie down. At the start of combat, pick a group of Thugs and spend a point. For the rest of combat, each Thug in the group can take lethal damage once without dying. Instead, they're left at 1 Hit Point.

If that Thug is damaged again, they drop.

LEUTENANTS AND MASTERMINDS

Always Ready

This villain is always looking out for trouble. Spend a point and they are not surprised, react just in time to avoid being ambushed, or avoid triggering a trap. They are also somehow having all the equipment that they would bring into a firefight conveniently at hand.

Boy/Girl Next Door

This villain can fool anyone with their innocent looks or their ability to lose themselves in a crowd. Spend a point and the players' allies will hesitate, doubting for

a moment that they're on the right side. At the same time, any bystanders watching the confrontation will take the villain's side—either verbally or physically.

This ability does not make anyone suicidally willing to defend the villain, and both bystanders and allies can have their minds changed by good reasoning on the part of the PCs or by the villain doing something unabashedly sinister.



Devoted Followers

This villain's followers are willing to lay

down their lives for their leader. Spend a point and for the rest of this Scene any attempt to interrogate or turn one of the villain's minions automatically fails. The players can still try again, but they will need to wait a dramatically significant period of time (as determined by the GM) before they do.

Driven

Failure is not an option for this villain. Spend a point and for the rest of this Round they do not suffer any ill effects from taking damage to their Hit Locations or for being dropped below zero Hit Points. This ability may only be used once per Scene.

Hateful Rage

The villain is filled with such fury that, for a moment, everything in the cosmos seems to line up for them. For a single Round, the PCs may not spend Scene Points. The GM may not use Automatic Hit, Lucky Shot, or Maximum Damage until the next Round begins.

Honorable

This villain has a sense of honor. Once per scenario, at *no* Scene Point cost, they can choose not to do something terrible and underhanded. If they refrain, they either immediately heal 15 Hit Points or they gain a Scene Point.

Lucky Shot

This villain knows *just* where to place a bullet. When an attack hits, spend a point to upgrade it to a Critical Success. The damage from this attack may not be reduced with Scene Points. You may not combine this ability with Automatic Hit or Maximum Damage.

Rabbit Out of the Hat

The villain is a planner and—lucky them—they have just what they need to deal with the situation at hand.

Once per scenario, you may spend a point to have a villain produce any one item from the Equipment section (or another item that it's reasonable for the villain to have) from a pocket, the trunk of their car, a stash spot, etc. right in time to do some damage with it.

Unnerving

The villain exudes such a powerful charisma that they are unsettling to be near. Spend a point to increase the TN for all Skill Tests and Opposition Rolls in the villain's presence by +2 until the end of the Round. This ability *can* stack.

STATS FOR YOUR ADVERSARIES

If an Adversary's Hit Points are written with a slash in the middle, the first number is how many Hit Points it has as a Thug. The second number is how many it has as a Lieutenant or Mastermind.

If an Adversary's Scene Points are written with a + after the number, the GM should add 1 – 2 points to the number if they use the Adversary as a Mastermind.

The GM should also feel free to create new Adversaries or to modify existing ones in order to fit a scenario better. Nothing here is set in stone.

DEFEATING ADVERSARIES

Lieutenants and Masterminds, like PCs, can keep fighting after they've been reduced below 0 Hit Points. However, as most of them do not want to die, many will surrender or to attempt to escape long before that.

Thugs, on the other hand, drop the moment they are reduced to 0 Hit Points or below. Whether they are killed or merely knocked out is up to whoever dropped them.

For more information about characters continuing to fight after they've been reduced below 0 Hit Points, see *Damage and Death Saves* in the *Combat* section.

USING ADVERSARIES AS REGULAR NPCs

It would be a pretty bleak game if every civilian were secretly an enemy agent, waiting for an opportunity to bring down the PCs. Luckily, the world of *Wicked Pacts* is not nearly that dark. Although every entry here is listed as an 'Adversary', the same stats can be used for these NPCs when they're not working against the PCs. In fact, in the case of civilians, police officers, Praetorian Guard, and street mages, that's more or less how you're expected to treat them.

To use an Adversary as a regular NPC, just ignore their Adversary Type. As a regular NPC, they can't spend Scene Points on Adversary Abilities—but that's okay. They have better things to do right now than to try and ruin the PCs' day.

NPCs in general aren't always friendly—and if the PCs do pick a fight with them, treat them as Adversaries during that fight—but mostly they just want to pursue their own agendas.

By a similar token, most Adversaries aren't mindlessly hostile. They usually have an objective that they're working towards—even if that objective is just a payday from their Syndicate boss. Adversaries might break off of combat to deal with their own problems, or to flee, or they might even try to talk to the PCs.

Over time, an Adversary can become a regular NPC—or vice versa.

MORTALS

Just because they're not eight feet tall, breathing fire, and sprouting leathery wings from their back doesn't mean they're not dangerous. There's a reason mages went into hiding all those years ago and, if anything, the mundanes have only become *more* dangerous since.

ANGRY LOW-LIFE

Thug Adversary Type

If you need a random group of dirtbags, look no further than these guys.

You can use the table below or you can use the pre-set to generate as many nameless mooks as you need for an encounter.

Roll 1d4 for each section...

Attributes

1. Strength: 5, Health 3, Reflexes 3, Willpower 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 2
2. Strength: 3, Health 5, Reflexes 4, Willpower 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 2
3. Strength: 4, Health 4, Reflexes 3, Willpower 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 3
4. Strength: 3, Health 3, Reflexes 5, Willpower 2, Charisma 2, Intelligence 3

Derived Attributes

1. Hit Points 24 Move: 12 yards
Damage Bonus: +1d8 Scene Pts: 3
2. Hit Points 28 Move: 10 yards
Damage Bonus: +1d3 Scene Pts: 3
3. Hit Points 30 Move: 11 yards
Damage Bonus: +1d6 Scene Pts: 2
4. Hit Points 25 Move: 10 yards
Damage Bonus: +1d3 Scene Pts: 4

Skills:

1. Streetwise 1d6, Pistols 2d8, Rifle 2d6, Stealth 2d6, Observation 2d6, Drive 2d6
2. Streetwise 2d6, Pistols 3d8, Rifle 1d6, Stealth 2d8, Observation 2d8, Drive 2d6
3. Occultism 1d8, Pistols 2d10, Rifle 2d8, Stealth 2d6, Observation 1d6, Drive 1d6
4. Occultism 3d6, Pistols 3d6, Rifle 3d8, Stealth 2d6, Observation 2d8, Drive 2d8

Or take the Pre-set...

Attributes

Strength: 3	Health: 3
Reflexes: 3	Willpower: 2
Charisma: 2	Intelligence: 2

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 16	Move: 8 yards
Dam Bonus: +1d3	Scene Points: 2

Skills

Pistols 2d8, Rifle 2d6, Stealth 2d6, Observation 2d6, Drive 2d6, Club or Blades 2d6, Brawling 3d8, Dodge 1d8

Equipment

GM's decision. Usually there's a Melee weapon or a firearm, but some goons prefer to work with just their fists and maybe a cinder block.

CIVILIANS

Thug Adversary Type

When someone says, 'the average person', this is who they're talking about.

Attributes

Strength: 2	Health: 2
Reflexes: 2	Willpower: 2
Charisma: 2	Intelligence: 2

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 10	Move: 6 yards
Dam Bonus: -	Scene Points: 1

Skills

Stealth 1d6, Observation 1d6, Drive 1d6, Brawling 1d6, Athletics 1d6, Dodge 1d6, and a profession-related Skill at 2d8

Equipment:

Game Master's decision. Varies depending

on what this civilian does for a living, but usually includes a cellphone.

CULTIST

Thug or Lieutenant Adversary Type

An ardent believer, in service to a power that doesn't care whether they live or die. Cultists occasionally operate solo, but those ones are the exception, rather than the rule.

Attributes

Strength: 2	Health: 3
Reflexes: 3	Willpower: 2
Charisma: 2	Intelligence: 3

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 12 / 24 Move: 8 yards
Dam Bonus: - Scene Points: 1
Magic Points: 20

Skills

Alchemy 1d6, Athletics 1d6, Blades 2d6, Fast Talk 1d8, Streetwise 1d8, Intimidation 1d8, Pistols 2d6, Magic Lore: Witch 2d6, Magic Lore: General: 2d6, Stealth 2d8, Observation 2d6, Drive 2d6, Occultism 2d6, Dodge 1d6, Throwing 1d6

Spells (*Spells at 2d6*)

Claws of the Beast, Drain Life, Hardened Skin, Hellfire (*plus 2 other Witch or General Spells*)

Equipment

Light Pistol, Cellphone, Short Sword

ONYX SYNDICATE

ENFORCER

Thug or Lieutenant Adversary Type

More than just muscle, the Syndicate's enforcers have exactly enough status to start getting aspirations about climbing the ranks. This keeps them merciless, as no enforcer wants to be put in the position of disappointing their boss.

Attributes

Strength: 4	Health: 3
Reflexes: 3	Willpower: 3
Charisma: 2	Intelligence: 3

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 20 / 40 Move: 10 yards
Dam Bonus: +1d6 Scene Points: 1
Magic Points: 25

Skills

Alchemy 1d6, Athletics 2d6, Blades 3d8, Fast Talk 1d8, Streetwise 2d8, Intimidation 2d8, Pistols 3d8, Magic Lore: Grunt 2d8, Magic Lore: General 2d8, Stealth 2d8, Observation 2d6, Drive 2d8, Occultism 2d6, Dodge 1d8,

Spells (*Spells at 2d8*)

Titan's Strength, Armor of the Gods, Arcane Bolt, Darkness, Night Sight (*plus 2 other Grunt or General Spells*)

Equipment

Heavy Pistol, Cellphone, Short Sword, 1 Dose of Faery Parts, Speed Potion

ONYX SYNDICATE LT.

Lieutenant or Mastermind Adversary *Type*

Just high enough in the Syndicate that people notice when they screw up, and just low enough that there's nothing they can do if their boss decides to remove them, Syndicate lieutenants are paranoid out of sheer survival instinct. Some of them enjoy throwing their weight around, but others prefer to keep as far back from trouble as they can manage.

Attributes

Strength: 4	Health: 4
Reflexes: 4	Willpower: 4
Charisma: 3	Intelligence: 3

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 60	Move: 12 yards
Dam Bonus: +1d6	Scene Points: 2+
Magic Points: 30	

Alchemy 2d8, Athletics 2d8, Blades 2d8, Fast Talk 3d10, Streetwise 2d10, Intimidation 2d10, Pistols 2d10, Magic Lore: Angel Slayer 2d10, Magic Lore: Shadow 2d10, Magic Lore: General 2d10, Stealth 2d10, Observation 2d10, Drive 2d8, Occultism 3d8, Dodge 2d8,

Spells (*Spells at 2d10*)

Demon Armor, Vigor of the Beast, Furious Fist of Hades, Combat Teleport, Fleeting Shadow, Lock, Hellfire, Cure Wound (*plus 3 other Angel Slayer, Shadow, or General Spells*)

Equipment

Heavy Pistol (*Enchanted, +2 damage, Ignites victim for 1d6 damage for 1d3 Rounds, only works for owner*), Combat Knife (*Enchanted,*

+2 damage, AP 2, only works for owner), Unicorn Horn, Healing Potion

ONYX SYNDICATE BOSS

Lieutenant or Mastermind Adversary *Type*

Within their own territory, their word is law. Of course, they still have to answer to *their* bosses, but they have a longer life expectancy than a lieutenant—as long as their lieutenants don't start getting ideas.

Attributes

Strength: 3	Health: 4
Reflexes: 4	Willpower: 5
Charisma: 4	Intelligence: 4

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 48	Move: 11 yards
Dam Bonus: +1d3	Scene Points: 4+
Magic Points: 40	

Skills

Alchemy 2d8, Athletics 1d8, Blades 2d8, Fast Talk 3d10, Streetwise 2d10, Intimidation 2d10, Pistols 2d10, Magic Lore: Necromancer 2d10, Magic Lore: Seer 2d10, Magic Lore: General 2d10, Stealth 2d10, Observation 2d10, Drive 2d8, Occultism 3d8, Dodge 2d8

Spells (*Spells at 2d10*)

Speak to the Dead, Raise the Dead, Control the Dead, Death Vision, Summon Ghost, Soul Blast, Feign Death, Rotting Flesh, Steal Spirits, Resurrection, Telepathy, Mind Blast, Mind Shield, Charm, Command, Teleport, Recall Past Event, Precognition, Telekinesis, Reprogram Mind, Night Sight, Revealing Eye, (*plus 3 other Necromancer, Seer, or General Spells*)

Equipment

Heavy Pistol (*Enchanted, +2 damage, Drains 1d6 MP, only works for owner*), Combat Knife (*Enchanted, +2 damage, AP 2, only works for owner*), Warning Talisman, Guardian Ring, Dragon Tooth (1d6 uses left)

POLICE OFFICER

Thug Adversary Type

An officer of the law, even on the straight-and-narrow, can still be a threat to the PCs—especially if the PCs are doing something illegal to save lives or the officer misreads a charged situation. An officer of the law who's *not* on the straight-and-narrow can also be a threat to the PCs, although for different reasons.

Neither the Order nor the Syndicate particularly encourages armed conflict with the police, since investigations into events where an officer was injured are difficult to cover up, but sometimes supernatural problems spill over into the mundane world and the police get caught in the fray.

Attributes

Strength: 3	Health: 3
Reflexes: 3	Willpower: 2
Charisma: 2	Intelligence: 2

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 17 Move: 9 yards
Dam Bonus: +1d3 Scene Points: 2

Skills

Pistols 2d8, Rifle 2d6, Stealth 1d6,
Observation 2d6, Athletics 2d8, Drive 2d8,
3d8, Dodge 1d8

Equipment

Light Pistol, Kevlar Vest, Cuffs, Field Radios, Police Car, Tactical Shotgun (in car)



PRAETORIAN GUARD

Thug or Lieutenant Adversary Type

Despite being the Order's peacekeepers, the Praetorian Guard are quite comfortable with the idea that keeping the peace sometimes means breaking a few heads.

Attributes

Strength: 3	Health: 4
Reflexes: 4	Willpower: 4
Charisma: 3	Intelligence: 4

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 24 / 48 Move: 11 yards
Dam Bonus: +1d3 Scene Points: 2
Magic Points: 35

Skills

Alchemy 2d8, Athletics 2d8, Blades 2d10,
Fast Talk 2d10, Streetwise 2d10,
Intimidation 2d10, Pistols 2d8, Magic Lore:
Warlock 2d10, Magic Lore: Demon Hunter
2d10, Magic Lore: General 2d10, Stealth 3d8,
Observation 2d10, Drive 2d8, Occultism
2d10, Dodge 2d8

Spells (*Spells at 2d8*)

Heal Self, Flight, Track Prey, Hunter's
Sense, Arcane Bolt, Hardened Skin,
Sunlight, Alarm, Lock, Revealing Eye,
Sword of the Creator, (*plus 3 other Warlock,
Demon Hunter, or General Spells*)

Equipment

Medium Pistol, Combat Knife, Talisman of
Warning, Caster's Aid, Power Elixir

RED CIRCLE DEVOTEE

Thug or Lieutenant Adversary Type

Operating in secret, these are mages who think nothing of perverting the power of Vodou. Instead of acting as intermediaries between the two worlds, they seek to enslave mortals and spirits alike.

Tracking the Red Circle is difficult, as the term has been used to vilify innocent Vodou mages, but there is also no one who hates the Red Circle half as much as the Vodou.

Attributes

Strength: 3	Health: 3
Reflexes: 3	Willpower: 3
Charisma: 3	Intelligence: 3

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 16 / 32	Move: 9 yards
Dam Bonus: +1d3	Scene Points: 1
Magic Points: 25	

Skills

Alchemy 1d6, Athletics 2d6, Blades 2d6,
Fast Talk 1d8, Streetwise 1d8, Intimidation
1d8, Pistols 2d6, Magic Lore: Vodou 2d6,
Magic Lore: Shadow 2d6, Magic Lore:
General 2d6, Stealth 2d8, Observation 2d6,
Drive 2d6, Occultism 2d6, Dodge 1d6,
Throwing 1d6

Spells (*Spells at 2d6*)

Warrior, Zombie Slave, Plague, Curse,
Scrying, Demon Armor, Frighten, Trick of
the Light, Arcane Bolt (*plus 2 other Vodou,
Shadow, or General Spells*)

Equipment

Light Pistol, Cellphone, Short Sword,
Talisman of Devastation, Eye of Newt (1
use), Heal Potion

SOLDIER

Thug Adversary Type

Whether an official member of the armed forces, a paramilitary contractor, or an ex-military type working in a related field, a soldier is trained, disciplined, and knows how to react to armed conflict. A number of supernatural factions recruit regular soldiers—although the soldiers are not usually told who, or what, they are working for.

Attributes

Strength: 3	Health: 4
Reflexes: 3	Willpower: 2
Charisma: 2	Intelligence: 2

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 24	Move: 9 yards
Dam Bonus: +1d3	Scene Points: 2

Skills

Pistols 3d8, Rifle 2d8, Stealth 2d8,
Observation 2d8, Drive 2d6, Brawling 2d8,
Dodge 1d8

Equipment

GM's decision. If the soldier is active duty, they might have a Battle Rifle or Assault Rifle, Helmet, Kevlar Vest, a Medium Pistol, and a Fragmentation Grenade. If the soldier has a specialist role, is off-duty, or is a military contractor, their kit might change in any number of ways.

STREET MAGE

Thug or Lieutenant Adversary Type

An average mage. Unfortunately, even an average mage is capable of doing terrible things.

Attributes

Strength: 3	Health: 3
Reflexes: 3	Willpower: 3
Charisma: 2	Intelligence: 3

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 16 / 32	Move: 9 yards
Dam Bonus: +1d3	Scene Points: 2
Magic Points: 25	

Skills

Alchemy 1d8, Athletics 1d6, Blades 2d8,
Fast Talk 1d8, Streetwise 2d8, Intimidation 1d8, Pistols 2d8, Magic Lore: General 2d8, Magic Lore: Any 2d8, Stealth 1d8, Observation 2d6, Drive 2d8, Occultism 2d8, Dodge 1d8

Spells (*Spells at 2d8*)

Hardened Skin, Walk on Air, Lock, Arcane Bolt, (*plus 3 other Archetype Spells, matching the mage's second Magic Lore*)

Equipment

Medium Pistol, Cellphone, Combat Knife, Healing Potion

WITCH COVEN

Thug or Lieutenant Adversary Type

Politically independent from the Order and the Syndicate, covens typically keep to their own affairs. Unfortunately, those affairs can range from a weekly Sunday brunch to barbecuing teenagers, depending on the coven. This has led to a lot of animosity between the Order and the covens, as the covens keep being subjected to very thorough Order investigations with no way of refusing short of armed resistance.

Attributes

Strength: 2	Health: 3
Reflexes: 3	Willpower: 3
Charisma: 3	Intelligence: 3

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 12 / 24	Move: 8 yards
Dam Bonus: -	Scene Points: 1
Magic Points: 25	

Skills

Alchemy 1d8, Athletics 1d8, Blades 2d8, Fast Talk 1d8, Streetwise 1d8, Intimidation 2d8, Pistols 2d6, Magic Lore: Witch 2d8, Magic Lore: General: 2d8, Stealth 2d8, Observation 1d8, Drive 2d6, Occultism 2d8, Dodge 1d6, Throwing 1d6

Spells (*Spells at 2d8*)

False Loved One, Divination, Terrible Whispers, Fire Lash, Claws of the Beast, Drain Life, Lightning (*plus 2 other Witch or General Spells*)

Equipment

Medium Pistol, Cellphone, Combat Knife, Personalized Wards Talisman, Spider Webs (2 uses), Power Elixir

MONSTERS

Monsters are less numerous than mundanes, but then they have to be.

Predators should never outnumber their prey.

ANGELS

Lieutenant or Mastermind Adversary Type

Heaven's soldiers are typically only found on earth for two reasons. One is that there is a situation that has become dire enough to warrant their direct involvement. The other is that they have gone astray.

That second is more common than most Angels like to admit.

Attributes

Strength: 7 Health: 5
Reflexes: 3 Willpower: 4
Charisma: 5 Intelligence: 3

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 112 Move: 13
Magic Points: 60
Dam Bonus: +1d12 Scene Points: 3+

Skills

Athletics 2d10, Augury 2d10, Stealth 2d8, Brawling 2d10, Dodge 2d8, Fast Talk 3d10, Intimidation 3d10, Interrogation 3d10, Law 2d10, Magic Lore (Demon Hunter, Warlock, Seer, General) 2d10, Occultism 2d10, Persuasion 3d10, Seduction 3d10, Resist Torture/ Interrogation 2d8, Throwing 2d8, Observation 2d10

Abilities

Damage Immunity: Angels take no damage from mundane weapons, half damage from fire, and full damage from magic.

Extra Power: Angels are powerful beings. Their maximum Magic Points is increased by +30 (this is already factored into the Angel's stats).

Influence Resistant: Angels are trained to resist temptation. Most of the time, it works. The TN to influence an Angel with either mundane or magical means is increased by +3.

Healing Touch: An Angel can bestow a healing blessing upon another living being. It spends 5 MP and an Action and touches the target. The target instantly recovers 10 Hit Points. The Angel may spend an additional +3 MP to cure an illness, but it is honor-bound not to try to cure natural,

terminal illnesses.

Blessing: The creator has allowed the Angels to grant blessings to those they feel are worthy. These blessings are small, but better than nothing. The Angel spends 10 MP and an Action, touches their target, and concentrates. The target gains a Scene Point. This cannot bring the target over their maximum Scene Points, and it can only be done once per person, per day.

The Creator's Blade: This a blade forged in Heaven itself. Any undead or demonic being hit by this weapon suffers a +1 TN penalty to all Skill Tests, Opposition Rolls, and Saving Throws until treated with a Spell or remedy that removes magical illnesses. This penalty does not stack.

Wings: These wings can appear or disappear as needed. This does not cost an Action. When the wings are extended, the Angel can fly 35 yards per turn instead of their normal Movement.

Spells

Arrow of Righteousness, Divine Aura, Track Prey, Hunter's Sense, Mask Self, Hunter's Trap, Cure Disease, Barrier Ward, Mage Eye, Telepathy, Mind Blast, Mind Shield, Charm, Calculated Teleport, Precognition, Telekinesis, Lesser Presence, Night Sight, Alarm, Lock, Sunlight

Attacks

Punch: 1d4+DB

Creator's Blade: 2d8 +DB (See above note)

CHUPACABRA

Lieutenant or Mastermind Adversary Type

These foul creatures are often believed to be urban legend. Unfortunately, they are both very real and very nasty. Their appetite often gets the better of them, but they are masters of stealth and can vanish into crawlspaces, alcoves, and pipes when threatened. In big cities, they have a particular fondness for old factories and sewer tunnels.

Attributes

Strength: 3 Health: 4
Reflexes: 6 Willpower: 4
Charisma: 1 Intelligence: 2

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 48 Move: 15
Magic Points: 25
Dam Bonus: +1d3 Scene Points: 4+

Skills

Athletics 2d10, Stealth 3d10, Brawling 3d10, Observation 3d8, Gaze 2d10

Abilities

Shadow Blend: By spending an Action and 4 MP, the Chupacabra can disappear into the shadows and reappear 50 yards away. The Chupacabra can only do this when it is not in anyone's direct line of sight.

Armored Skin: +5 Protection to all Hit Locations

Stunning Gaze: By spending an Action, the Chupacabra can deliver a stunning gaze attack. It makes an Opposition Roll using Gaze + WLP against its victim's Willpower

Saving Throw. If it succeeds, its target immediately spends two Actions from its next turn. This incurs a Multiple Action penalty on the target's next turn.

Complications

Light-Sensitive: When caught in bright light, such as daylight or the light of a sodium flare, the Chupacabra suffers a +2 TN penalty on all Skill Tests, Opposition Rolls, and Saving Throws.

Attacks

Razor Claws: 2d8+1+DB, AP 2

Bite/Drain: 2d6+1+DB, Drains 1d6 HP



DEMONS (MAJOR)

Lieutenant or Mastermind Adversary Type

Major Demons are the movers and shakers of the world below. While they do not have the same political clout as outright demon lords, they are each capable of coercing small gangs of minor demons into their service. Not all do, as some find it safer to work alone than risk one of their underlings being turned by a rival.

Major Demons, like Minor Demons, can typically only enter the mortal world by being summoned—but they don't need to enter the mortal world in order to make deals with their victims. Major Demons can peer across the divide between earth and Hell anywhere that the boundaries are thin.

Some Major Demons have a particular fondness for crossroads.

Attributes

Strength: 7 Health: 5

Reflexes: 3 Willpower: 4

Charisma: 4 Intelligence: 3

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 112

Move: 13

Magic Points: 60

Dam Bonus: +1d12

Scene Points:

3+

Skills

Athletics 3d8, Augury 2d10, Stealth

2d8, Brawling 2d10, Dodge 2d8, Fast

Talk 3d10, Intimidation 3d10,

Interrogation 3d10, Law 2d10, Magic

Lore (Warlock, Angel Slayer,

Shadow, Necromancer, Witch, General)
2d10, Occultism 2d10, Persuasion 3d10,
Seduction 3d10, Resist Torture/
Interrogation 2d8, Throwing 2d8,
Observation 2d10

Abilities

Damage Immunity: The Demon takes no damage from mundane weapons but will take full damage from magic and half damage from fire.

Extra Power: Major Demons have immense personal reservoirs of magical energy. They gain +30 maximum MP (this bonus has already been factored into their stats.)

Influence Resistant: Demons live in constant competition with one another, and so the strongest of them are the ones that can prevent their kin from tampering with their minds. Any attempt to influence a Major Demon, either by Skill or Spell, has its TN increased by +3.

Drain Life Force: Demons feed on human suffering—but human life force, human magical energy, and human souls are a reasonable substitute. A Major Demon that touches a target can immediately begin to drain their Magic Points by spending an Action and making an Opposition Roll using their Willpower Saving Throw +2 against the target's Willpower Saving Throw. If they succeed, they drain 2d8 Magic Points. They may spend additional Actions to continue to drain their target, with no roll required, so long as they maintain contact. After a target's Magic Points have been drained, they begin to siphon off Hit Points. If the target dies from this damage, the Major Demon drains their soul. The Major Demon can use any points

they drain to heal either their Hit Points or their Magic Points.

Demon's Contract: Like bad telemarketers, demons *live* for the moment when they can get a mortal to sign one of their contracts. Said contract is usually, but not *always*, damnation in return for services rendered. Demons do their best not to promise mortals anything *too* satisfying in return for their signature, and they tend to seek out mortals in desperate situations for their most one-sided deals. Demons are not above offering 'plea bargains' to mortals who have already been damned, giving them a chance to earn their freedom from eternal torment, but this is inevitably a scam by the demon to net a few more souls and only rarely does the bargainer actually go free. The effects of being damned only really kick in when a person dies, but demons have been known to occasionally hire hitmen to hasten some of their prospects on their way.

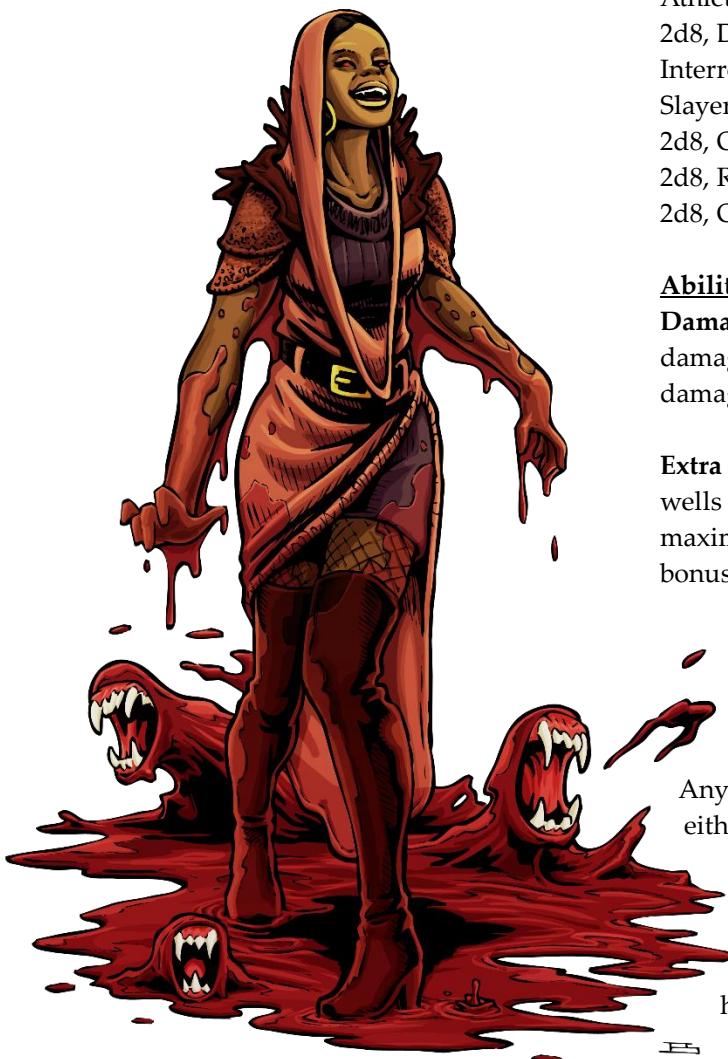
Possession: A Major Demon can spend an Action to pour itself into the body of a willing mortal, camouflaging itself inside of them. While inside of the mortal, the demon acts on the mortal's turn, uses the mortal's stats, and uses whichever Skills or Spells are higher between it and the mortal. The demon can leave the mortal at any time by spending an Action from its next turn. Alternately, it can be forced out by killing the mortal. Finally, touching the mortal with a holy symbol forces the demon to make a Challenging Willpower Saving Throw (TN 9). If the demon fails, it is immediately expelled from the mortal's body.

Spells: Dragon's Flame, Double Trouble, Illusion, Flight, Wards, Mage Eye, Cloud of Confusion, Demon Minion, Demon Armor, Steal Spell, Furious Fist of Hades, Burst of Ash, Frighten, Trick of the Light, Speak to the Dead, Raise the Dead, Control the Dead, Death Vision, Soul Blast, False Loved One, Divination, Terrible Whispers, Emotion Control, Fire Lash, Evil Eye, Alarm, Lock, Revealing Eye, Blade of the Damned, Hellfire

Attacks

Punch: 1d4+DB

Hell's Blade: 2d8 +DB (Ignites target for 1d6 damage for 1d3 Rounds)



DEMONS (MINOR)

Thug or Lieutenant Adversary Type

Attributes

Strength: 3 Health: 3
Reflexes: 3 Willpower: 3
Charisma: 3 Intelligence: 3

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 16 / 32 Move: 9
Magic Points: 35
Dam Bonus: +1d3
Scene Points: 1

Skills

Athletics 2d6, Augury 2d8, Stealth 2d8, Brawling 2d8, Dodge 2d8, Fast Talk 2d8, Intimidation 2d8, Interrogation 2d8, Law 2d8, Magic Lore (Angel Slayer, Necromancer, Shadow, Witch, General) 2d8, Occultism 2d8, Persuasion 2d8, Seduction 2d8, Resist Torture/ Interrogation 2d8, Throwing 2d8, Observation 2d8

Abilities

Damage Immunity: Minor Demons take half damage from mundane weapons but take full damage from magic.

Extra Power: Minor Demons are like miniature wells of occult energy. A Minor Demon's maximum Magic Points is increased by +10 (this bonus has already been factored into their stats.)

Influence Resistant: Demons live in constant competition with one another, and even the weaker ones have learned to shrug off most attempts to coercion. Any attempt to influence a Minor Demon, either by Skill or Spell, has its TN increased by +1.

Drain Life Force: Demons feed on human suffering—but human life force, human magical energy, and human souls are a reasonable substitute. A Minor

Demon that touches a target can immediately begin to drain their Magic Points by spending an Action and making an Opposition Roll using their Willpower Saving Throw against the target's Willpower Saving Throw. If they succeed, they drain 1d6 Magic Points. They may spend additional Actions to continue to drain their target, with no roll required, so long as they maintain contact. After a target's Magic Points have been drained, they begin to siphon off Hit Points. If the target dies from this damage, the Major Demon drains their soul. The Major Demon can use any points they drain to heal either their Hit Points or their Magic Points.

Possession: A Minor Demon can spend an Action to pour itself into the body of a willing mortal, camouflaging itself inside of them. While inside of the mortal, the demon acts on the mortal's turn, uses the mortal's stats, and uses whichever Skills or Spells are higher between it and the mortal. The demon can leave the mortal at any time by spending an Action from its next turn. Alternately, it can be forced out by killing the mortal. Finally, touching the mortal with a holy symbol forces the demon to make a Tough Willpower Saving Throw (TN 12). If the demon fails, it is immediately expelled from the mortal's body.

Spells

Demon Armor, Furious Fist of Hades, Burst of Ash, Frighten, Trick of the Light, Speak to the

Dead, Soul Blast, False Loved One, Emotion Control, Fire Lash, Evil Eye, Alarm, Lock, Revealing Eye, Blade of the Damned, Hellfire

Attacks

Punch: 1d4+DB

ELEMENTAL (EARTH)

Superficially, Earth Elementals resemble Golems. They are made of the same building materials and they have the same humanoid shape, but that's where the similarities end. Earth Elementals may be as small as little clay dolls or as big as horses, but they are deep thinkers, capable of profound philosophical thought. That humans periodically conjure them and send them to Large Stones at people does not sit well with them. Many protest this by simply sitting down and refusing to obey, not letting the caster summon another Elemental until they have destroyed the peaceful resister.

Minor Earth Elemental

Thug Adversary Type

Attributes

Strength: 2 Health: 3

Reflexes: 2 Willpower: 2

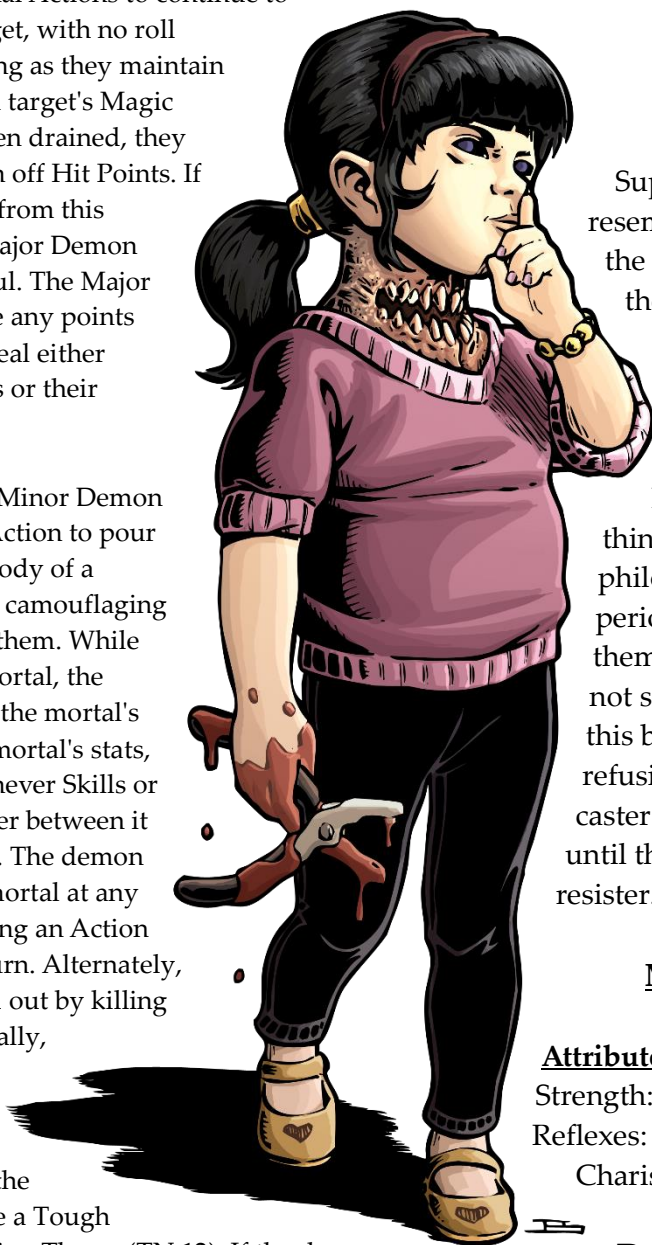
Charisma: 1 Intelligence: 2

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 24 Move: 6

Magic Points: 15

Dam Bonus: - Scene Points: 1



Skills

Athletics 1d6, Stealth 2d6, Brawling 2d8, Observation 2d6, Throw 2d8

Abilities

Damage Immunity: The Elemental may only take damage from magic or water-based attacks.

Form of the Soil: The Elemental is made up of loose earth. It has +2 Protection to all Hit Locations.

Complications

Water Sensitive: If a large amount of water is thrown at the Elemental (a gallon or more) it will take 2d3 damage.

Indentured Servant: The creature is bound to obey its caster's will. It is aware of this and resents the one who holds the leash.

Attacks

Earthen Fist: 1d4+1 damage, 8-yard range.

Moderate Earth Elemental

Thug or Lieutenant Adversary Type

Attributes

Strength: 3 Health: 4
Reflexes: 3 Willpower: 2
Charisma: 1 Intelligence: 2

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 48 Move: 9
Magic Points: 15
Dam Bonus: +1d3 Scene Points: 1

Skills

Athletics 2d6, Stealth 3d6, Brawling 2d10, Observation 2d6, Throw 2d10

Abilities

Damage Immunity: The Elemental may

only take damage from magic or water-based attacks.

Form of the Soil: The Elemental is made up of loose earth. It has +2 Protection to all Hit Locations.

Complications

Water Sensitive: If a large amount of water is thrown at the Elemental (a gallon or more) it will take 2d3 damage.

Indentured Servant: The creature is bound to obey its caster's will. It is aware of this and resents the one who holds the leash. When pushed to do something it doesn't want to do, it may make a Tough Willpower Saving Throw (TN 12) to try and break free. If it fails, it performs the task as ordered.

Attacks

Earthen Fist: 2d6+1 damage, 12-yard range.

Major Earth Elemental

Lieutenant or Mastermind Adversary Type

Attributes

Strength: 4 Health: 4
Reflexes: 3 Willpower: 2
Charisma: 1 Intelligence: 2

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 60 Move: 10
Magic Points: 15
Dam Bonus: +1d6 Scene Points: 1+

Skills

Athletics 3d6, Stealth 2d8, Brawling 3d10, Observation 2d6, Throw 2d10

Abilities

Damage Immunity: The Elemental may

only take damage from magic or water-based attacks.

Form of the Soil: The Elemental is made up of loose earth. It has +3 Protection to all Hit Locations.

Complications

Water Sensitive: If a large amount of water is thrown at the Elemental (a gallon or more) it will take 2d3 damage.

Indentured Servant: The creature is bound to obey its caster's will. It is aware of this and resents the one who holds the leash. When pushed to do something it doesn't want to do, it may make a Challenging Willpower Saving Throw (TN 9) to try and break free. If it fails, it performs the task as ordered.

Attacks

Earthen Fist: 2d8+1 damage, 16-yard range.

ELEMENTAL (FIRE)

Fire Elementals range from tiny lighter flames to towering bonfire spirits. They are passionate, arrogant, and can fly into a rage at the slightest provocation.

Fire Elementals are not native to the mortal world and they are typically summoned into being by mages who then bind them to a specific task. The Elementals don't care for this kind of treatment, and strong Elementals sometimes manage to break free of their bindings, taking swift and terrible revenge on the caster for their enslavement.

Minor Fire Elemental

Thug Adversary Type

Attributes

Strength: 1 Health: 3
Reflexes: 3 Willpower: 2
Charisma: 1 Intelligence: 2

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 16 Move: 7
Magic Points: 15
Dam Bonus: -1d3 Scene Points: 1

Skills

Athletics 1d8, Stealth 3d8, Brawling 2d8,
Observation 2d8, Flame 3d8

Abilities

Damage Immunity: The Elemental may only take damage from magic or water-based attacks.

Wreathed In Flames: Anyone who touches the Elemental Ignites for 1d6 damage for 1d6 Rounds.

Complications

Water Sensitive: If a large amount of water is thrown at the Elemental (a gallon or more) it will take 2d3 damage.

Indentured Servant: The creature is bound to obey its caster's will. It is aware of this and resents the one who holds the leash.

Attacks

Fire Blast: 1d6 damage, 6 yards range. Each blast costs 1 MP.

Moderate Fire Elemental

Thug or Lieutenant Adversary Type

Attributes

Strength: 2 Health: 3
Reflexes: 3 Willpower: 2
Charisma: 1 Intelligence: 2

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 24 Move: 8
Magic Points: 15
Dam Bonus: - Scene Points: 1

Skills

Athletics 2d8, Stealth 3d8, Brawling 3d8,
Observation 3d8, Flame 3d8

Abilities

Damage Immunity: The Elemental may only take damage from magic or water-based attacks.

Wreathed In Flames: Anyone who touches the Elemental Ignites for 2d6 damage for 2d6 Rounds.

Complications

Water Sensitive: If a large amount of water is thrown at the Elemental (a gallon or more) it will take 2d3 damage.

Indentured Servant: The creature is bound to obey its caster's will. It is aware of this and resents the one who holds the leash. When pushed to do something it doesn't want to do, it may make a Tough Willpower Saving Throw (TN 12) to try and break free. If it fails, it performs the task as ordered.

Attacks

Fire Blast: 2d6 damage, 12 yards range. Each blast costs 1 MP.

Major Fire Elemental

Lieutenant or Mastermind Adversary Type

Attributes

Strength: 3 Health: 3
Reflexes: 3 Willpower: 3
Charisma: 1 Intelligence: 3

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 32 Move: 9
Magic Points: 25
Dam Bonus: +1d3 Scene Points: 2+

Skills

Athletics 3d8, Stealth 3d8, Brawling 2d10,
Observation 3d8, Flame 2d10

Abilities

Damage Immunity: The Elemental may only take damage from magic or water-based attacks.

Wreathed In Flames: Anyone who touches the Elemental Ignites for 2d8+2 damage for 2d8+2 Rounds.

Complications

Water Sensitive: If a large amount of water is thrown at the Elemental (a gallon or more) it will take 2d3 damage.

Indentured Servant: The creature is bound to obey its caster's will. It is aware of this and resents the one who holds the leash. When pushed to do something it doesn't want to do, it may make a Challenging Willpower Saving Throw (TN 9) to try and break free. If it fails, it performs the task as ordered.

Attacks

Fire Blast: 2d8+2 damage, 18 yards range. Each blast costs 1 MP.

ELEMENTAL

(WATER)

Water Elementals vary in size from little more than a puddle to a walking, angry swimming pool. While more even-tempered than Fire Elementals, their moods are also much more changeable, and they can hold a grudge with singular determination.

Water Elementals are not native to the mortal world and they are typically summoned into being by mages who then bind them to a specific task. The Elementals don't care for this kind of treatment, and strong Elementals sometimes manage to break free of their bindings, taking swift and terrible revenge on the caster for their enslavement.

Minor Water Elemental

Thug Adversary Type

Attributes

Strength: 1 Health: 2
Reflexes: 4 Willpower: 2
Charisma: 1 Intelligence: 2

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 12 Move: 9
Magic Points: 15
Dam Bonus: -1d3 Scene Points: 1

Skills

Athletics 1d8, Stealth 3d8, Brawling 2d8,
Observation 2d8, Water 3d8

Abilities

Damage Immunity: The Elemental may only take damage from magic or fire-based attacks.

Aqueous Body: The Elemental is made entirely of water. It can slide through screen doors, through grates, or bubble its way through a house's plumbing system at its normal Movement speed, reforming once it reaches the other end.

Complications

Fire Sensitive: If a large amount of fire is thrown at the elemental (such as a torch) it will take 2d3 damage.

Indentured Servant: The creature is bound to obey its caster's will. It is aware of this and resents the one who holds the leash.

Attacks

Water Blast: 1d4, 8 yards range. Each blast costs 1 MP. If struck, the target must make a Challenging Reflexes Saving Throw (TN 9) or be knocked off their feet.

Moderate Water Elemental

Thug or Lieutenant Adversary Type

Attributes

Strength: 2 Health: 3
Reflexes: 5 Willpower: 2
Charisma: 1 Intelligence: 2

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 24 Move: 12
Magic Points: 15
Dam Bonus: - Scene Points: 1

Skills

Athletics 2d8, Stealth 3d8, Brawling 3d8,
Observation 3d8, Water 3d8

Abilities

Damage Immunity: The Elemental may only take damage from magic or fire-based attacks.

Aqueous Body: The Elemental is made entirely of water. It can slide through screen doors, through grates, or bubble its way through a house's plumbing system at its normal Movement speed, reforming once it reaches the other end.

Complications

Fire Sensitive: If a large amount of fire is thrown at the elemental (such as a torch) it will take 2d3 damage.

Indentured Servant: The creature is bound to obey its caster's will. It is aware of this and resents the one who holds the leash. When pushed to do something it doesn't want to do, it may make a Tough Willpower Saving Throw (TN 12) to try and break free. If it fails, it performs the task as ordered.

Attacks

Water Blast: 2d4, 16 yards range. Each blast costs 1 MP. If struck, the target must make a Tough Reflexes Saving Throw (TN 12) or be knocked off their feet.

Major Water Elemental

Lieutenant or Mastermind Adversary Type

Attributes

Strength: 3 Health: 3
Reflexes: 5 Willpower: 3
Charisma: 1 Intelligence: 3

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 32 Move: 13
Magic Points: 25
Dam Bonus: +1d3 Scene Points: 2+

Skills

Athletics 3d8, Stealth 3d8, Brawling 2d10,
Observation 3d8, Water 2d10

Abilities

Damage Immunity: The Elemental may only take damage from magic or fire-based attacks.

Aqueous Body: The Elemental is made entirely of water. It can slide through screen doors, through grates, or bubble its way through a house's plumbing system at its normal Movement speed, reforming once it reaches the other end.

Complications

Fire Sensitive: If a large amount of fire is thrown at the elemental (such as a torch) it will take 2d3 damage.

Indentured Servant: The creature is bound to obey its caster's will. It is aware of this and resents the one who holds the leash. When pushed to do something it doesn't want to do, it may make a Challenging Willpower Saving Throw (TN 9) to try and break free. If it fails, it performs the task as ordered.

Attacks

Water Blast: 2d6, 24 yards range. Each blast costs 1 MP. If struck, the target must make an Extreme Reflexes Saving Throw (TN 14) or be knocked off their feet.

ELEMENTAL (WIND)

Wind Elementals are solid bodies of air. While they might look like fog, they have substance to them. The smallest ones resemble pixies made of mist. The largest are diffuse beings the size of houses. Wind Elementals rarely have strong opinions about anything, and they have trouble focusing on a single thought at a time, but they find conversations with most mortals very irritating.

Wind Elementals are not native to the mortal world and they are typically summoned into being by mages who then bind them to a specific task. The Elementals don't care for this kind of treatment, and strong Elementals sometimes manage to break free of their bindings, taking swift and terrible revenge on the caster for their enslavement.

Minor Wind Elemental

Thug Adversary Type

Attributes

Strength: 1 Health: 2
Reflexes: 4 Willpower: 2
Charisma: 1 Intelligence: 2

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 12 Move: 9
Magic Points: 15
Dam Bonus: -1d3 Scene Points: 1

Skills

Athletics 1d10, Stealth 3d8, Brawling 2d8,
Observation 2d8, Wind 3d8

Abilities

Damage Immunity: The Elemental may only take damage from magic.

Gaseous Form: The Wind Elemental is made purely of vapor. It can slip under doors and through heating vents. It can also fly.

Complications

Indentured Servant: The creature is bound to obey its caster's will. It is aware of this and resents the one who holds the leash.

Attacks

Wind Blast: 1d3 damage, 9 yards range.

Each blast costs 1 MP per shot. If struck, the target must make an Average Strength Saving Throw (TN 7) or be knocked off their feet.

Moderate Wind Elemental

Thug or Lieutenant Adversary Type

Attributes

Strength: 1 Health: 3
Reflexes: 5 Willpower: 2
Charisma: 1 Intelligence: 2

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 16 Move: 11
Magic Points: 15
Dam Bonus: -1d3 Scene Points: 1

Skills

Athletics 2d10, Stealth 2d10, Brawling 2d8,
Observation 3d8, Wind 2d10

Abilities

Damage Immunity: The Elemental may only take damage from magic.

Gaseous Form: The Wind Elemental is made purely of vapor. It can slip under doors and through heating vents. It can also fly.

Complications

Indentured Servant: The creature is bound to obey its caster's will. It is aware of this and resents the one who holds the leash. When pushed to do something it doesn't want to do, it may make a Tough Willpower Saving Throw (TN 12) to try and break free. If it fails, it performs the task as ordered.

Attacks

Wind Blast: 2d3 damage, 18 yards range. Each blast costs 1 MP per shot. If struck, the target must make a Challenging Strength

Saving Throw (TN 9) or be knocked off their feet.

Major Wind Elemental

Lieutenant or Mastermind Adversary Type

Attributes

Strength: 2 Health: 3
Reflexes: 6 Willpower: 3
Charisma: 1 Intelligence: 3

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 24 Move: 14
Magic Points: 25
Dam Bonus: - Scene Points: 2+

Skills

Athletics 3d10, Stealth 3d10, Brawling 2d8,
Observation 2d10, Wind 3d10

Abilities

Damage Immunity: The Elemental may only take damage from magic.

Gaseous Form: The Wind Elemental is made purely of vapor. It can slip under doors and through heating vents. It can also fly.

Complications

Indentured Servant: The creature is bound to obey its caster's will. It is aware of this and resents the one who holds the leash. When pushed to do something it doesn't want to do, it may make a Challenging Willpower Saving Throw (TN 9) to try and break free. If it fails, it performs the task as ordered.

Attacks

Wind Blast: 2d6+1 damage, 27 yards range. Each blast costs 1 MP per shot. If struck, the target must make a Tough Strength Saving Throw (TN 12) or be knocked off their feet.

GHOSTS

Lieutenant or Mastermind Adversary Type

Most ghosts are more troubled than predatory, but this doesn't make them easier to deal with. An average ghost is like a collection of echoes—all the most emotional moments of a person's life on permanent replay.

Some ghosts are more coherent than others, capable of holding extended conversations and even understanding what they've become. These ghosts aren't necessarily nicer, but they can at least be reasoned with.

Because ghosts have no body to speak of, the only way to permanently stop one is to hammer it with magic or destroy its remains.

Many ghost stick to areas they are familiar with. A few, however, simply wander the roads, looking for prey. This type of ghost is often drawn to Ley Line nexuses, haunted houses, or other places where great amounts of energy gather.

Attributes

Strength: n/a Health: 4
Reflexes: 4 Willpower: 4
Charisma: 1 Intelligence: 2

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 24 Move: 8
Magic Points: 25
Dam Bonus: - Scene Points: 3+

Skills

Athletics 2d8, Stealth 2d8, Brawling 2d8,
Scare 2d10, Observation 2d8

Abilities

Phantasmal: A ghost cannot be harmed except with magic, enchanted weapons, or blessed items. A ghost also has limited ability to interact with the material world. They can interact with objects forcefully, such as throwing a vase across a room or flicking a light switch, but they cannot carry items, don armor or clothes, or perform any action that involves holding things for more than a second in their hands.

Flight: A ghost can fly at a speed equal to its Movement. Strong winds, heavy rain, etc. do not affect this flight.

Manifestation: Ghosts are, by default, invisible to anyone who can't see magical energy. However, they may choose to reveal themselves for a Round. This does not cost an Action and they may do this at any time.

Ghostly Touch: With a purposeful touch the ghost can sap the life of their target. To use this ability, a ghost spends an Action and rolls Brawling + REF against 5 + their target's REF. The target may choose to Dodge, just as if they'd been targeted by a Ranged attack. If the ghost hits, it deals 2d8 damage, AP All.

Horrifying Visage: When a ghost deals damage to a target, it may spend 1 MP to make an Opposition Roll using its Scare + INT against its target's Willpower Saving Throw. If it succeeds, the target suffers a +2 TN penalty on all Skill Tests, Opposition Rolls, and Saving Throws until the end of the ghost's next Turn. This penalty does not stack.

Ghostly Yell: A ghost can let out an unearthly scream, scaring all targets in

earshot. To use this ability, it must pay 1 MP and spend an Action. Then it makes an Opposition Roll using its Scare + INT against the Willpower Saving Throw of every target that the scream reaches. Any target that fails suffers a +2 TN penalty on all Skill Tests, Opposition Rolls, and Saving Throws until the end of the ghost's next turn. This penalty does not stack with itself, but it does stack with Horrifying Visage.

Complications

Holy Weakness: Weapons that have been blessed or consecrated do extra damage. Roll an extra die of the same type for all damage from a holy source.

GHoul

Thug or Lieutenant Adversary Type

These are the lowest rung of the thinking undead hierarchy. Although still brutal creatures, with bestial natures that they have to work to keep in check, Ghouls are often trusted as foot soldiers by vampires—or other creatures that aren't bothered by minions that eat roadkill and human corpses.

Ghouls have trouble digesting fresh meat, and in the wild they often have to cache their kills somewhere and come back after decomposition sets in.

In bad lighting, and when wearing especially thick clothes, Ghouls can pass as human. Sometimes this lets them find lodging in the very poorest parts of town.

Attributes

Strength: 5	Health: 3
Reflexes: 3	Willpower: 2

Charisma: 1 Intelligence: 2

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 24 / 48 Move: 12

Magic Points: 15

Dam Bonus: +1d8 Scene Points: 2

Skills

Athletics 2d8, Stealth 3d8, Brawling/ Bite 2d8, Observation 2d8

Abilities

Mundane Damage Immunity: Ghouls take half damage (round up) from non-magical or un-blessed weapons.

Tunnelers: A Ghoul can tunnel in the dirt at a rate equal to their Move. Chasing a Ghoul into one of these tunnels is exceptionally dangerous, as they have been known to circle back and collapse the tunnel behind them.

Complications

Light-Sensitive: When caught in bright light, such as daylight or the light of a sodium flare, Ghouls suffer +2 TN on all Skill Tests, Opposition Rolls, and Saving Throws.

Need to Feed: Ghouls need to feast regularly of the dead flesh of a sentient being—especially the brain. A Ghoul that goes a full day without feeding on *anything* takes 1d8 damage and a cumulative +2 TN penalty to all Skill Tests, Opposition Rolls, and Saving Throws. A Ghoul that goes a week without feeding on a rotting human body suffers the same penalty.

Attacks

Claw: 1d6+DB

Bite: 1d4+DB

GOLEM (FLESH)

Thug or Lieutenant Adversary Type

Flesh Golems are built from one of two possible cores: the heart of a formerly living creature, or its brain. Golems built from a brain must have the same sort of body as the creature that their core came from—a dog, an ape, a human. Etc. Golems built from a heart can have any sort of shape, and some of the more avant-garde Golem crafters have used heart-cores to create true aberrations.

On the other hand, some creators work to make their Flesh Golems as human-seeming as possible. As long as they are careful with the stitches, a Flesh Golem with a human brain-core can mimic a human quite well—although they are not able to hold a conversation. This hasn't stopped a few less stable mages from trying to 'resurrect' their loved ones in such a way that they'll never die again. Inevitably, these efforts end in tragedy.

Like living animals, Flesh Golems need to eat every three days in order to continue functioning. They do not have digestive systems, but the magic that animates them can break down any meat they consume. Tofu, black beans, and other cheap sources of protein provide them with no nourishment.

Many Golems are pre-programmed with a kind of failsafe in the event of the death of their creator—or one final set of instructions to carry out before they find a hammer and smash themselves to dust. Flesh Golems, for some reason, are highly resistant to these fail safes. Many go feral after the death of

their creator, living for as long as they can on whatever meat they can find.

Attributes

Strength: 4 Health: 3
Reflexes: 3 Willpower: 2
Charisma: 1 Intelligence: 1

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 20 / 40 Move: 10
Magic Points: 10
Dam Bonus: +1d6 Scene Points: 1

Skills

Athletics 1d10, Stealth 2d6, Brawling 2d8,
Improvised Weapon 2d8, Throwing 2d8,
Observation 2d8

Abilities

Impervious Mind: The Golem has no true mind of its own. It was created for a specific purpose and it is bound whatever limitations its creator decided to impose. The Golem is immune to all attempts to reason with it or mentally influence it, but it must obey commands from its ritually attuned owner.

Attacks

Punch: 1d4+DB

GOLEM (CLAY)

Lieutenant or Mastermind Adversary Type

Clay Golems are built from a statuette core. The statuette must be sculpted by the creator, and the Golem takes on a form to match the statuette. When not in use, Clay Golems can be put into a kind of hibernation. They recede into the earth, dormant until their creator calls for them. If

the creator dies while they are in hibernation and no final instructions have been programmed into them, they sleep forever.

Of course, there are always rumors of Clay Golems that have woken back up. In some stories, a Golem even learns to sculpt statuettes of its own, creating an entire brood of its kin.

Attributes

Strength: 5 Health: 4
Reflexes: 3 Willpower: 2
Charisma: 1 Intelligence: 1

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 72 Move: 9
Magic Points: 10
Dam Bonus: +1d8 Scene Points: 1+

Skills

Athletics 2d8, Stealth 2d6, Brawling 2d10,
Improvised Weapon 2d10, Throwing 2d8,
Observation 2d8,

Abilities

Impervious Mind: The Golem has no true mind of its own. It was created for a specific purpose and it is bound whatever limitations its creator decided to impose. The Golem is immune to all attempts to reason with it or mentally influence it, but it must obey commands from its ritually attuned owner.

Weapon Immunity: The Golem takes only half damage from mundane weapons that would pierce it or cut it (this includes bullets).

Complications

Slow Moving: Due to the material it was

built with, the Golem is a little slow on its feet. It suffers -2 to its Movement (this penalty is already factored in).

Attacks

Punch: 1d4+DB

GOLEM (STONE)

Lieutenant or Mastermind Adversary Type

Stone Golems are formidable but ponderous, and each one is built from a massive gemstone core. The core does not need to be a precious gem—it can be simple quartz—but even a quartz cluster the size of two clenched fists can cost a chunk of change on the open market.

Stone Golems are either rough-hewn or sculpted, with the latter type mostly being a vanity. A Stone Golem that has been painstakingly sculpted to resemble a gargoyle is not more effective in combat than a walking mound of flagstones and dirt, but there are always mages that like to show off.

Attributes

Strength: 6 Health: 4
Reflexes: 3 Willpower: 2
Charisma: 1 Intelligence: 1

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 84 Move: 9
Magic Points: 10
Dam Bonus: +1d10 Scene Points: 1+

Skills

Athletics 2d10, Stealth 1d6, Brawling 2d10,
Improvised Weapon 2d10, Throwing 2d10,
Observation 2d8

Abilities

Impervious Mind: The Golem has no true mind of its own. It was created for a specific purpose and it is bound whatever limitations its creator decided to impose. The Golem is immune to all attempts to reason with it or mentally influence it, but it must obey commands from its ritually attuned owner.

Weapon Immunity: The Golem takes only half damage from mundane weapons that would pierce it or cut it (this includes bullets).

Stone Body: Thanks to its building materials, the Golem has +5 Damage Resistance to all Hit Locations.

Complications

Slow Moving: Due to the material it was built with, the Golem is a little slow on its feet. It suffers -3 to its Movement (this penalty is already factored in).

Attacks

Punch: 1d4+DB

GOLEM (IRON)

Lieutenant or Mastermind Adversary Type

Iron Golems use their namesake metal for their cores. The iron is formed into a sphere the size of a baseball and graven with runes. The Golem is then catalyzed with energy—and any kind will do. Iron Golems can be dumped into bonfires, tied to lightning rods, charged with magic, or beaten relentlessly with hammers. Some mages have even been known to jump-start them off of their trucks.

Iron Golems do not last very long if they are not cared for. They can rust if left out in the elements and should generally be treated with a sealant before being taken on excursions. Iron Golems that rust become less and less predictable, even going as far as to develop the rudiments of a personality. Mages are advised to dispose of their rusting Iron Golems before the condition becomes too advanced, as some Iron Golems have even refused the order to dismantle themselves and taken apart their creator instead.

Attributes

Strength: 7 Health: 4
Reflexes: 3 Willpower: 2
Charisma: 1 Intelligence: 1

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 96 Move: 9
Magic Points: 10
Dam Bonus: +1d12 Scene Points: 1+

Skills

Athletics 3d10, Stealth 1d6, Brawling 2d10, Improvised Weapon 2d10, Throwing 2d10, Observation 2d8

Abilities

Impervious Mind: The Golem has no true mind of its own. It was created for a specific purpose and it is bound whatever limitations its creator decided to impose. The Golem is immune to all attempts to reason with it or mentally influence it, but it must obey commands from its ritually attuned owner.

Weapon Immunity: Mundane weapons only do half damage to the Golem.

Iron Body: Thanks to its building materials,

the Golem has +7 Damage Resistance.

Complications

Slow Moving: Due to the material it was built with, the Golem is a little slow on its feet. It suffers -4 to its Movement (this penalty is already factored in).

Attacks

Punch: 1d4+DB

HELLHOUND

Lieutenant or Mastermind Adversary Type

Not quite a demon, but definitely not a dog, Hellhounds are relentless hunters that revel in the carnage they create. Hellhounds seen on earth are usually pursuing their prey, but sometimes especially courageous mages will call them for guard work.

Attributes

Strength: 6 Health: 4
Reflexes: 4 Willpower: 4
Charisma: 1 Intelligence: 2

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 84 Move: 18
Magic Points: 25
Dam Bonus: +1d10 Scene Points: 3+

Skills

Athletics 3d10, Stealth 2d10, Brawling/Bite 3d10, Observation 2d10, Intimidation 3d10, Tracking 3d10, Flame Breath 2d10

Abilities

Damage Immunity: The hound takes no damage from mundane weapons, half damage from fire, and full damage from magic or holy weapons.

Fast Movement: The beast has +4 Movement and +3 Initiative (these bonuses are already factored into the Hellhound's stats).

Death Stare: The hound can immobilize a target within 5 yards by spending an Action and making an Opposition Roll using its Willpower Saving Throw against the target's Willpower Saving Throw. If the hound succeeds, the target may not move on its next turn and takes a +2 penalty on all Skill Tests, Opposition Rolls, and Saving Throws until the end of that turn. This penalty cannot stack.

Prowl the Darkness: As part of the hound's Movement, it can spend 3 Magic Points and teleport from one darkened space to another up to 100 yards away.

Terror Howl: The hound lets out a loud, hellish howl that rattles the very soul of everyone within 30-yard radius. This costs 4 MP and an Action, but it allows the hound to make an Opposition Roll using its Willpower Saving Throw +1 against every target within the radius' Willpower Saving Throw. Every target that fails suffers -3 Initiative and a +3 TN penalty on all Skill Tests, Opposition Rolls, and Saving Throws

on their next turn. If this reduces a target to 0 Initiative or below, they may not act during their next turn. The hound may only howl once per Round.

Flame Breath: By spending 3 MP and an Action, the hound can spew a 10-yard spear of flame from its mouth. Any target that gets struck takes 2d12 damage and lights on fire for the next 4 Rounds, taking 1d6 damage at the start of each Round unless they spend an Action to put it out.



Attacks

Bite: 1d8+DB

Flame Breath: (See above note)

LICH

Lieutenant or Mastermind Adversary Type

Some might say the Lich is top of the undead food chain. These beings are often powerful sorcerers who have decided to cling to the world and accumulate power. Not all Liches are power-hungry sociopaths, but there are plenty of mages that would love to raid a Lich's lair for whatever magical items and tomes are kept within, so Liches tend to be at least a little guarded around mortals—if not outright hostile.

Attributes

Strength: 4 Health: 4
Reflexes: 3 Willpower: 5
Charisma: 3 Intelligence: 5

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 60 Move: 10
Magic Points: 75
Dam Bonus: +1d6 Scene Points: 4+

Skills

Athletics 1d6, Stealth 2d8, Brawling 2d8,
Observation 2d10, Intimidation 3d10,
Interrogation 2d10, Magic Lore
(General, Warlock, Necromancer,
Enchanter, Seer) 3d10, Persuasion
2d10, Streetwise 2d8

Abilities

Mundane Damage Immunity:

The Lich takes no damage from mundane weapons and normal damage from magic.

Extra Power: Due to their history of power harvesting, Liches have learned how to hold more magical power than most living mages can handle. Liches gain +30 Magic Points (this bonus is already factored in to the Lich's stats.)

Drain Life Force: Liches no longer need to eat or drink, but they do require spiritual nourishment to keep going. Specifically, this means they eat magic, vital energy, and souls. A Lich that touches a target can immediately begin to drain their Magic Points by spending an Action and making an Opposition Roll using their Willpower Saving Throw against the

target's Willpower Saving Throw. If they succeed, they drain 2d8 Magic Points. They may spend additional Actions to continue to drain their target, with no roll required, so long as they maintain contact. After a target's Magic Points have been drained, they begin to siphon off Hit Points. If the target dies from this damage, the Lich drains their soul. The Lich can use any points they drain to heal either their Hit Points or their Magic Points.



Amassed Wealth: Over their long lives (or unlives) Liches accumulate incredible wealth. The average Lich is at least a millionaire, and many are billionaires.

Phylactery: A Lich keeps its own soul trapped in a small metal box covered in runes. This box is exceptionally durable, with Protection 20 and 15 Hit Points, and it is usually stored in a safe location surrounded by automatic defenses. As long as this box is intact, destroying the Lich simply causes its consciousness to find a new living human body within a

five-mile radius of the phylactery, kick out its occupant, and hijack it. For the next 24 hours, the newly embodied Lich's maximum Magic Points are reduced by half. During that time, the body's flesh begins to slough off, revealing the Lich's bones. If the

Lich is destroyed again during this time, it reduces its maximum Hit Points by 10 and jumps bodies again. If it survives the 24-hour period, by the end it looks exactly like it did before it was killed. It also regains its regular maximum MP. The Lich does not have any control over which body it jumps to after being destroyed, and it will only jump into a PC's body if there are no other valid targets in a five-mile radius. Even then, the Lich must make an Opposition Roll using its Willpower Saving Throw +2 against the PC's Willpower Saving Throw. If the Lich succeeds, it hijacks the PC's body. If it fails, it is destroyed. If the Lich's box is destroyed, the Lich is annihilated on the spot, with no chance of jumping to a new body.

Complications

Holy Symbols: While Holy Symbols won't kill a Lich, they will aggravate it. Within a 2-yard range of a holy symbol that's being brandished, the Lich suffers a +2 penalty on all TNs.

Spells

Dragons Flame, Dragon's Skin, Illusion, Flight, Wards, Mage Eye, Speak to the Dead, Raise the Dead, Control the Dead, Soul Blast, Rotting Flesh, Assume Appearance, Smith, Sharpen, Create Golem, Create Scroll, Telepathy, Mind Blast, Mind Shield, Command, Calculated Teleport, Telekinesis, Alarm, Darkness, Lock, Revealing Eye, Arcane Bolt, Sword of the Creator

Attacks

Punch: 1d4+DB

RED CAP

Lieutenant or Mastermind Adversary Type

Red Caps are unique among the Fae in that they live almost exclusively on earth. The reason for this is not well understood, but they seem not to be welcome back in the Thicket.

Unfortunately for the mundanes, and for everyone else that crosses a Red Cap's path, the beings are incredibly murderous. Even the gentlest of Red Caps is as hardened to killing as the sincerest sociopath, and most of them genuinely enjoy the act. Although the trails of bodies they leave behind are not subtle, catching up with them is dangerous. Red Caps have been known to take high-explosive grenades to the chest and keep fighting and the Order's official policy is to only engage them when the local Praetorian Guards can afford to take some losses.

Attributes

Strength: 5 Health: 4
Reflexes: 5 Willpower: 4
Charisma: 4 Intelligence: 3

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 72 Move: 15
Magic Points: 40
Dam Bonus: +1d8 Scene Points: 3+

Skills

Athletics 3d10, Augury 2d8, Stealth 2d10, Brawling 3d10, Blade 3d10, Club 3d10, Improvised Weapon 3d10, Dodge 2d8, Fast Talk 2d10, Intimidation 3d10, Magic Lore (Demon Hunter, Grunt, Shadow, Warlock, General) 2d10, Occultism 2d10, Persuasion

3d10, Seduction 3d10, Resist Torture/
Interrogation 2d8, Throwing 2d10,
Observation 2d10

Abilities

Damage Immunity:

Red Caps take no damage from mundane weapons, but they take full damage from magic or weapons made of iron.

Extra Power: Red Caps are linked to the primal energies of the Thicket and thus increase their maximum Magic Points by +10 (this change is already factored into the Red Cap's stats).

Influence Resistant:

Red Caps' minds are a mess of twisted thoughts and pure stubbornness. The TN to influence them with Skills, Spells, or Abilities is increased by +2.

Blood Bath: A Red Cap thrives off the blood of its victims. Each day, the Red Cap needs to hunt and kill an intelligent creature. Once killed, they dip their hat in the victim's blood and wear it. If they do not do this ritual by the end of each day, they suffer 2d10 damage and increase the TN on all their Skill Tests and Opposition Rolls by +2. This damage is cumulative, but the penalty doesn't stack. Killing an intelligent creature removes the penalty, and the Red Cap can

recover 4d10 Hit Points from dipping their hat in exceptionally brutal killings.



Complications

Holy Symbols: Red

Caps hate holy scripture and religious symbols. They take 2d8 damage the first time they are touched with a religious symbol or holy weapon during a Scene. They also suffer a +1 TN penalty on all Skills and Spells until the end of the Scene and must succeed an immediate Challenging Willpower Saving Throw (TN 9) or else be teleported 1 mile away. Red Caps cannot carry religious objects on their person and will not attempt to touch

them of their own volition.

Spells

Illusion, Double Trouble, Mage Eye, Track Prey, Mask Self, Trick of the Light, Speed of Hermes, Titan's Strength, Assume Likeness, Walk on Air, Night Sight, Darkness, Lock, Lightning

Attacks

Claw: 1d6+DB

Spear: 1d8+DB

TROLL

Lieutenant or Mastermind Adversary Type

These wild creatures are as old as the stones in the north. There aren't many of them left, and those that have survived into the modern age don't seem especially interested in talking with people.

Hunting people is another matter, and most Trolls are happy to snatch mundanes out of outlying homes as repayment for the population collapse of the buffalo, of the reindeer herds, and of the other animals on which they used to feed.

Attributes

Strength: 8 Health: 5
Reflexes: 3 Willpower: 3
Charisma: 1 Intelligence: 2

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 126 Move: 14
Magic Points: 20
Dam Bonus: +2d8 Scene Points: 2+

Skills

Athletics 3d10, Stealth 2d8, Brawling 3d10,
Improvised Weapon 3d10, Dodge 2d6,
Intimidation 3d10, Resist Torture/
Interrogation 3d10, Throwing 2d10,
Observation 2d10, Tracking 3d10

Abilities

Damage Immunity: Trolls take half damage from mundane weapons, full damage from magic, and double damage from iron and fire.

Regeneration: As if their sheer mass and muscle wasn't enough, these awful beasts regenerate. Trolls heal 8 Hit Points per Round. They cannot regenerate damage done with iron and fire, but their regeneration continues even if they fail a Health Saving Throw at 0 or less Hit Points and die. As soon as they heal back to at least 1 Hit Point, they resurrect. The only way to permanently put a Troll down is by dealing its entire maximum Hit Points in fire and iron damage or by decapitating it. A Troll will regrow any other body parts that are removed.

Thick Skinned: Trolls have +5 Protection to all Hit Locations.

Keen Smell: A Troll has an incredible sense of smell. They can smell their prey up to 100 yards away, and they can tell everything from how wounded their prey is, to what type of creature it is, to how scared it is. Trolls receive a -3 TN bonus on all scent-related uses of the Observation Skill.

Complications

Hunger: Trolls require meat. Lots of it. In the wild, this means elk, deer, bears, or beached whales. In the countryside, this means cows, horses, or several sheep. In the cities, this means people. Trolls can eat dogs, cats, raccoons and the like as a snack, but they must eat at least a full-grown-human's worth of meat and bone every week. If they skip a week, they begin taking 3d10 damage daily and cannot regenerate until they have satisfied their hunger.

Ugly: Trolls have a hard time looking normal. They are unusually tall, thick-skinned, and sickly colored with apish features and a horrible stink. Because of

this, the TN for any attempt a Troll makes at social interaction is increased by +3. Because of this, most city Trolls avoid people and live as homeless bums waiting to murder and eat their next victim.

Attacks

Claw: 1d6+2+DB

Bite: 1d6 +DB

VAMPIRES

Lieutenant or Mastermind Adversary Type

According to Liches, vampires are the petty lords of the undead hierarchy. Vampires do not share this view, and generally try not to spend too much time in the company of Liches.

Although some vampires are utopians, dreaming of an ideal “society of the night” in which humans have been completely subjugated, many others prefer to dwell among the mortals, sometimes even trying to integrate into mortal society.

Their appetites make this difficult.

As vampires only die by being careless, old vampires are canny, paranoid creatures that are *very* difficult to kill. Younger vampires are less so and have a reputation among their kind for making amateur mistakes.

Attributes

Strength: 7 Health: 4
Reflexes: 4 Willpower: 4
Charisma: 4 Intelligence: 3

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 96 Move: 15
Magic Points: 30
Dam Bonus: +1d12 Scene Points: 3+

Skills

Athletics 2d10, Stealth 3d8, Brawling/ Bite 2d10, Observation 2d8, Fast Talk 2d10, Intimidation 2d10, Interrogation 2d10, Leadership 2d8, Magic Lore (Various) 2d8, Occultism 2d8, Persuasion 2d10, Seduction 3d10, Streetwise 2d8

Abilities

Mundane Damage Immunity: Vampires take half damage (round up) from non-magical or un-blessed weapons.

Blood Vacuum: A vampire can replenish either lost Hit Points or Magic Points by feeding off the fresh blood of a sentient being. When a vampire hits with a bite attack, they also drain 1d6 HP or MP from their victim.

Enthrall: The vampire can force their will upon another creature within 5 yards by spending an Action, 10 MP, and making an Opposition Roll using the vampire's Persuasion + CHR against the target's Willpower Saving Throw. If the vampire succeeds, they may influence the target. A newly created vampire may cause the target to treat everything they say as being reasonable. A seasoned vampire can control their target's actions. An elder vampire may permanently enslave the target—at least until the elder vampire has been destroyed. Vampires may only enthrall one target at a time, but repeated enthrallings can render a person much more pliable and receptive to the vampire's commands.

Strong Will: Vampires receive a -3 TN bonus on all Saving Throws to resist mind-influencing effects.

Create Progeny: Although their community has very strict rules about where and when



they can do this in order to prevent overpopulation, vampires can pass on their curse to mortals. To create a childe, a vampire drains their target of blood and spends 25 Magic Points. The target dies from the blood loss but, three days later, they awaken as a vampire.

Complications

Light Sensitive: How a vampire is affected by sunlight depends largely on the vampire's age. A newly created vampire takes 4d6 for every turn they spend in direct sunlight. A seasoned vampire takes 2d6 damage for every turn they spend out in direct sunlight. An elder vampire does not take any damage but suffers a +2 TN penalty on all Skill Tests, Opposition Rolls, and Saving Throws until they get out of the sunlight. Artificial sunlight has no effect on vampires. Magical sunlight, on the other hand, is quite effective.

Need to Feed: All vampires need to draw blood from living, sentient creatures in order to survive. Any time a vampire goes a day without feeding, they take 3d8 damage and suffer a cumulative +2 TN penalty to Skill Tests, Opposition Rolls, and Saving Throws until they have fed.

Holy Symbols: Vampires react to holy symbols differently depending on their age. Newly create vampires take 2d6 damage, AP All, if they touch a holy symbol. They must also blindly flee from the symbol. Seasoned vampires, while they do not need to flee, take 1d8 damage and suffer a +2 TN penalty on all Skill Tests, Opposition Rolls, and Saving Throws until the end of their next turn. Elder vampires suffer no damage, but still receive this penalty. This penalty does not stack with itself.

Attacks

Claw: 1d6+DB

Bite: 1d4+DB

WENDIGO

Lieutenant or Mastermind Adversary Type

Experts disagree on whether the Wendigo is truly its own creature or merely a disease. When a starving person commits cannibalism, the spiritual essence of the Wendigo is drawn to them. If their willpower is still strong, they can cling to sanity and repel it, but if their mind has begun to fracture—or if they were never stable to begin with—the Wendigo essence glides inside of them and fuses with their soul.

Once the Wendigo essence has joined to a host, their body begins to change. Their cheeks sink. Their limbs grow long and gaunt. Their teeth sharpen. Their breath begins to reek perpetually of raw meat. Within a month, the last of their self-awareness erodes and they are nothing but a killing machine, piloted by a ravenous collision of man and spirit.

Attributes

Strength: 6	Health: 4
Reflexes: 3	Willpower: 4
Charisma: 2	Intelligence: 3

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 84	Move: 12
Magic Points: 30	
Dam Bonus: +1d10	Scene Points: 2+

Skills

Athletics 2d10, Stealth 3d10, Brawling 2d10, Improvised Weapon 2d10, Dodge 2d8, Intimidation 2d10, Resist Torture/ Interrogation 3d10, Throwing 2d10, Observation 2d10, Tracking 3d10

Abilities

Howl: The Wendigo is a terrifying beast. Once per Round, it can spend an Action to let out a howl that shakes its prey to their very bones.

The Wendigo makes a Willpower Saving Throw +3 against its targets' Willpower Saving Throws. Any target that fails takes a +3 TN penalty on all Skill Tests, Opposition Rolls, and Saving Throws for the rest of the Scene. This penalty does not stack.

Pain Immunity: Nothing can compare to the pain of its hunger. The Wendigo suffers no penalties from being hit in the Groin & Kidney location, nor does it need to react to taking damage in a way that would suggest it even notices the pain.

Driven by Madness: Because this tortured soul's mind is so tormented, they are near impossible to manipulate mentally by skill or magic. The Wendigo gains a -5 TN bonus on all Saving Throws to resist the effects of Spells and abilities. This does not affect its Howl ability or its Hunger Complication.

Regeneration: The spirit inside this tortured person wants to keep going, even knowing what it's likely to do to the people around it. The Wendigo regenerates 8 Hit Points at the end of each Round. Holy damage and magic damage cannot be regenerated this way. If the Wendigo ever fails a Death Save, its regeneration stops, and it dies.

Complications

Hunger: Wendigos require human meat. Sadly, the more a Wendigo eats the more it wants. Each day, it must make a Tough Willpower Saving Throw (TN 12) to not forget where it is and go on an immediate gluttonous binge. Even if it succeeds, it must still stalk its prey and feed before dawn the next day. If a Wendigo is kept from its daily meal, it suffers 2d10 damage and loses its regeneration. This damage repeats every day until it feeds, at which point its regeneration resumes again.

Attacks

Claws: 1d8+DB
Improvised Weapon: 1d8+DB
Bite: 2d4+DB

WEREWOLVES - FERAL CREATED

Thug, Lieutenant, or Mastermind Adversary Type

A werewolf bit and turned a person into another of its kind. Sadly, these beasts can rarely control their change and their hunger is overwhelming.

Feral-Created do not have control over their need to change, and it can be brought out by strong emotion, predatory scents or images, or the full moon in the sky.

Attributes

Strength: 5 Health: 3
Reflexes: 4 Willpower: 2
Charisma: 3 Intelligence: 3

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 24 / 48 Move: 15
Magic Points: 20
Dam Bonus: +1d8 Scene Points: 1+

Skills

Athletics 3d10, Stealth 2d8, Brawling/ Bite 2d8, Observation 2d8, Intimidation 2d8, Interrogation 2d8, Persuasion 2d8, Streetwise 2d8, Tracking 2d8

Abilities

Damage Immunity: Feral-Created take half damage (round up) from mundane weapons. They take full damage from magic, silver, and fire.

Tracking Nose: The Feral-Created has an uncanny tracking ability. They can follow even the faintest whiff of perfume or body

odor several miles to a target and they treat each person's scent as being completely different. To pick up a scent trail, the Feral-Created spends five minutes and rolls an Observation Skill Test at whatever TN the GM decides is appropriate. Once they have the scent, they can follow their target with Tracking, at a TN of 7. Modifiers from running water, perfume bombs, etc. can apply to this TN, and if the Feral-Created loses the trail, they must stop and pick up the scent again.

Regeneration: Feral-Created regenerate 6 Hit Points every Round. Unless their head is cut off, their body is set on fire, or they are disintegrated, this can bring them back from the dead. Damage inflicted with silver weapons cannot be regenerated.

Infectious Bite: Feral-Created automatically try to pass on their curse when they bite a mortal. A Feral-Created that bites a target and inflicts damage must spend 20 MP, if it is available. If they do, they make an Opposition Roll using their Health Saving Throw against their target's Health Saving Throw. If the target fails, they contract lycanthropy and become a Feral-Created within 2 days. This infection can be killed while it's still incubating with anything that treats magical diseases. A Feral-Created's lycanthropy can't be cured—except by elaborate ritual.

Pack Bond: Feral-Created don't always have packs, but when they do they can communicate mind-to-mind with other members of their pack while in wolf form as long as they are within line of sight of each other. They can also communicate at a distance by howling.

Human Form: All werewolves have a human form with different stats and none of the werewolf's abilities. If the GM does not have a particular character in mind for a werewolf's human form, they are encouraged to use the Civilian (see Mortals, earlier in this section). Changing forms costs an Action, but a werewolf can spend that Action from their next turn and change forms in response to an incoming attack.

Complications

Silver Vulnerability: Any attack on a werewolf with a silver weapon does x2 damage.

Uncontrolled Change: When a Feral-Created who is in human form experiences an especially strong emotion or takes damage, they must make a TN 9 Willpower Saving Throw or change immediately. They may only change back after they have fed or slept due to a lack of targets. The full moon also brings this change with no Saving Throw, and the Feral-Created cannot change back until the moon has left the sky.

Hunger: Werewolves crave fresh meat—as in freshly killed. Feral-Created must eat bloody, raw animal or human meat once per day—although they are driven to seek human meat if it is available. If they skip a day, they take 1d8 damage and lose their regeneration until they have eaten freshly-killed meat again.

Attacks

Claws: 2d6 +DB

Bite: 1d8+DB

WEREWOLVES - NATURAL BORN

Lieutenant or Mastermind Adversary Type

Natural-Born werewolves are distant descendants of the first Feral-Created werewolves. Over generations, they learned to control their gift, gaining the ability to not just force a change any time they wish, but to keep a portion of their human mind aware of what's happening while they are shifted.

Like vampires and mages, Natural-Born werewolves were hunted extensively by humanity, and like vampires and mages, Natural-Born werewolves have long memories. Most do not particularly like or trust mundanes and stick to the company of other Natural-Borns, operating the same way as a wolf pack. Natural-Borns have wide territorial ranges—even wider since the invention of the train and automobile—and sometimes come into conflict with other packs. On other occasions, they cooperate.

Natural-Borns have a deep, instinctive hate of the undead and will often risk their lives to exterminate small groups of Ghouls, zombies, or vampires. Their hate is not stronger than their survival instinct, however, and they will leave entrenched groups of undead alone.

Attributes

Strength: 6	Health: 4
Reflexes: 5	Willpower: 3
Charisma: 3	Intelligence: 3

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 84 Move: 18
Magic Points: 25
Dam Bonus: +1d10 Scene
Points: 2+

Skills


Athletics 2d10, Stealth 3d10,
Brawling/ Bite 2d10,
Observation 3d10,
Intimidation 2d10,
Interrogation 2d8,
Magic Lore (Various)
2d8, Occultism 2d8,
Persuasion 2d8,
Streetwise 2d8,
Tracking 3d10

Abilities

Damage Immunity:

Natural-Borns take half damage (round up) from mundane weapons. They take full damage from magic, silver, and fire.

Tracking Nose:

The Natural-Born has an uncanny tracking ability. They can follow  even the faintest whiff of perfume or body odor several miles to a target and they treat each person's scent as being completely different. To pick up a scent trail, the Natural-Born spends five minutes and rolls an Observation Skill Test at whatever TN the GM decides is appropriate. Once they have the scent, they can follow their target with Tracking, at a TN of 7. Modifiers from running water, perfume bombs, etc. can

apply to this TN, and if the Natural-Born loses the trail, they must stop and pick up the scent again.

Regeneration: Natural-Borns regenerate 8 Hit Points every Round. Unless their head is cut off, their body is set on fire, or they are disintegrated, this can bring them back from the dead. Damage inflicted with silver weapons cannot be regenerated.

Infectious Bite: Natural-Borns can give mortals lycanthropy, but only if they choose to. A Natural-Born that bites a target and inflicts damage may spend 20 MP and make an Opposition Roll using their Health Saving Throw against their target's Health Saving Throw. If the target fails, they contract lycanthropy and become a Feral-Created within 2 days. This infection can be killed while it's still incubating with anything that treats magical diseases. A Natural-Born's lycanthropy cannot be cured—except by elaborate ritual.

Pack Bond:

Natural-Borns form tight bonds with their packmates. As long as they are within sight of each other, they can communicate mind-to-mind. They can also communicate at a distance by howling.

Human Form: All werewolves have a human form with different stats and none



of the werewolf's abilities. If the GM does not have a particular character in mind for a werewolf's human form, they are encouraged to use the Civilian (see Mortals, earlier in this section). Changing forms costs an Action, but a werewolf can spend that Action from their next turn and change forms in response to an incoming attack.

Complications

Silver Vulnerability: Any attack on a werewolf with a silver weapon does x2 damage.

Uncontrolled Change: When a Natural-Born who is in human form experiences an especially strong emotion or takes damage, they must make a TN 9 Willpower Saving Throw or change immediately.

Hunger: Werewolves crave fresh meat—as in freshly killed. Natural-Born must eat bloody, raw animal or human meat once per day. If they skip a day, they take 1d8 damage and lose their regeneration until they have eaten freshly-killed meat again.

Attacks

Claws: 2d6 +DB

Bite: 1d8+DB

“ZOMBIE”

Thug Adversary Type

This is your basic, garden-variety shambling corpse. Despite their reanimation having nothing to do with the practices of Vodou mages, Necromancers persist in calling them zombies.

Zombies are mindless and untiring, performing whatever labor their master

assigns—as long as their master is within range. Zombies without a master to control them are endlessly hungry, feel no pain, and will generally try to chase down and kill anything they think they'll be able to eat.

Attributes

Strength: 3 Health: 2

Reflexes: 2 Willpower: 2

Charisma: 1 Intelligence: 1

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 24 Move: 7

Magic Points: 10

Dam Bonus: +1d3 Scene Points: 1

Skills

Stealth 1d6, Brawling 2d8, Observation 1d8

Abilities

Infectious Bite: It's an unfortunate side-effect, but when a zombie is not properly prepared, the residual necromantic energy that goes into animating it becomes a little bit...contagious. Anyone bitten by a zombie must make a Health Saving Throw at TN 9. If they succeed, they merely contract Bite sickness, taking 2d6 damage at the start of each day for the next 3 days. If they fail, they suffer the same consequences but also take a +2 TN penalty on all Skill Tests and Opposition Rolls for the duration of their Bite sickness. If they critically fail, they suffer all of the above, and 1d6 hours later they turn into a zombie. Bite sickness can be cured with any treatment that works on magical diseases. However, once someone turns into a zombie, their condition is irreversible.

Complication

Brain Dead: Unless they're being controlled by a master, zombies mostly just follow their feeding instinct.

Rotten Cranium: Zombies take double damage from attacks to their Head or Brain Hit Locations. This stacks with bonuses to damage those locations.

Attacks

Grab/Swipe: 1d4+DB

Bite: 1d3+DB



GAINING EXPERIENCE

Whenever the PCs complete a scenario, they gain Experience Points. How many Experience Points they get depends on how well they did as a group.

A group that worked well together, achieved their objectives, and had lots of good in-character humor or drama should get 4 points each.

A group that had serious trouble working together, failed their objectives, and had very little in-character humor or drama should get 1 point each.

The group should never get less than 1 point each (they are, after all, showing up to play the game and that's worth something), and the GM is free to assign the additional Experience Point awards for accomplishing especially important tasks.

Depending on the length of the scenario, the Game Master may want to reward the characters with experience points at the end of every game session instead of every scenario.

PCs keep all their unspent Experience Points, and they can spend their Experience Points at the beginning or end of any game Session for the following upgrades:

Gain a New Skill

1D6	8 points
-----	----------

Increase a Skill's Level of Learning

From 1d6 to D8	10 points
From 1d8 to D10	15 points

Increase a Skill's Practical Usage

From 1 to 2	10 points
From 2 to 3	15 points

Improve a Skill That's Already 3d10

Add a +1 bonus	25 points
----------------	-----------

Increase Attribute (To No More Than 5)

Add +1 30 points

Buy An Archetype or General Talent

+1 Talent (+2 Max) 16 points

Buy A Second Miracle (Templar Only)

+1 Miracle (+1 Max) 20 points

Buy Off A Complication

You may only do this with the GM's approval, and it must make sense in the game's story. Furthermore, this counts as buying another Talent, so if you do this, you may only buy one Talent with Experience Points. If you've already bought two Talents with Experience Points, you may not buy off your Complication.

-1 Complication (-1 Max) 16 points

Buy Scene Points

This does not increase your maximum Scene Points. It increases your current Scene Points. You may buy Scene Points during a game Session, not just at the beginning or end of one, and you may spend those Scene Points right away.

+1 Scene Point 1 point

BEING A GM

The truth is, this section could easily go for a couple hundred pages, but here's the quick and dirty version: Wicked Pacts is a story that you and your players tell together.

The PCs are the main characters in that story. You, on the other hand, are the narrator, the director, the villains, and the supporting cast.

Your job as the GM is to shine the spotlight on the PCs, push them into the action, challenge them, and give them each

a chance to show what's cool about *their specific character*.

Being a GM can be a big job, as you have to know the game rules, you have to hook the PCs into a story, you have to challenge them just the right amount, and you have to react on the fly when the PCs do the unexpected.

Being a GM *is not* an impossible job, however, and you have a lot of resources at your disposal.

If you don't feel 100% solid on the game rules, try building a character and running it through a few different challenges. Try a Skill Test, a combat, and maybe even think about how that character would study a crime scene for clues.

If you aren't comfortable writing your own scenarios, there's a scenario at the end of this book and there's more scenarios to come. You can also scavenge plotlines from TV shows, movies, and novels—changing the details to add mages, magical crimes, and supernatural creatures where appropriate.

If you're worried that your GMing style isn't interesting, ask your players what they want to see more of in the game and then give it to them. Put in villains that they'll *really* hate, or that they'll feel conflicted about. Develop the supporting cast with personality quirks, accents, etc.—and don't be afraid to keep bringing back characters that the players really react to. If the players enter a Scene that's supposed to be really scary, or ominous, or violent, take a moment and describe what the Scene looks like—what the PCs are seeing, hearing, and

feeling. You can sometimes get a lot of oomph out of lingering on very little details like the slow drip of blood from the ceiling or the *tik tik tik* of claws on linoleum tiles.

And once you've got these things mastered, don't be afraid to go the extra mile. Use accents or specific voices for your NPCs. Bring props (such as a map of the city where the PCs are located) and pass them out to the players. Play music to set the tone for a Scene. Above all, have fun—and make sure your players are having fun too. That's why you're all playing this, after all.

SCENARIO

HOOKS

Sometimes you need just a piece of a story to get started. Roll once on each table and combine the two for a hook.

Locations 1d12

1. House or Apartment
2. Mall or Store
3. Hospital or Clinic
4. Graveyard or Funeral Parlor
5. Woods or Beach or Swamp
6. Police Station or Morgue
7. Liquor Store or Dispensary
8. Office Building or Govt Office
9. Abandoned House or Facility
10. Down the Block or On the Interstate
11. Ley Line or Dead Zone
12. Neutral Ground

Problems 1d6

1. Someone or something is pressuring the owner, trying to take control of the location.
2. Someone has been killed in a way a mundane could never have managed.
3. Two or more factions had a fight here. Signs suggest their disagreement is far from over.
4. Something unnatural lives in the area. It's been preying on the mortals nearby.
5. What's happening at the location is just a test. If the test goes well, it will begin happening elsewhere.
6. An enemy faction wants to parlay. They're facing a problem here that threatens not just them but people the PCs care about.





SAMPLE SCENARIO: SUFFER THE CHILDREN

PREMISE

A young father, *Javier Cabrera*, furious. His wife and daughter are dead, gunned down in a mob retaliation for a crime he didn't commit.

Unfortunately for the mobsters, Javier has magic in his blood and he means to return that suffering tenfold.

And unfortunately for everyone else, he doesn't care who gets caught in the crossfire.

BACKGROUND

Last year, Javier was working as a driver for what he thought was a legit trucking

company. One day his truck was side swiped by a “careless” driver. The truck was only somewhat scratched, but Javier wanted to do the right thing and stopped to make sure the other guy was okay and that the accident was reported.

What he didn't realize was that the sideswipe had been planned to get him to stop. While he was speaking with the driver, several other men went to the back of the truck, located the stack of drugs that Javier didn't know he was hauling, removed them, and left.

Javier got to the delivery site, unloaded his otherwise legal cargo, and left, but when he got home strangers were there and they had his wife and daughter on their knees in the kitchen on a rolled-out piece of plastic. The men grabbed Javier and interrogated him.

They were convinced that Javier had made some deal with a Korean outfit known as the *Worthless Flower Gang*. At this point Javier realized that the person he had been working for was a mob boss and that he had been moving drugs. The strangers were not happy with Javier's repeated insistences that he knew nothing about the Worthless Flower Gang, so they shot Javier's wife and daughter and held him at gunpoint while they bundled up the bodies.

However, before they could have Javier stand on the same tarp, a police response to an unrelated 911 call spooked the strangers. Javier used the moment to try and run and they shot him in the head. Even suppressed, the shot and Javier's shouting drew the police, and the strangers were forced to flee

the scene before they could confirm the kill.

Javier woke two months later from a coma and learned that his wife and daughter were dead. When the police questioned him about the incident, he told them that he didn't remember any of it. Instead he worked on getting himself healthy, and once he was able to stand up he began researching all of the people who had been involved in his family's death.

Then he plotted their slow and terrible fates.

Javier contacted an ostracized member of his family, Uncle Romeo Cabrera, who was have said to have dabbled in dark magic. Javier told Romeo about what had happened, and Romeo said that he was quite happy to help. There was a spell he knew of that would summon and control a ravenous beast. No crime the beast committed would be linked back to either of them, as they would both have ironclad alibis. At first Javier thought his uncle was joking, but when Romeo showed him the spell, he became very interested. He demanded that Romeo teach it to him, Romeo consented, recognizing the spark of magic in his nephew's blood.

Soon, *everyone* who had been involved in his family's killing would pay.

THE HOOK

The players are all contacted by phone by **Darren Lord**, a Praetorian guard within the Hermetic Order. He explains that he needs some boots on the ground *right now* to find a supernatural killer. While the multiple murder that the Guard is investigating

appears to be the work of an animal, not a man, there is a magical residue around the site of the crime that suggests the killings had been performed by a summoned creature.

So far, a family of four has been murdered. **Charles Hearne** (Father), **Claire Hearne** (Mother), and **Hugh Hearne** (their 11-year-old son) have all been killed in their home. Darren provides directions to the address, and stresses that the PCs should get there right away, before the mundane police start swarming over the scene.

Darren doesn't especially care if things get wrapped up neatly, or if there's mundane politics involved. His priority is finding out what caused the killings, bringing it to justice, and/or destroying it.

SCENE OF THE CRIME

The Hearne family's house is in a nice two-story house in a modest part of town. New cars sit in the driveway and the family doesn't seem to have wanted for anything. When the PCs arrive, a lone patrol officer named **Joseph Daniels** is there to let them in. He is a member of the Order and has been instructed to allow the PCs in first before he calls in the bodies. He asks the PCs to be quick and not to disturb the scene.

PCs who investigate the house will find that Claire Hearne and Charles Hearne were killed in the kitchen and Hugh Hearne was killed in the upstairs hallway. There is a Light Handgun by Charles' corpse. It is four bullets short of a full magazine. Also, the power for the house has been cut.

All three Hearne bodies have been

savagely clawed and ripped apart. Claire's throat has been cut, her arms, torso, and face are covered in small slashes, and her body seems partially deflated. Hugh has simply been shredded, and Charles has suffered the same treatment as Claire.

Everyone who goes into the house must make a Tough Willpower Saving Throw (TN 12) or be nauseated, suffering a +1 TN penalty to all Skill Tests and Opposition Rolls for the rest of the Scene.

The PCs can also uncover more information by making Skill Tests.

Observation (TN 5)

There is a four-foot-wide circle of disturbed earth in the back yard. Digging down into it just reveals more churned-up dirt.

Police Sciences (TN 9)

The creature killed Claire in the kitchen first. Hearne was in his upstairs study at the time, pulled his loaded handgun out of his gun safe and ran downstairs. The creature was already gone and his wife dead by the time he got there.

The creature got Hugh next, when the boy was coming downstairs to investigate the noise and the screams. Charles fired on the creature, wounding it and leaving a small trickle of blood in the upstairs hallway next to the ruins of Hugh's corpse. Two bullets embedded in the creature. One embedded in the wall.

The creature rushed Hugh, driving him back into the kitchen. Hugh got off a final shot which embedded itself in the kitchen ceiling before he was slaughtered.

There are no obvious claw marks on windowsills, near doorways, or anywhere else to suggest how the creature exited the building.

Occultism (TN 7)

The creature seems to have drained the blood and other vital fluids from the two older Hearnese. It must have done this quickly, because it only took a few seconds with each of them. It did not do this with Hugh, possibly because it was interrupted.

- **Police Sciences (TN 5)**: Ensures the right blood sample is collected for further analysis.
- **Alchemy (TN 9)**: After studying the sample in an alchemical lab, the following information is revealed: the creature has an affiliation with shadow and there are magical similarities between its magical signature and that of a basilisk. It is *nowhere close* to an exact match, however, and basilisks are supposed to have been pushed to extinction a few centuries ago.

Security (TN 7)

There is no sign of the creature entering or exiting the house through any normal means. Also, the house's security system—which is *way* nicer than houses on this block warrant, and which *does not* call the police in the event of a disturbance—had its battery backup disconnected shortly after the attack began.

In fact, the alarm panel looks like it was hit by a lawnmower. The battery backup wasn't just removed. It was shredded.

Magic Lore: Any (TN 9)

There is residue from a teleport Spell near the meter where the power was cut. Magic

Lore: Shadow (TN 7) identifies the Spell as Create Door.

Computers (TN 5)

There are protected files on the computer in Charles' study, which has a Hearne Transportation and Automotive LLC logo as its desktop background.

A second Computers Skill Test, this time at TN 9, cracks into the protected files. Inside the files are spreadsheets listing cars and car parts, as well as a list of shipments of “brakes”. The “brakes” are being delivered all across the region, up to 100 miles away.

Observation (TN 7)

The creature had razor sharp claws and seemed to move on both four legs and two. After killing the victims, it simply vanished. Also, there is a hidden floor vault in the upstairs study.

- **Lockpicking (TN 9)**: The vault in the floor has lots of money (\$25,000 in cash), a second handgun, 3 fake passports, and 3 fake IDs. Furthermore, there is a small handwritten ledger that seems to be tracking shipments. Many of them are to someone named *Pak Jun-Tak*. A Streetwise Test (TN 9) will connect that name to a Korean gang involved in the drug trade, the *Worthless Flower Gang*. The Worthless Flower Gang, following a series of messy disagreements with the Triad five years ago, is now effectively run by the Triad.

Streetwise (TN 4)

Charles Hearne is a member of the 56th *Street Clovers*. They are a branch of the Irish mob.

A second Test, TN 9, reveals that Charles was in charge of smuggling and ran a chop shop for the Clovers using his company for cover. His company, if the PCs haven't already sussed it out, is Hearne Transportation and Automotive LLC.

WHERE TO NEXT

Depending on the clues they've uncovered, the PCs might choose to investigate Pak Jun-Tak, Hearne Transportation and Automotive, the 56th Street Clovers, research the creature, or dig deeper into the Hearne family specifically.

If the PCs did not uncover any major clues while investigating the house, asking criminal, automotive, or police contacts about the Hearne family will quickly reveal the family's ties to the Clovers.

Researching the creature, meanwhile, produces some theories (use bright lights, carry mirrors, be more careful after dark or if the power goes out), but it's going to take time to nail down the creature's type. If the PCs found the blood sample and deliver it to the Order, the Order will study it and have an answer for the PCs 24 hours later. If the PCs did not find the blood sample, the Order will simply tell them it is assigning research mages to the task.

The other three options for investigation (Pak Jun-Tak, Hearne Transportation and Automotive, and the Clovers) will all lead to specific encounters.

INVESTIGATING PAK JUN-TAK

Pak Jun-Tak co-owns a car wash downtown. The entire staff of the car wash (14 people in total, with 6 people on site at a given time) is connected to the Worthless Flower Gang. Most of them are bit players, but all of them have some idea about what the car wash does: i.e. launder money for the Worthless Flower Gang—and, by extension, the Triad.

Pak is out and the gang members at the car wash don't know where he is or when he will be back. Song Ho-Dam, the Flowers' liaison with the Triad, is there and will try to coldly fend off any questions that are asked about the business or about Pak. If the PCs try to pressure him, he will escalate first to subtle threats, and then to violence (treat Song and the other 5 gang members as Mobster Thugs). He won't try to kill anyone unless the PCs pull out guns or blades or start throwing flashy Spells, but he will try to beat them soundly and then kick them out.

If the PCs manage to win Song's trust, or if they otherwise put him in a position where he can't say no, he will admit that he's aware of Pak's connection to the Clovers—and particularly, to Hearne—and that he's concerned about it. He genuinely doesn't know where Pak went, but he wants to see him as soon as possible.

Telling Song that Charles is dead will worry him, but not excessively. Charles is linked to Pak, but not directly to Song.

INVESTIGATING THE 56TH STREET CLOVERS

The Clovers put a lot of stock in bravado, but beneath the surface they're twitchy and cautious. By the time the PCs track any of them down, most of the gang already knows what happened to Charles and his family, and the Clovers are like a kicked hornet's nest. They think Charles' killing was an act by a rival gang, and they haven't decided who they're going to hit back yet.

The Clovers own a series of low-rent apartments, pawn shops, dive bars, and of course Hearne Transportation and Automotive LLC. The individual Clovers are jumpy, but if the PCs manage to win their trust they'll refer the PCs to the person who inherited Charles' position: Barry Malone, his second in command. Barry can be found at Hearne Transportation, and this is more or less the extent of what the street-level Clovers know.

The Clovers are run by a man named *Dougal Hearne*, Charles' father, but Dougal isn't in town right now and the Clovers are kind of grateful. Dougal scares them. He used to be a good judge of character, but for the past five years he's made it clear that he thinks everyone is plotting against him and he is quick to order that an example be made of anyone he perceives as a threat.

If the PCs pick a fight, the same information can be wrung out of the defeated Clovers. Picking a fight with a single Clover on Clover territory will lead to the PCs being jumped by 3d4 Clovers on the way back out.

The GM should use the Mobster Thugs entry for the Clovers' stats.

INVESTIGATING HEARNE TRANSPORTATION AND AUTOMOTIVE LLC

Hearne Transportation and Automotive is in the shady part of town, in a warehouse that's been haphazardly converted to a garage. It's technically open to the public, but if anyone brings a car there, the attendants tell them they can't get to it for over a month.

In truth, the warehouse holds a chop shop, a cache of stolen goods from minor burglaries, and a substantial supply of drugs. The warehouse is heavily guarded by armed guards and they have several look-outs in the neighborhood to watch for either cops or rivals.

Currently in charge of operations is a man named **Barry Malone**. Barry was Charles' second and has stepped up to command following Charles' death. Barry is not gentle, and he knows that the power vacuum has put a lot of targets on his back. Anyone in the Clovers who wants to move up could do so by icing him. The slightest hint of danger will cause him to respond with violence, calling in his best men (1d6 +3 Mobster Thugs) against the PCs.

Telling the guards at the gate that they

have information about Charles Hearne is the easiest way for the PCs to get in, but they can also just storm the warehouse. There are 16 loyal Clovers inside, but they fight in groups of 4 each and killing or knocking out two groups is enough to scatter the others. If the PCs scatter the Clovers, capturing Barry is simple. He will try to flee, but not very effectively, paralyzed by the fear that the PCs are what killed Charles and they've come for him.

If the PCs get Barry talking, he will tell them that he was good friends with Charles. He will also insist on knowing what happened. Regardless of whether the PCs tell him, he will voice the opinion that maybe **Ruth Hearne** killed him (Charles' sister, who owns a chain of stores called Aisling Florists and has a reputation for ruthlessness) because of the bad blood between her and Charles, or else Charles was silenced by some unknown party, possibly to bury his dealings with some mystery Triad member.

Barry knows Charles had a friend who worked with the Triad, but he doesn't know who.

Unfortunately, before he can say any more, the conversation is interrupted.

THE ATTACK

While the PCs are talking with Barry (or searching his body for clues, depending on how the encounter went) two Chupacabras will hit the warehouse. The beasts will begin attacking any surviving Clovers, whittling down their numbers with hit-and-run strikes. The Clovers will return fire if any of them are still standing. If the Clovers

have been killed or scattered, the Chupacabras will go after Barry. If Barry is dead, they will go after the PCs.

The Chupacabras are only tasked with killing the Clovers. Once the Clovers have been eliminated, they will stick around for just three more Rounds before using Stunning Gaze and Shadow Blend to get away.

If Barry survives, he will check the warehouse's security footage. If Barry is killed or escapes, the PCs can do this themselves, accessing the cameras from the laptop on his desk (Computer Operation Test, TN 7). Either way, the footage reveals a man calmly walking out the back of the employee locker room into the yard surrounding the warehouse. As he does this, both Chupacabras scurry past him. Neither one so much as glances at him. The footage is time-stamped only a couple minutes ago, and if the PCs investigate the place where he left the building, they will find the residue of a teleport Spell.

Studying the footage in greater detail reveals that the man opened an employee locker and rummaged around in it before leaving. The locker is empty, but a fading nametag shows it belonged to Javier Cabrera.

The Clovers, if any of them are still on the site, know that Javier used to be a driver and that he was a good worker, but he was completely clean. Charles employed him because of how spotless his reputation was, but the other Clovers hated the security risk he represented—since they had to hide the drugs, guns, and everything else and follow him around like good little minders every

time the boss let him on-site to pick up a load of 'auto parts'.

The Clovers believe Javier was killed during a home-invasion eight months ago, but they don't know of any attempt by the Clover leadership to investigate it. They know Charles genuinely seemed to like the guy, and certainly wouldn't have wanted him killed, so they find this a little strange—not that they're complaining, mind you.

If the PCs completely lost control of the situation at the warehouse, either during the attack or before, the Order will step in and clean things up. They will recover the footage from the security system and pass it along to the PCs, putting them on the trail of Javier.

WHAT HAPPENED TO JAVIER

If the PCs decide to look into what happened to Javier, there are a few routes they can take.

Newspaper Articles

There is limited information about what happened, but the sheer ghastliness of the crime was enough to make the local papers and the records can be found online or in a library. Newspaper articles will mention that eight months ago Javier's wife and daughter were killed, that Javier was left in a coma, and that no witnesses came forward with information about the crime. A second, much shorter article dated two months ago mentions that Javier woke up, but that he couldn't remember anything about what happened.

Police Investigation

The investigator who was originally assigned to Javier's case is **Detective Paul Rizzo**. If the PCs ask around at the station, Detective Rizzo will immediately take an interest in who they are and why they're asking. If the PCs talk to Rizzo directly, he is brusque with his questions and evasive when the PCs ask theirs.

An Observation Test (TN 5) reveals that he knows something about Javier that wasn't covered in the official investigation. If the PCs are on good terms with the Clovers or *fake* being on good terms with the Clovers (Fast Talk or Streetwise TN 9), they can manipulate Rizzo into admitting that he took a payment not to look too deeply into Javier's family's killing.

Alternately, Intimidation, Interrogation, or Police Sciences (TN 12) can force Rizzo into admitting that he accepted a bribe, although he'll spin it as trying to keep his brothers in uniform safe from a gangland retaliation. Forcing Rizzo into a confession is risky, and if the players fail he'll tell them to get out. If they press their luck or actually physically threaten him, he'll try to physically detain them, and he'll call out for backup.

If the PCs do get Rizzo's cooperation, weather by force of will or social finesse, he will tell them to be careful who they talk to in the Clovers. He suspects that the order to kill Javier came from the top—Dougal Hearne—and he suspects that Dougal got the wrong guy. As far as Rizzo knows, it was Charles Hearne that was trying to get chummy with the Triad. Javier was spotless.

Rizzo has one more detail that he'll share with the PCs, but only if he's certain this

isn't going to come back and bite him (Persuasion TN 9). He suspects Ruth Hearne, Charles' sister, provided Dougal with the muscle that killed Javier's family.

Asking Javier's Neighbors

Javier lived in a crowded, rundown apartment building in a poor neighborhood. If anyone asks the neighbors what they saw, no one is in a hurry to talk. Firm believers in “snitches get stitches”, a Persuasion Test (TN 12), an Intimidation or Interrogation Test (TN 7), a *very* discreet \$2,000 bribe, or magical manipulation is required to get most of them to open up.

The neighbors know that a bunch of Irish guys showed up at Javier's door that day. They had a bad feeling about them, and so they hid before they could actually witness any of the violence.

If the PCs get frustrated with the neighbors or decide to nose around the apartment building a little more, a Streetwise Test (TN 5) lets them find **Hattie Dumorne**, an 80-year-old lady who got a very clear look at the men who shot Javier's family. Hattie used to work part-time in the back room at an Aisling Florist's, and she recognized one of the strangers from her work at there. The stranger's name is **Bryan Byrne**, and a Streetwise Test (TN 7) identifies him as an enforcer for Ruth Hearne. A Police Science Test (TN 9) matches him with a history of violence altercations, but no successful convictions.

Searching Javier's Apartment

While they're in the neighborhood, the PCs might want to check out Javier's apartment. It is on the second floor of the apartment building, with a rickety fire escape overlooking an alley below. The

door is locked (Lock Picking TN 7) and relatively sturdy (Strength Saving Throw TN 9 to kick it down), but the windows are a little bit easier to get in through (Strength Saving Throw TN 5).

The interior of the apartment is lived in, but it's a mess. The door hasn't been opened in something like two months (Javier's been going in and out through the windows, and even then, only at night), there's a pile of mail on the other side of the mail slot, the utilities mysteriously still work (Javier's *Uncle Romeo* has been paying the bills), there's a mound of food wrappers in one corner, and *there's a shotgun trap facing the door*.

That last detail is kind of important.

Any PC that opens the front door needs to make a Reflexes Saving Throw (TN 12) or take 4d6 in birdshot as the loaded sawed-off with string wrapped around its triggers empties both barrels with a roar like a cannon going off.

The shotgun trap is Javier's handiwork, and it won't *immediately* cause anyone in the building to place a 911 call (as they're too worried about not getting caught up in whatever's happening), but it will put a definite time limit on what the PCs do in the apartment. Furthermore, if they already talked to Hattie Dumorne, she *will* tell the police that she saw the PCs asking around, which could lead to the local police getting their descriptions in connection with the event. Worse, if they've also antagonized Detective Rizzo, he may use this as an excuse to try and have them brought in.

Whether the PCs trigger the shotgun or

not, Javier's apartment is a smorgasbord of clues, all of which can be recovered fairly quickly.

Magic Lore: Any (TN 7) will reveal that the apartment is saturated in trace energies from repeated teleport Spell castings. Magic Lore: Shadow (TN 5) will reveal that the Spell in question was Create Door.

Observation (TN 7) will find ritual implements including rosaries, votive candles, a bread knife, and a small clay statuette of a twisted rat like thing that very closely resembles the creatures from the attack on Hearne Automotive. Occultism (TN 7) will finally ID the creatures as Chupacabras. So, will sending the ritual items back to the Order for analysis, although in the latter case it will take a few hours to get results.

Finally, the PCs will find three and a half boxes of .45 handgun bullets out in the open on the kitchen counter, next to a sink full of dirty dishes and swarming with flies.

Using Recall Past Event on the apartment (or any other means of magically peering into the past) will reveal scenes of Javier praying, lighting the votive candles, reading from a small black book, practicing Spells, climbing in and out of the window at odd hours of the night, cleaning his gun, and occasionally being visited by Romeo.

Once the PCs have visited the apartment, Javier won't come back to it. He will hole up with Romeo instead, and he will begin looking for an opportunity to send a Chupacabra after the PCs.

If the PCs somehow manage to track and

ID Romeo at this point, the group can skip ahead to the Romeo's Hideout Scene. Otherwise, they'll have to follow some more leads.

AISLING FLORISTS

At this point, the PCs may want to go talk to Charles' sister Ruth. Ruth can be found in the largest Aisling Florist's in town—a two-story floral megastore that also happens to be a front for a prostitution ring. Ruth dabbles in a little bit of everything, from hired killings to drug-deals to gun-running, but Aisling's is her biggest money-maker and she spends a lot of her time on-site, supervising its operations.

Aisling's has a helpful staff of clerks, florists, and janitors that provide cover for the real business, and most of these people are unaware of what happens in the back of the store. They know that Ruth also employs some rough types, and that she can be really generous with the holiday bonuses when she likes a particular employee, and that sometimes people switch from working the front of the store to the back and don't really see their old work friends much anymore...but the employees try not to think too much about this, as people have been unceremoniously fired for getting too close to the back rooms without an escort.

Approaching the store from the front means going through a busy parking lot that the Aisling's shares with a chain hardware store, a chain bakery, and a chain bookstore. Approaching from the back means walking up to the large loading dock that is guarded by seven burly Clovers.

The PCs can ask for Ruth by talking to the

heavies or by talking to any of the more 'civilian' employees. If the PCs are talking to the regular employees, they will need to pass a Persuade (TN 7) to assure the employee that Ruth wants to see them and that they won't get fired for interrupting her work. If the PCs are talking to the heavies, Streetwise or Fast Talk (TN 9) will convince them that the PCs are with the Clovers. Alternately, Intimidation (TN 12) will convince the heavies that they are in over their heads and they need to get their boss (as will beating them in a fight). The heavies cannot be bribed, since they don't want Ruth to kill their relatives.

Ruth's security is on high alert, as she learned about Charles' death only a little after the police did, but it is possible to sneak into the Aisling's. The back of the Aisling's, just past the large floral supplies storeroom, is a reception area for the prostitution racket.

There are stairs up to the second floor with a metal shutter than can be pulled down over the bottom of the staircase and padlocked in case of a police raid. Similarly, the receptionist has a silent alarm button under her desk that triggers an alert on Ruth's phone. The second floor is a narrow maze of corridors and soundproofed rooms, with 1d4 +2 Clover enforcers standing by in case someone doesn't pay, doesn't tip, or looks like they're upset enough to narc.

If Ruth manages to knock out and capture any of the PCs, it's to one of these rooms that she'll bring them for an interrogation (should this happen, she has 2d10 Interrogation and 3 Charisma. The rest of her stats are as a Mobster Thug).

If the PCs approach Ruth directly, she is

suspicious, but willing to talk to them if they make the first move by offering information about what happened to Charles. Ruth has friends on the force, and she knows how to manage a conversation with police, but she will be especially jumpy if the PCs are giving off a heavily 'police' vibe.

Ruth thinks Javier is a non-issue. His attempted killing should have sent a message to Charles to back off whatever he was doing. It didn't, and he didn't, and now he's dead.

Ruth had also been considering knocking Charles off to prevent Dougal from learning that Charles was dealing with the Triad, but she never did much more than mull over how to go about it without starting a war within the Clovers. She definitely would not have killed the rest of his family, and she would have made sure he was killed respectfully—a shot of whiskey in his hand and a bullet in his heart. Or a lot of bullets everywhere, if he ran or tried to resist.

While Ruth is talking to the PCs (whether it's as a friendly conversation or a full-on interrogation), two Chupacabras will hit the Aisling's. They will appear in the back rooms on the first floor and begin by killing the receptionist, then the nearest Clovers, and then one will work its way upstairs to start on the guards, staff, and johns while the other heads for the loading dock. Whichever Chupacabra is closest to Ruth will zero in on her the moment it spots her, ignoring all other threats. If the PCs kill it or wound it heavily enough to drive it off (dropping it to 10 Hit Points or less), the other Chupacabra will leave as well.

If Ruth survives, she will swear up and

down that this was the work of the Triad, and that they must have been the ones to kill Charles. She's heard rumors about them being able to anticipate police raids or gangs trying to muscle in on their turf by asking a fortune-teller, and she's heard even less credible stories that they have magical powers. She will give the PCs the address of the Worthless Flower Gang's car wash, if they don't have it already, and then try to figure out how to perform damage control on a crime scene that has already gone so far past controllable that controllable can't see it with a telescope.

Regardless of whether or not Ruth is still alive, the Order will move in with police friendlies to try and contain the scene.

Depending on how the PCs have done with fending off the attack, they may get tied up in a grilling from Darren Lord about their progress so far, potentially stalling them from visiting the car wash. Putting off Darren is a Law, Persuade, or Resist Torture/Interrogation (TN 9). Alternately, the PCs can just speed away, ignoring his calls, and leave the site entirely to the Order to clean up. This will probably have repercussions later.

If the PCs don't have a clear reason to go to the car wash, or if they go somewhere else instead, the Order will call them when the car wash gets hit and ask them to go to the neighboring hospital to speak to the only survivor of the attack: Song Ho-Dam.

MORE DEAD BODIES

If the PCs speed to the car wash, they get there while the attack is in progress. Two Chupacabras are hunting down the six on-

duty members of the Worthless Flower Gang. Song Ho-Dong is bleeding heavily, but he has gotten away from the building and is hobbling down the street as fast as he can. Intervening quickly may save some of the members of the gang, and it will certainly win favor with the Triad.

If Song Ho-Dam survives, he will point the PCs towards the only person he can think of who might know what just happened: the Triad's fortune-teller. If he dies, Pak Jun-Tak will find the PCs an hour later (on the fortune-teller's advice) and give them the same instructions. The group can then skip the next Scene, going straight to The Old Woman.

However, if the PCs get to the car wash after the Chupacabras have done their work, Song Ho-Dam will have gone by ambulance to the nearest hospital and the other members of the gang will be dead. Bystanders will be able to tell the PCs this, although they did not see the Chupacabras—just heard the screams—as the creatures worked very quickly.

If the PCs take an extra-long time to get there (possibly because they were stopping for supplies, medical care, Spell Components, etc.), Joseph Daniels will be at the car wash and tell them that a survivor was taken to the hospital. He will also offer them a tactical resupply: three boxes of ammo, 2 Light Handguns, 2 Heal Potions, 3 Power Elixirs, and 2 Armor Potions.

THE HOSPITAL

Song Ho-Dam is surrounded by Triad. They are standing watch outside the ER, they are standing watch *inside* the ER, the doctors and nurses clearly know that they're

Triad and are doing their best not to mess with them, but their presence is not contributing to the smooth running of an emergency medical care facility.

Song Ho-Dam is either just going into or just coming out of emergency surgery, depending on when the PCs get there. Either way, he's indisposed—regardless of whether or not the Triad enforcers are willing to let a group of strangers walk up to their wounded boss for a quick conversation. Of course, if the PCs flash some magic and *heal* Song Ho-Dam right in the ER, this will put them even further in the good books of the Triad.

While the PCs are in the hospital, Pak Jun-Tak will arrive. He will tell them that he knows his silent partner Charles is dead, that the connection between the two of them has somehow become deadly for everyone involved, and that he wants whatever is happening to stop. He will also tell them that he was told to meet them here by the Triad's ace in the hole: their fortune-teller. He will give them directions to the fortune-teller and admit that she would not tell him any more than that.

According to him, she only wants to share her information about the killings with members of the Order.

THE OLD WOMAN

The fortune-teller works out of a small Chinese grocery that seems to keep long hours. In the back there is a small room where she sits, surrounded by crates of brightly packaged snack foods, beauty products, and tourist goods. Her name is *Ma Zhou*, although she goes by Ma Po. It's

almost impossible to tell her age, but it is definitely somewhere north of seventy.

The woman will smile once she sees the PCs—especially if they admit they are working on behalf of the Order. If Pak is with them, she will give him a dismissive look and he will retreat.

At this point, she will explain what she knows of the killings: that Javier is summoning the Chupacabras, and that he was taught this magic by his uncle. She also add that he has an incredible natural gift, having learned in months what most people struggle with for years. Finally, she will tell the PCs about Romeo's warehouse in the bad part of town and ask them to stop him however they can.

ROMEO'S HIDEOUT

Uncle Romeo's hideout is an a heavily industrial part of town. It is owned, on paper, by Romeo Cabrera, but there are no signs of any kind of vehicle activity around the building. Romeo has been using the building for the past five years, and he has slowly molded the interior into a kind of lair with trash, shipping containers, and rusting vehicles forming natural barricades between the entrance and the office at the far end.

Romeo has been expecting an Order raid ever since he moved in, and there are *tripwires tied to strings of tin cans* (Observation TN 7 to notice) *bear traps* (Observation TN 12 to notice them in the dim light, Security TN 7 to disarm, 3d6 damage if they bite down, and a Strength Saving Throw TN 9 to pry one open and step out) and *a pair of Chupacabras on*

watch duty (Stealth Opposition Roll against 3d8 Observation for every two minutes the PCs spend inside).

The Chupacabras are sitting on top of rubbish heaps near Romeo's office, gnawing on bones and twitching whenever they hear a truck go by outside. They have very good night vision, and they will attack the PCs if they see them, but they haven't been given instructions to patrol, just to watch, so they will sit and wait until alerted.

The Chupacabras can be lured away with fresh meat (or even poisoned, if the PCs have thought sufficiently far ahead).

Alternately, the PCs can call in a squad of Praetorians—although Javier and Romeo will try to use Create Door to flee the city if this happens.

Simply opening up with gunfire and Spells will cause the Cabreras to respond in kind, and this is likely the best way to keep them from running.

However, the PCs may want to try and talk to Javier. If they do, he won't start shooting immediately, and he'll command the Chupacabras to hold back. He's willing to hear the PCs out, and if they tell him that he got the wrong guy (Charles), and that Charles was looking out for him, he will hesitate. Romeo, sensing that he's losing control of the situation, will open fire.

WRAPPING UP

If Romeo or Javier is subdued and turned over to the Order, the Order will seek a swift trial followed by an execution for each of them. The PCs can intercede with a

Challenging Law (TN 9) or Tough Persuade (TN 12) to save them, but neither is likely to be especially repentant—unless Javier knows that Charles was looking out for him, in which case he might be willing to serve the Order in penance.

Killing Javier will end the Chupacabra attacks. Killing Romeo will cause Javier to fight to the end. Killing the Chupacabras, while satisfying, doesn't solve the problem, as the Cabreras can always summon more.

If the Cabreras get away, they will certainly come back and try again—although not for a long while. At least in the short term, simply running the Cabreras off is problem solved.

Whatever happens, the Order will send a team (along with Darren Lord) to debrief the PCs after the warehouse is cleared. How he treats them will depend on how well they contained the various flare-ups of Chupacabra-induced violence around the city, but he will be glad the attacks have stopped regardless, and the Order will be willing (or desperate enough) to call on the PCs again in the future.

TIMELINE

If the PCs have been very diligent investigators, they might have an idea of why Javier's family was hit, but for the GM's benefit, here is a play-by-play.

Dougal Hearne, paranoid and looking for signs of betrayal by any of the Clovers, realized that someone was trying to form a business relationship with the Flowers. Incorrectly, he assumed it was too-clean-to-be-believable Javier instead of Charles.

When Javier's truck was stopped by Pak's men, as part of plan between Charles and Pak to funnel the hidden drug shipment to the Flowers in exchange for a future favor, a Clover reported the missing drugs not just to Charles but to Dougal—and Dougal stepped in.

Dougal ordered Javier questioned and killed. Unfortunately for him, Javier legitimately knew nothing. Javier and his family were shot, and Charles escaped retribution—at least until Javier learned summoning magic and decided to hold him accountable for the deaths.

Unfortunately, Javier's first kill was Charles' family, not knowing that Charles actively worked to protect Javier while he was in the hospital.

Javier has not actually realized Dougal's involvement, but as he plans to kill every Clover if left unchecked, he will get to the old man eventually.

CHANGING THE ODDS

If the PCs are having an exceptionally difficult time with this scenario, there are a few things the GM can do to give them a little bit of a breather.

The first option is to only include one Chupacabra in the Scenes where both the Cabreras would summon their monsters. The Cabrera brothers, panicking monsters, environmental hazards, etc. are still plenty dangerous for the PCs, and a single Chupacabra that uses hit-and-run tactics is

more than capable of threatening the party.

The second option is to have the Order deliver the PCs a resupply after one of the major combats. This resupply includes 4 Healing Potions, a First Aid Kit, and a box of bullets for every kind of firearm the PCs have.

NPCS AND ADVERSARIES

CHUPACABRA

Lieutenant Adversary Type

These foul creatures are often believed to be urban legend. Unfortunately, they are both very real and very nasty. Their appetite often gets the better of them, but they are masters of stealth and can vanish into crawlspaces, alcoves, and pipes when threatened. In big cities, they have a particular fondness for old factories and sewer tunnels.

Attributes

Strength: 3 Health: 4
Reflexes: 6 Willpower: 4
Charisma: 1 Intelligence: 2

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 48 Move: 15
Magic Points: 25
Dam Bonus: +1d3 Scene Points: 4

Skills

Athletics 2d10, Stealth 3d10, Brawling 3d10,
Observation 3d8, Gaze 2d10

Spells/Abilities

Shadow Blend: By spending an Action and 4 MP, the Chupacabra can disappear into the shadows and reappear 50 yards away. The Chupacabra can only do this when it is not in anyone's direct line of sight.

Armored Skin: +5 Protection to all Hit Locations

Stunning Gaze: By spending an Action, the Chupacabra can deliver a stunning gaze attack. It makes an Opposition Roll using Gaze + WLP against its victim's Willpower Saving Throw. If it succeeds, its target immediately spends two Actions from its next turn. This incurs a Multiple Action penalty until the end of the target's next turn.

Attacks

Razor Claws: 2d8+1+DB, AP 2

Bite/Drain: 2d6+1+DB, 1d6 HP Drain

Complication

Light-Sensitive: When caught in bright light, such as daylight or the light of a sodium flare, the Chupacabra suffers +2 TN on all Skill Tests, Opposition Rolls, and Saving Throws.

JAVIER CABRERA

Mastermind Adversary Type

At one time in his life he was a positive and upbeat man. He loved his family very much and that was what made him truly happy. When they were murdered, a part of his soul died. What was left of Javier has become a shell inhabited solely by vengeance.

If left unchecked, Javier's attacks will only escalate. Deep down, he mostly just wants to join his family in death, but his anger won't let him.

Attributes

Strength: 3	Health: 4
Reflexes: 4	Willpower: 5
Charisma: 2	Intelligence: 4

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 48	Move: 11 yards
Dam Bonus: +1d3	Scene Points: 4
Magic Points: 40	

Skills:

Alchemy 2d8, Blades 2d10, Fast Talk 2d10, Streetwise 2d10, Intimidation 2d10, Pistols 2d10, Magic Lore (Witch, Shadow, and General) 2d10, Stealth 2d10, Observation 2d10, Drive 3d10, Occultism 3d8, Dodge 2d8

Spells: (*Spells at 2d10*)

False Loved One, Divination, Terrible Whispers, Claws of the Beast, Drain Life, Fire Lash, Evil Eye, Harden Skin, Night Sight, Darkness, Lock, Blade of the Damned, Create Door, Summon Chupacabra

Equipment:

Heavy Pistol (*Enchanted with Smite. May only be fired by Javier*), Warning Talisman, Guardian Ring, Power Elixir (x3), Dragon Tooth (1d6 uses left on it)

UNCLE ROMEO CABRERA

Lieutenant Adversary Type

The black sheep of the Cabreras, Romeo

always felt Javier was soft and weak. For a long time, he suspected his nephew had the right blood for magic, but Romeo saw no point in teaching him. Not when Javier would have been as likely to join the Order as anything else.

However, when Romeo heard about the deaths of Javier's wife and daughter, something inside the older man clicked into place.

Romeo is an independent mage and he has nursed a grudge against both the Order and the Syndicate for many years. He lost his sons and his mother to violence between the Mexican government and the cartels, and when Javier woke from his coma, Romeo took it as a sign.

In his head, Romeo holds both the Order and Syndicate responsible for organized crime among the mundanes. After all, it would be trivially easy for the Order to rub out the mob, the Triad, the cartels, and any other group of mundanes who preys on honest citizens. That the Order and the Syndicate haven't, and that they spend all their time hiding in the shadows, is a sign of what's wrong with the world.

Though Romeo might have no compunction about teaching his nephew how to send a monster to kill mobsters' families, he isn't suicidally devoted to Javier. If Javier gets sufficiently in over his head, Romeo will try to leave.

If he manages to get away, Romeo will look for another pupil and, in a few months' time, pick a different crime family and start again.

Attributes

Strength: 3 Health: 3
 Reflexes: 3 Willpower: 4
 Charisma: 3 Intelligence: 4

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 32 Move: 9 yards
 Dam Bonus: +1d3 Scene Points: 2
 Magic Points: 35

Alchemy 3d10, Blades 2d10, Fast Talk 3d10,
 Streetwise 2d10, Intimidation 1d8, Pistols
 2d8, Magic Lore (Witch, Enchanter,
 Shadow, and General) 2d10, Stealth 2d8,
 Observation 2d8, Drive 2d8, Occultism
 3d10, Dodge 2d8

Spells: (*Spells at 2d10*)

Emotion Control, Divination, Drain Life,
 Fire Lash, Smite, Arcane Attunement,
 Sharpen, Armor Up, Lock, Hellfire, Cure
 Wound, Summon Chupacabra

Equipment:

Medium Pistol (*Enchanted with both Smite
 and Arcane Attunement. May only be fired by
 Romeo*), Combat Knife (*Enchanted with
 Sharpen, Smite, and Arcane Attunement. May
 only be wielded by Romeo*), Healing Potion

MOBSTER THUG

Thug Adversary Type

Attributes

Strength: 3 Health: 3
 Reflexes: 3 Willpower: 2
 Charisma: 2 Intelligence: 2

Derived Attributes

Hit Points: 16 Move: 8 yards.
 Dam Bonus: +1d3 Scene Points: 2

Skills

Pistols 2d8, Rifle 2d6, Stealth 1d8,
 Observation 2d6, Drive 2d6, Club or Blades
 1d8, Brawling 3d8, Dodge 1d8

Equipment:

Medium Pistol, Brass Knuckles, 2d100 In
 Cash, Cellphone, Car

NEW SPELL

SUMMON

CHUPACABRA

General Spell

A Chupacabra burrows up from the
 ground, emerging in the caster's location.
 The caster can control this beast, but only
 for as long as the Spell lasts.

Cost: 8 points

Duration: One Day

Range: 15' (*to summon*) 10 miles (*to control*)

Notes:

The summoner can control up to half their
 Charisma (round down, minimum 1) in
 Chupacabras. Each Chupacabra is
 ravenously hungry when it emerges from
 the ground. Chupacabras do not return to
 the ground when the Spell's Duration is
 done, but the caster may specify a particular
 Chupacabra to summon again in order to
 re-establish control over the beast. Ordering
 the Chupacabra to kill itself, ordering it into
 a trap, or the caster attacking the
 Chupacabra immediately breaks the Spell
 and lets the Chupacabra take a single free
 Action before Initiative is rolled.

WICKED PACTS

Name: _____

Description: _____

Bloodline: _____

Archetype: _____

Arcana Card: _____

ATTRIBUTES

Strength: _____ Health: _____

Reflexes: _____ Willpower: _____

Charisma: _____ Intelligence: _____

DERIVED ATTRIBUTES

Hit Points: _____ Heal Rate: _____

Move: _____ Magic Points: _____

Dam Bonus: _____ Scene Points: _____

Exp: _____

Languages: _____

SKILLS

Alchemy _____

Athletics _____

Augury _____

Blades _____

Botany _____

Brawling: _____

Chemistry _____

Club _____

Computer Operation _ _____

Crafting _____

Cryptography _____

Demolitions _____

Disguise _____

Dodge _____

Drive : _____

Electronics _____

Escape _____

Fast Talk _____

First Aid _____

Forgery _____

History _____

Hvy Weapons _____

Improvised Weapons _____

Interrogation _____

Intimidation _____

Law _____

Leadership _____

Lock picking _____

Magic Lore _____

Magic Lore _____

Magic Lore _____

Mechanics _____

Navigation _____

Observation _____

Occultism _____

Persuasion _____

Physician _____

Physics _____

Pilot _____

Pistols _____

Poisons _____

Police Sciences _____

Primitive Rngd Wpns _____

Resist Torture/Interrogation _____

Ride Horse _____

Rifle _____

Security _____

Seduction _____

Sleight of Hand _____

Stealth _____

Streetwise _____

Throwing _____

Tracking _____

Veterinary _____

TALENTS & COMPLICATION

[illegible]

EQUIPMENT

[illegible]

WEAPONS / ENCHANTED ITEMS/ POTIONS

[illegible]

NOTES

SPELLS

[illegible]

BACKGROUND

At 21:05 a stiff comes into the morgue.

He's middle-aged. White. No ID. Covered in lacerations.

At 21:15 he reanimates and tries to take a chunk out of the medical examiner. Luckily, the medical examiner is a necromancer, and she's one of your people, so that's how you get the call. The stiff is still thrashing when you get there, despite him being harpooned to the floor with an Angel-forged broadsword, and the medical examiner says she hasn't ever seen a reanimation like this. Together you call up the man's soul, now trapped in endless replay of the moments leading to his death, but all it does is scream.

"And I was beginning to think," the medical examiner says dryly, "that this was going to be a slow week."

You're only half-listening at this point, because all you can think about now is motive. Was this a Syndicate job? A failed possession? An unregistered artifact? A natural death near a Ley Line?

You're still thinking about motive when a blood-curdling howl shreds the night and a werewolf comes through the front windows of the office upstairs, broken glass raining down around it, claws skidding on the tiles. You've been expecting this attack for weeks, ever since you shut down that smuggling operation, and your pistol is already in your right hand--a spell forming in your left.

"You might want to get down," you tell the medical examiner and hurl a fireball at the stairs.

Welcome to the world of Wicked Pacts.

Wicked Pacts is a tabletop roleplaying game about mages, criminals, and about how far you'll go to see that real justice gets done--all set against a backdrop of covert wars, occult powers, and supernatural menace. It is the third game by the Polyhedral Knights, providing players with an easy-to-learn system, satisfyingly deep gameplay, and a pulpy, old-school feel--all set against a backdrop of magic, mistrust, and gun smoke.

