

[[[Hellboy, revised (2) first draft, by Phil Masters <phil@philm.demon.co.uk> and Jonathan Woodward <woodward@io.com>]]]

# INTRODUCTION

In a world menaced by supernatural threats from beyond sanity, humanity's greatest defender is the being intended to bring about its destruction. He's Hellboy; seven feet tall, with red skin, tail, horns (which he keeps filed down), and a hand like a sledgehammer. He's also a regular guy who likes old monster movies and paprika chicken. But, while Hellboy is definitely the world's greatest paranormal investigator, he can't do everything himself.

With the *Hellboy Sourcebook and Roleplaying Game*, you can play the role of his allies – agents of the Bureau for Paranormal Research and Defense, freelance exorcists, or just people whose activities have taken them too close to the edge of reality. Or, if you really want, you can play Hellboy himself. Or, as the Game Master, you can take the lead in shaping new stories of Hellboy's world, leading your friends through epic struggles against strange foes.

If you're new to roleplaying games or to the *Hellboy* stories, you should read this introduction first. If you are already fully familiar with both, you may be able to skip ahead. Chapter 1 of the book deals with the game part of the subject, providing the basic rules for creating characters and determining whether they succeed or fail in whatever they attempt. Chapters 2 to 6 describe the game's setting, including its history, Hellboy's human allies and foes, supernatural monsters, and the weird science sometimes used by both heroes and villains. Lastly, Chapter 7 explains how to run the game, and the Appendices provide some additional useful information.

So start reading. In this world, you've got to know what you're dealing with.

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## About Steve Jackson Games

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of its products. Our address is SJ Games, Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! Resources now available include:

*Pyramid* ([www.sjgames.com/pyramid](http://www.sjgames.com/pyramid)). Our online magazine includes new rules and articles for *GURPS*. It also covers the hobby's top games – *Dungeons & Dragons*, *Traveller*, *World of Darkness*, *Call of Cthulhu*, and many more – and other Steve Jackson Games releases like *In Nomine*, *INWO*, *Car Wars*, *Toon*, *Ogre Miniatures*, and more. And *Pyramid* subscribers also have access to playtest files online, to see (and comment on) new books before they're released.

*New Supplements and adventures.* *GURPS* continues to grow, and we'll be happy to let you know what's new. A current catalog is available for an SASE. Or check out our Web site (below).

*Errata.* Everyone makes mistakes, including us – but we do our best to fix our errors. Up-to-date errata sheets for all *GURPS* releases, including this book, are always available from SJ Games; be sure to include an SASE with your request. Or download them from the Web – see below.

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*Internet.* Visit us on the World Wide Web at [www.sjgames.com](http://www.sjgames.com) for an online catalog, errata, updates, and hundreds of pages of information. We also have a conference on AOL. *GURPS* has its own Usenet group, too: [rec.games.frp.gurps](mailto:rec.games.frp.gurps).

*GURPSnet*. Much of the online discussion of *GURPS* happens on this e-mail list. To join, send mail to majordomo@io.com with "subscribe GURPSnet-L" in the body, or point your World Wide Web browser to: <http://gurpsnet.sjgames.com/>.

The *Hellboy Sourcebook and Roleplaying Game* Web page is at: [www.sjgames.com/hellboy/](http://www.sjgames.com/hellboy/).

## PAGE REFERENCES

*GURPS*-related books such as this one often refer to each other, and the references use standard short abbreviations for convenience. See *GURPS Compendium I*, p.181, or SJ Games' Web site for a full list of abbreviations for *GURPS* titles. Any page reference that begins with a B refers to *GURPS Basic Set Third Edition Revised*; e.g., p. B102 refers to page 102 of *Basic Set*. SPI refers to *GURPS Spirits*, VE refers to *GURPS Vehicles*, and so on.

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## WHAT IS A ROLEPLAYING GAME?

For those readers who don't know, a *roleplaying game* (RPG) is one in which a referee (the Game Master, or GM) guides several players through an adventure, in which they play the parts of fictional characters (Player Characters, or PCs). The *Hellboy Sourcebook and Roleplaying Game* is powered by *GURPS*, meaning that its rules are closely based on *GURPS*, a popular general-purpose RPG system which is also published separately.

Some readers may be unfamiliar with pencil and paper RPGs such as this, but may have seen the term attached to computer games. The two have much in common, but are different in important ways; you don't need a computer to play *this* game. Others may have run into ideas similar to RPGs elsewhere; they can be compared to group storytelling sessions, certain kinds of wargaming, and even improvisational theater. Don't worry; you don't have to be an actor or a great storyteller to play RPGs. Nor do you need to be a tactical genius, although some tactical questions may arise in play, and some players may have a flair for it.

It's important to understand that RPGs don't have winners and losers. The idea is not to reach any single fixed objective, but to tell a good story. Admittedly, in *Hellboy's* universe, the PCs will often be struggling against dark forces which could destroy the world, and failing to defeat those forces would be very bad – but even the GM isn't setting out to make that happen. Rather, the idea is to set challenges for the PCs which can be overcome by cleverness, courage, and skill. Even if one or more of the PCs dies, it's not a disaster for the game. It may be annoying for the players, who often invest a lot of effort and thought in their creations, but sometimes, well, heroes *do* die, especially in the tough, rather horrific world of the *Hellboy* stories – and a heroic death can make for a very good story in itself. A PC who gives his life in a good cause will often be remembered with more respect and affection than one who wasn't played as a hero. On the other hand, some PCs are flawed and imperfect; that makes for good stories too, as they either overcome their flaws or work around them.

It's also worth emphasizing that this is a book about fictional characters in a fictional world. It describes supernatural powers and beings; whether you believe that such things exist, what you'll find in these pages is fantasy (though partly based on real-world beliefs and ideas). You won't learn how to work 'real' magic in this book, and anything that happens in a game is just that – a game.

In other words, a roleplaying game is a unique and special form of entertainment, which permits a group of players to give their imaginations a workout while creating something new.

### ***Materials Needed for Play***

To begin playing, you just need these rules, three or more six-sided dice, pencils, and scratch paper.

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## WHAT IS GURPS?

**GURPS**, which stands for Generic Universal RolePlaying System, is the RPG that the rules in this book are condensed from. Why is it called that? Well . . .

Generic. **GURPS** starts with simple rules, and builds up to as much optional detail as you like. The abridged version in this book presents the core rules that most GMs start with, specifically presented for use in games set in the world of *Hellboy*.

Universal. The basic rule system is designed to emphasize realism. Therefore, it can fit any situation fantasy or historical, past, present, or future. It works just fine for this game.

RolePlaying. This is not just a hack-and-slash game. The rules are written to make true roleplaying possible and to encourage it. **GURPS** is a game in which you take on the persona of another character and pretend, for a little while, to be that character.

System. Over 160 different books have been published for **GURPS**, in eight different languages (so far). It is one of the recognized standards for roleplaying, worldwide.

### ***GURPS Lite***

**GURPS Lite**, which is used as the basis for the rules in this book, is the boiled-down essence of **GURPS**: all the fundamental rules, but not the options and embellishments that often confuse new players. Experienced Game Masters will, we hope, find this a valuable tool for introducing new players to the game.

The rules presented in this book are complete and usable, but if you want more options, more detail, and more ideas, you can find them in other books from Steve Jackson Games. Once you're comfortable with the *Lite* rules, you can pick up the **GURPS Basic Set** and jump right into the action. See Appendix B for information on more **GURPS** books which you may also find of interest.

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## HELLBOY'S WORLD

The published stories about Hellboy, and hence also this roleplaying game, are set in a world which closely resembles our own in many ways, but which is in fact clearly a different universe. It's a world where not only do blatant supernatural forces definitely exist, but they're fairly widely known. Ordinary people probably don't encounter them at any time in their lives, and most people who know a little about the subject are quite glad of that. It's also a world in which a small number of heroes have existed since the 1930s with the purpose of fighting these forces where they pose a threat.

In many ways, the style of the setting is oriented towards a flamboyant kind of horror. Although there is a bit of very weird science and technology around, most of the enemies who Hellboy fights are demons, vampires, werewolves, and the like. However, despite the fact that Hellboy himself was declared an honorary human by the United Nations in 1952, most ordinary people prefer to keep their knowledge of the supernatural at a subliminal level. It's better for their sanity that way.

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I did some thinking after that. Was it really the Nazis who brought me to Earth? How, Why? From where? . . . You know what I came up with? I *like* not knowing.

— Hellboy (from *Wake the Devil*).

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All the dangers and demons notwithstanding, it's not by any means a bleak or hopeless world. Hellboy himself, and forces such as the Bureau for Paranormal Research and Defense, work to defend humanity from paranormal threats, and have plenty of power and resources at their command. In other words, it's an ideal setting for adventurous heroes, and tales of mystery and conflict and hence, for a roleplaying game.

## ABOUT THE CREATOR

<xxx Notes required from Mike Mignola at his convenience. xxx>

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

*Phil Masters* first manifested on Earth in a hospital in Britain in 1959. Since then, he has pursued various courses of arcane studies, a process which culminated in his becoming a roleplaying games writer. Aside from work on numerous *GURPS* books, alone or in collaboration, including *Arabian Nights*, *Discworld*, *Discworld Also*, and *Atlantis*, he has worked for Hero Games, Hogshead Publishing, and White Wolf. He is married, spends far too much time on his computer, but has still somehow managed to avoid acquiring a cat.

*Jonathan Woodward* is a part-time freelance writer, and full-time computer professional. He is the author of *GURPS Ogre* and *Transhuman Space: In The Well*, and co-author of several books for White Wolf Publishing's *Trinity* science-fiction roleplaying game. In addition to roleplaying, he is an obsessive comic book reader, and a collector of odd statuary. He disclaims all responsibility for the Chengdou Disaster; it was like that when he got there. He lives in Massachusetts.

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## A BRIEF TIMELINE OF HELLBOY'S WORLD

*(Note: Most of the characters and organizations mentioned here are described in more detail later in the book. See the index, p. 00, for full cross-references. Appendix A, pp. 00-00, contains a full bibliography of the publications in which these events are described.)*

**1916:** The mystic-monk Grigori Rasputin is the target of an assassination attempt by enemies at the Russian court. He is poisoned, shot, and thrown into a river. However, he is preserved by mystical forces; the being known as the Dragon, Ogdru Jahad, speaks to him, telling him of his supposed destiny. He travels to Italy to recover and plan.

**The 1930s:** In 1933, Adolph Hitler becomes Chancellor of Germany, and his followers launch various schemes and projects in their pursuit of power. Many of these are the work of the Special Group, founded by Nazi leader Heinrich Himmler. Meanwhile, Professor Trevor Bruttonholm, a British scholar of the paranormal, begins his studies of a possible haunting site in East Bromwich. In America, the crime fighter Lobster Johnson is active, sometimes dealing with paranormal or exotic enemies.

On March 20th, 1939, Lobster Johnson and a team of American agents and troops, concerned by reports of Nazi activities, attempt to stop the launch of a rocket from Hunte Castle, in Austria. However, despite the destruction of the castle, they fail. The body of the recently assassinated Professor Doctor Ernst Oeming, of the Special Group, is sent into space for the use of supernatural entities which the Nazis have contacted. Nazi scientist Professor Doctor Herman von Klempt is seriously injured in the explosion which destroys the castle, but is one of the very few survivors.

**World War II:** On September 1, 1939, Germany invades Poland, beginning the war. The Nazis are initially successful, but as the tide turns, they seek increasingly desperately for paranormal and exotic weapons and advantages. In 1941, Himmler recruits Rasputin to the Special Group, eventually leading to the creation of the shadowy Project Ragna Rok.

In 1944, Himmler also proposes the creation of a vampire army. A delegation including Ragna Rok member Ilsa Haupstein travels to Castle Giurescu, in Romania, to seek the aid of vampire Vladimir Giurescu. A meeting is arranged between Giurescu and Hitler, while Haupstein falls in love with Giurescu. However, after the meeting in December, Hitler takes against the vampire, and orders the arrest and execution of Giurescu and his family.

Shortly afterwards, on December 23, the Project Ragna Rok team secretly travel to Tarmagant Island, off the coast of Scotland, and conduct a magical ritual enhanced by technological devices. Meanwhile, a number of Allied agents and experts, including Professor Bruttonholm, Lady Cynthia Eden-Jones (Britain's leading psychic),

and the American Professor Malcolm Frost, have learned something of what is planned, and pursued psychic clues which take them to East Bromwich. The ritual has no obvious effect at its own site, but in fact, it summons a powerful magical being to Earth; the very young Hellboy appears in East Bromwich. Seeing him more as a child than a monster, the Allied team keep him alive and take him away for investigation.

In 1945, as the War ends and evidence is discovered of the secret Nazi projects, Bruttonholm and others seek the creation of an agency to deal with paranormal threats. Late in the year, the Bureau for Paranormal Research and Defense (BPRD) is founded, with Bruttonholm as its first Director. Meanwhile, the Ragna Rok team go into hiding on an island off Norway, freezing themselves into suspended animation. Similarly, Professor Doctor von Klempt goes to South America, while Rasputin hides in a pre-human temple in the Arctic, placing himself in magical suspension alongside the bizarre monster known as the Sadu-Hem. Also, Berlin freak show proprietor Hans Ubler acquires Giurescu's skeleton and flees from Germany to America.

*The Late 1940s and 1950s:* In 1946, Professor Bruttonholm formally adopts Hellboy. However, Professor Frost has begun a campaign to have Hellboy killed as a supernatural menace. The BPRD learns some of the truth about Project Ragna Rok, but not enough to understand its connection to Hellboy. In 1952, Hellboy is declared an honorary human by the United Nations, and joins the BPRD. Shortly afterwards, Professor Frost dies, broken by the failure of his campaign.

Hellboy travels the world throughout the 1950s, for his own education and as an agent of the BPRD. Among many other incidents, he faces a dragon at the behest of the British based Osiris Club in 1954, encounters the spectral King Vold in Norway in 1956 (while being betrayed by Professor Edmond Aickman), saves a baby from the Daoine Sidh of Ireland in 1959, and in the same year, encounters Professor Doctor von Klempt in South America, burying him in the wreckage of his lab. Meanwhile, in 1958, Professor Bruttonholm steps down as Director of the BPRD to return to investigation work.

*The 1960s and 1970s:* Hellboy continues his work, for example slaying a goblin in 1961 and Japanese cannibal heads in 1967, shooting out the left eye of the legendary Russian entity Baba Yaga in 1964, and defeating an ectoplasmic monster in 1979. However, when Lady Eden-Jones asks him to re-open the East Bromwich investigation, he refuses. (She dies shortly thereafter.) At the end of the 1970s, Hellboy meets archaeologist Doctor Anastasia Bransfield, and they fall in love.

Meanwhile, the BPRD becomes increasingly well established, recruiting new paranormal agents. In 1973, an 11 year old Kansas girl named Liz Sherman manifests uncontrolled pyrotechnic powers which kill 32 people, including her own family. In 1974, she becomes a ward of the BPRD, and eventually comes to work for them as an agent. Likewise, in 1978, a mysterious fish man is discovered unconscious in a sealed laboratory in the basement of St. Trinian's Hospital, Washington DC; he is investigated by the Bureau, named Abraham Sapien, becomes an agent (and Hellboy's closest friend) in 1979.

*The 1980s:* With the BPRD well established, Hellboy and his allies find themselves fighting vampires, black magicians, ghosts and rat-beasts. However, his relationship with Doctor Bransfield fails in 1981, although they work together again in 1986 to deal with an undead Persian army. In 1984, folklorist and historian Professor Kate Corrigan becomes a consultant to the Bureau; she will later join the staff full-time, and become a close friend to Hellboy.

*The 1990s:* As Hellboy and others continue their now relatively routine work in the early years of the decade, dealing with ghosts and monsters, Professor Bruttonholm goes on an archaeological expedition with members of the eccentric Cavendish family, who have a traditional obsession with the Arctic. Unfortunately, in 1993, they find Rasputin.

In 1994, Professor Bruttonholm (being manipulated by Rasputin) returns to New York and contacts Hellboy, but is killed soon after. Investigating, Hellboy (along with Abe Sapien and Liz Sherman) encounters Rasputin and the Sadu-Hem at Cavendish Hall, in New England. Rasputin is seeking to use Hellboy for what is said to be his destiny to bring about the end of the world, by awakening the unthinkable powerful Ogdrú Jahad. However, Hellboy refuses to accept this role (the first of several such refusals). Rasputin then attempts to use Liz Sherman's power for the same purpose, but he and the Sadu-Hem are defeated and destroyed.

Having learned something of his true nature, Hellboy returns to East Bromwich for the first time, and dreams of his parents – a witch and a demon. However, he persists with his refusal to look too closely at the subject. Later that year, he and Professor Corrigan (on her first field mission) deal with the werewolf Grenier family.

Meanwhile, the Ragna Rok team awakes in their hideout. In 1995, the ghost of Rasputin contacts and dominates industrialist Roderick Zinco, who travels to Norway to meet the recently awakened Nazis, offering them his resources. His company also begins supplying (often subtly sabotaged) equipment to the BPRD. In 1996, Hauptstein kills Ubler and steals Giurescu's body. The BPRD investigates, correctly guessing that the body will have been taken back to Giurescu's castle. During the case, over half-a-dozen agents and employees are killed or gravely injured. Hellboy encounters the resurrected Giurescu, and also the supernatural being Hecate, who was worshipped as the goddess of magic in Ancient Greece; she too has returned to activity, and begins seeking to use Hellboy.

Unknown to the BPRD agents, most of the Ragna Rok Team, who have located and resurrected von Klempt, are apparently killed due to internal personal squabbles. Before they leave Romania, Hellboy and Professor Corrigan, seeking to aid Liz Sherman, who has been drained of her powers and life energy in a separate incident, encounter a pair of medieval homunculi (artificial beings); one is destroyed, and the other, who receives the name Roger, is rendered inert and taken back to BPRD HQ. Eventually restored to life, he becomes another BPRD agent.

In 1998, Hellboy meets Father Adrian Frost (son of Doctor Malcolm Frost), who convinces Hellboy that his right hand is a grave responsibility, as there is evidence that it is the subject of an ancient prophecy. Hellboy is being slowly forced to confront his own origins. In 1999, Hellboy has further dealings with an old enemy, a magician named Igor Bromhead. Bromhead has allied with a minor demon named Ualac, who tries to steal Hellboy's power. Hellboy wins that fight, and then meets the demon Astaroth, who informs him that Hellboy's crown – the symbol of his true power and destiny – will be kept for him in Hell.

*Recent Events:* In the year 2000, around the time that Hellboy and Abe Sapien are dealing with monstrosities out of Norse myth in Scandinavia, Liz Sherman quits the Bureau, and goes looking for mystical help in controlling her power. Thus, in 2001, it is Hellboy and Roger who go to Hunte Castle, where the Nazi rocket launched in 1939 is about to land. They encounter von Klempt and his allies, and the monster which the rocket has brought back to Earth – the Conqueror Worm. In the shadows, the ghost of Rasputin is still trying to exploit Hellboy, but after the Worm is defeated, Hecate confronts Rasputin, tells him that Hellboy is not his to control, and then obliterates him almost entirely.

In the wake of that case and seeking to deal with the press of revelations about his nature, Hellboy quits the BPRD. Other paranormal agents are considering doing the same for their own reasons, although Johann Kraus, a medium who was transformed into a being of ectoplasm by a psychic catastrophe, joins the team. Before anyone else actually departs, however, in 2002, Abe Sapien receives a psychic distress call from Liz Sherman, and he, Roger, Professor Corrigan, and Kraus set off in search of her.

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# 1. CREATING CHARACTERS AND PLAYING THE GAME

A game needs rules. To ensure that the discussion of game-related matters makes sense, we've put them here, early in the book. Anyone who wants to know more about Hellboy's world is welcome to jump ahead for now, and come back to this mechanical stuff later, and anyone who already knows *GURPS* can skip this chapter, but otherwise, things may be easier if you work through the book in order.

As already mentioned, the *Hellboy Sourcebook and Roleplaying Game* uses *GURPS Lite*, a basic version of the general purpose *GURPS* roleplaying rules. That's what this chapter consists of.

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## GLOSSARY

Like any hobby, roleplaying games have their own unique language. To help you understand the concepts and terms used in this game (and other RPGs), we'll start with a few definitions:

*Roleplaying Game (RPG)*: A game in which the players take on the personalities of imaginary individuals, or *characters*, in a fictional or historical *game world*, and try to decide and describe those characters would act.

*Game Master (GM)*: The referee, who chooses the *adventure*, talks the players through it, and administers the results.

*Character*: Any being (person, animal, whatever) played by the GM or a player in a RPG.

*Non-player Character (NPC)*: Any character played by the GM. The GM may control many characters, major and minor.

*Player Character (PC)*: Any character played by one of the players. Typically, each player controls a single character.

*Stats, or statistics*: Numbers rating a character's abilities, used to determine what each one can and cannot do. See p. 00.

*Party*: A group of PCs taking part in the adventure.

*Game World*: A background for play; the setting for an adventure. A GM's own fantasy creation or a published setting created specifically for gaming are both examples.

*Adventure*: The basic unit of play in a RPG, sometimes called a *scenario*. An RPG is never over until the players want to end it, but a single adventure will have a beginning and an end. It may last through several sessions of play, or be done in a single evening.

*Encounter*: One scene of an adventure. A meeting between the player characters and one or more NPCs.

*Campaign*: A continuing series of adventures. A campaign will usually have a continuing cast of player characters, and the same Game Master (or team of GMs). A campaign may move from one game world to another, with a logical reason.

*Race*: The species to which you belong. Nonhuman characters (elves, dwarves, halflings, or Martians, for example) are common in some RPGs. In the world of *Hellboy*, most characters are either human or unique

supernatural beings, rather than members of clearly defined nonhuman races, but it's possible that characters will encounter such beings, or entities such as types of undead which can be treated as races for game purposes.  
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# Rolling the Bones

To begin with, we should look at a few basic principles and game mechanics used when playing this game.

## *Dice*

**GURPS** uses six-sided dice only. To figure combat damage (and several other things), the *dice+adds* system is used. If a weapon does *4d+2* damage, this is shorthand for roll 4 dice and add 2 to the total. Likewise, *3d-3* means roll 3 dice and subtract 3 from the total. If you see just *2d*, that means roll two dice. For really huge numbers, dice can be multiplied. *2d10* would mean roll 2 dice and multiply by 10.

**GURPS Lite** has only three basic game mechanics: *success* rolls, *reaction* rolls, and *damage* rolls.

## SUCCESS ROLLS

A *success roll* is a die roll made when you need to test one of your skills or abilities. Sometimes you roll; sometimes the GM rolls for you. For instance, you might test, or *roll against*, your Strength to stop a heavy door from closing.

Roll 3 dice and add them together for a success roll. If your roll is *less than* or *equal to* the skill or ability you are testing, you succeeded. Otherwise, you failed. For example, if you are rolling against Strength, and your ST level is 12, a roll of 12 or less succeeds.

Thus, the higher the stat you are rolling against, the easier it is to make the roll.

## *When the GM Rolls*

Normally, the player rolls dice for his own character. There are two exceptions:

First, in a situation in which the character shouldn't be able to tell whether he has succeeded — especially when he is trying to get information — the GM rolls in secret. If the roll succeeds, the GM gives the player true information. If the roll fails, the GM lies or gives no information at all.

Second, in a situation in which the player simply shouldn't know what's going on. This includes most *sense* rolls (see p. 00). The GM should simply roll in secret and inform the player of any consequences that his character would be aware of.

## *Modifiers and Effective Skill*

Sometimes you will have *modifiers* (*bonuses* or *penalties*) to a roll. For instance, if you were trying to stop a *very heavy* door from closing, you might have to roll against Strength at a penalty of -2 (or *ST-2*, for short) because the door is heavy. In that case, with a Strength of 12, you would need to roll a 10 or less to succeed.

Likewise, for an especially easy task, you would get a bonus to your attempt. You might roll *Animal Handling+4* to make friends with a very friendly dog. If your skill were 12, a roll of 16 or less would succeed.

Your *effective skill* for a given task is your *basic skill* (your actual level in that skill) plus or minus any appropriate modifiers. In the example above, your basic skill is 12 but your effective skill is 16. You may not attempt to roll if your *effective skill* is less than 3, unless you are attempting a defense roll (see p. 00).

## *Critical Success and Failure*

A *critical success* is an especially good result on a skill roll; a *critical hit* is a critical success scored on an attack (see p. 00). You score a critical success as follows:

A roll of 3 or 4 is always a critical success.



A roll of 5 is a critical success if your effective skill is 15+.

A roll of 6 is a critical success if your effective skill is 16+.

The GM determines what happens when you roll a critical success. This is always something good; the better the roll, the better the bonus he gives you.

A *critical failure* is an especially bad result on a skill roll. You score a critical failure as follows:

A roll of 18 is always a critical failure.

A roll of 17 is an ordinary failure if your effective skill is 16 or better, and a critical failure if your effective skill is under 16.

Any roll of 10 greater than your effective skill is a critical failure. That is, 16 on a skill of 6, 15 on a skill of 5, and so on.

The GM determines what happens when you roll a critical failure. It's always something bad; the worse the roll, the worse the result.

### ***Automatic Success***

Some things are totally trivial. No roll is required when common sense says that both failure and critical success are impossible. However, if there is any chance of failure, a roll is required. Finding your corner store requires no roll. Hitting a target at point-blank range, even for an experienced warrior, does, since his weapon might break or he might slip on an unexpected banana peel.

### ***Repeated Attempts on Success Rolls***

Sometimes you have only one chance to do something; other times you can try over and over until you succeed. Sometimes you will not know whether you succeeded or failed until it's too late to try again. Finally, there will be times when you are injured by failure but can afford to fail a few times. The GM can use common sense to distinguish among these, according to the situation in which the players find themselves. As a rule:

(a) If the first failure kills them (or destroys the object of the attempt), that's that.

(b) If a failure causes damage of some kind, assess the damage and let them try again after a reasonable time passes.

(c) If a failure causes no damage, let them try again after a reasonable time, at a -1 penalty for each attempt after the first.

### ***Contests of Skill***

Sometimes two characters will need to compare their relative skills to settle a battle or competition. A *Contest of Skill* is a quick way to resolve a competitive situation without playing it out in detail.

When a Contest of Skill is called for, both characters make their success rolls in the appropriate skill. Any appropriate modifiers are used.

There are two types of contest:

A *quick contest* is usually over in a second; e.g., two people grabbing for the same weapon. Each character makes his skill roll. If one succeeds and the other fails, the winner is obvious. If both succeed (or fail) the winner is the one who succeeded by the most, or failed by the least. A tie means nobody won.

A *regular contest* may take some time; e.g., arm wrestling. Each character tries his skill roll. If one succeeds and the other fails, the winner is obvious. If both succeed or both fail, the characters' relative positions are unchanged and they may try again.

The time each attempt takes will depend on the activity, and is up to the GM to determine. In a combat situation, each attempt takes one second. In a library-research contest, with the fate of the world hanging on who finds a certain obscure reference first, each attempt could represent days of time.

If both characters have a very high skill, the contest could go on indefinitely. Therefore, shorten it as follows: If both skills are over 14, reduce the higher one to 14, and subtract the same amount from the lower one.

Eventually, one character will make his roll and the other one will miss. At this point, the one who made his roll is the winner of the contest.

## REACTION ROLLS

A *reaction roll* is a roll made by the GM to determine how NPCs react to the PCs. This roll is always optional; the GM may predetermine reactions. But (at least some of the time) it's more fun to let the dice control the reactions.

To check reactions, the GM rolls 3 dice and consults the *Reaction Table* (below). The higher his roll, the better the NPCs will react, and the better treatment they will give the PCs.

Reaction rolls are typically made in potential combat situations, during commercial transactions, in response to requests for aid or information, and to determine the attitude and loyalty of NPC hirelings.

### *Reaction Modifiers*

A *reaction bonus* is a factor which makes the NPCs more friendly; a *reaction penalty* is something that will make them less friendly. There are several types of reaction modifiers:

First, many PCs will have *personal* modifiers for appearance, social standing, etc., that add to (or subtract from) reaction rolls.

Occasionally, the *situation* can also result in a reaction modifier. Offering someone a bad business deal, or trying to convince someone not to attack you when you're badly outnumbered, might give you a penalty. Offering a good deal, or dealing with an old and trusted hireling, could give a bonus. This is left up to the GM.

Finally, *appropriate behavior* by the players should always influence reaction rolls. A good approach should be worth a +1 modifier or more! While a wholly inappropriate approach might give a -1 or -2 penalty on the reaction roll.

### *Reaction Table*

Roll 3 dice and apply any reaction modifiers.

**0 or less:** Disastrous. The NPC *hates* the characters and will act in their worst interest. Nothing is out of the question: assault, betrayal, public ridicule, or ignoring a life-or-death plea are all possible.

**1 to 3:** Very Bad. The NPC dislikes the characters and will act against them if it's convenient to do so: attacking, offering grossly unfair terms in a transaction, and so on.

**4 to 6:** Bad. The NPC cares nothing for the characters and will act against them (as above), if he can profit by doing so.

**7 to 9:** Poor. The NPC is unimpressed. He may make threats, demand a huge bribe before offering aid, or something similar.

**10 to 12:** Neutral. The NPC ignores the characters as much as possible. He is totally uninterested. Transactions will go smoothly and routinely, as long as protocol is observed.

**13 to 15:** Good. The NPC likes the characters and will be helpful within normal, everyday limits. Reasonable requests will be granted.

**16 to 18:** Very Good. The NPC thinks highly of the characters and will be quite helpful and friendly, freely offering aid and favorable terms in most things.

**19 or better:** Excellent. The NPC is extremely impressed by the characters, and will act in their best interests at all times, within the limits of his own ability or perhaps even risking his life, wealth, or reputation.

## DAMAGE ROLLS

A *damage roll* is a roll made in a fight to see how much harm you did to your foe. Many things can affect the final damage done by an injury: armor protects the wearer, certain weapons can do extra damage if they get through the armor, and *critical hits* bypass the damage roll altogether. All of these things are explained under *Combat* (see p. 00).

# Characters

Creating a character is the first part of the game, and one of the most important. The whole idea of roleplaying is to take the part of another person – a character – that you create. The *GURPS* system lets you decide exactly what kind of hero you will become.

The usual way to create a character is to *design* him, just as though he were a character in a story you were writing. Start by deciding what type of person you want to be. You can take your inspiration from a fictional hero or heroine – or create your new self from the ground up. Numerous characters from the *Hellboy* stories are detailed in game terms throughout this book; you can take them as examples, both of how to use the rules and of the sorts of people who appear in these stories.

Once you have some idea what sort of person you want to play, it's time to bring him to life!

*Character Stories:* A character story is the history of a game character, written by the person who plays that character. This is a great aid to roleplaying. You may even want to write the story first (or at least some of it), and *then* work out your character's actual stats. A story can really help bring your character to life. You don't have to do it – but it's recommended.

If you write the story down, you should show it to the GM, but not necessarily to the other players. After all, your character probably has some secrets, even from his friends.

## CHARACTER POINTS

When you create a character, you start with a certain number of *character points* to spend on your character's abilities. For most games, we recommend 100 points for a heroic character such as an ordinary BPRD agent. Other levels are possible, of course, from average folks at 25 points, to superbeings of 300 points or more; see p. 00.

The following sections describe things you can spend your character points on. Positive traits (e.g., great strength, wealth, better than average appearance, skills) *cost* points in proportion to their value. Negative traits (e.g., weakness, bad sight, poverty, fear of heights) *give* you extra points that can be used to buy more positive traits.

## ATTRIBUTES

Four numbers called *attributes* are used to define your basic abilities:

**Strength (ST)**, a measure of brawn or physical muscle.

**Dexterity (DX)**, a measure of agility and coordination.

**Intelligence (IQ)**, a measure of brainpower, alertness, adaptability, and general experience.

**Health (HT)**, a measure of energy and vitality. For most humans, HT also stands for *hit points* – the amount of physical damage a character can take. See pp. 00-00 for rules on injury.

The four attributes are considered equally valuable. The point cost for beginning attributes is given in the table below. Note that a score of 10 in any attribute is *free*, since 10 is average. Scores below 10 have a negative cost – in effect, they give you back some points!

An attribute of 1 is the lowest score permitted for a human. There is *no* upper limit to any score. For each attribute, a score of 10 represents the human average; anything from 8 to 12 is in the range considered *normal*. Scores above 16 are definitely unusual; scores above 20 are superhuman.

((BEGIN BOX))

### *Attribute Costs*

<i>Attribute</i>	<i>Point Cost</i>	<i>Attribute</i>	<i>Point Cost</i>	<i>Attribute</i>	<i>Point Cost</i>
1	-80	7	-20	13	30
2	-70	8	-15	14	45

3	-60	9	-10	15	60
4	-50	10	0	16	80
5	-40	11	10	17	100
6	-30	12	20	18	125

Each +1 to an attribute above 18 costs +25 points.

*Optional Strength Cost Rule:* Especially in games involving super-powered characters, the GM may introduce a special cost scheme for Strength at very high to superhuman levels. This reflects the fact that vast strength, while certainly useful, has relatively limited benefits compared to extreme levels of other Attributes, while very strong characters *should* be possible in some games. This optional scheme has been used in this book when defining characters such as Hellboy himself (p. 00).

In this version, ST up to 15 costs points as on the table above. From 16 to 23, each point of ST costs +10 character points. From 24-30, each costs 5 points, and each +1 ST from 31 on costs just 1/2 point.

*Example:* Morhark the Ogre, a being out of legend, has ST 42. This costs 60 (for ST 15), plus 80 (to raise it to 23), plus 35 (raising it to 30), plus 6 (for the last +12), for a total of 181 character points.

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## IMAGE AND LOOKS

This defines your character's *intrinsic* social traits: appearance, manner and bearing. Traits with positive point values (e.g., above-average Appearance, Voice) are considered *advantages* (p. 00), and obey all the usual rules for advantages. Others (e.g., below-average appearance, Odious Personal Habits) have negative values, and are treated as *disadvantages* (p. 00). Still others (e.g., height and weight, handedness) merely add color.

### **Appearance**

### **Variable**

You are free to set the physical appearance of your character in any way you like. However, outstanding good (or bad) looks are considered advantages (or disadvantages). Good looks cost points; bad looks give you bonus points to spend elsewhere.

*Horrific Appearance:* Limited to the most blatantly unnatural monsters and horrible alien races, not normal humans, this level of appearance causes normal humans not only to react to you at -6, but also to make Fright Checks (p. 00) on first meeting you. *-30 points.*

*Monstrous Appearance:* While not *automatically* terrifying, a Monstrous character is clearly not human, as well as being unpleasant to view. Normal humans react to you at -5, and usually treat you as a monster, not a sentient being. *-25 points.*

*Hideous Appearance:* Any sort of disgusting looks the player specifies: hunchback, severe skin disease, wall-eye . . . preferably several things at once. These looks need not be unnatural or monstrous, just *bad*. You have -4 on any reaction roll except by totally alien creatures or by people who cannot see you. *-20 points.*

*Ugly Appearance:* As Hideous, but not so bad – maybe only stringy hair and snaggle teeth. -2 on reaction rolls, except as above. *-10 points.*

*Unattractive Appearance:* You just look vaguely unappealing. -1 on reaction rolls by members of your own species, but no penalty for other species – this problem is too subtle for them to notice. *-5 points.*

*Average Appearance:* No bonuses or penalties of any type; you can blend easily into a crowd. No point cost or bonus.

*Attractive Appearance:* You may not enter beauty contests, but you're definitely good-looking. +1 on all reaction rolls by your own species. *5 points.*

*Handsome (or Beautiful) Appearance:* You *could* enter beauty contests! +2 on reaction rolls made by the same sex; +4 on reaction rolls made by the opposite sex – as long as the species are the same or similar. *15 points.*

*Very Handsome (or Beautiful) Appearance:* You *do* enter beauty contests, and you win. +2 on reaction rolls made by the same sex; +6 (!) on reaction rolls by opposite sex. *25 points.*

### **Charisma**

### **5 points/level**

This is the natural ability to impress and lead others. Anyone can acquire a semblance of charisma by good looks, good manners and intelligence, but *real* charisma works independently of these things, and you either have it or you don't. It affects any reaction roll made by any intelligent creature. Cost: 5 points for each +1 reaction bonus.

***Disturbing Voice*** **-10 points**

Your voice is odd, in a way that seriously annoys other people. This may be as simple as a bad stutter, you may have to use an obviously mechanical device to speak, or you may have the doom-laden tones of a greater demon. It gives you -2 to reaction rolls when you have to talk to the NPC, and some skills involving speech (e.g. Fast-Talk or Diplomacy) are impossible for you. You cannot combine this with the Voice advantage (below).

***Handedness*** **no point cost**

Decide whether you are right- or left-handed. These rules assume you are right-handed unless you decide otherwise or pay the points to be ambidextrous. If you decide to be left-handed, and combat damage is rolled to your right hand, it happens to your left instead. There is no point bonus or penalty for being left-handed.

Whenever you try to do anything significant (swing a sword, forge a letter, and so on) with your (off) hand, you will be at a -4 penalty. This does not apply to things you *normally* do with your off hand, like shield use.

***Ambidexterity*** **10 points**

You can use both hands with equal skill. You do not suffer the -4 DX penalty for using an (off hand) like most people do, and can fight (or act) with either hand (though not necessarily both at once). Should some accident befall one of your arms or hands, assume it is the left one.

***Height and Weight*** **no point cost**

Players are free to select height and weight for their characters, within reason. The table below can be used to determine (average) height and weight. Average height is based on your ST score. Weight, in turn, is based on your height. As much as 6" variation in height and 40 lbs. variation in weight is believable, but anyone with a better-than-average appearance should have a weight within 20% of (average) for his height.

<i>ST</i>	<i>Height</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>ST</i>	<i>Height</i>	<i>Weight</i>
5	2' or less	120 lbs.	10	5'9"	150 lbs.
5	3'	130 lbs.	11	5'10"	155 lbs.
5-	4'	130 lbs.	12	5'11"	160 lbs.
6	5'	135 lbs.	13	6'	165 lbs.
7	5'6"	135 lbs.	14	6'1"	170 lbs.
8	5'7"	140 lbs.	15	6'2"	180 lbs.
9	5'8"	145 lbs.	16+	6'3"	190 lbs.

For each inch of height over 6'3", add 10 lbs. to average weight.

This table assumes a 20th-century male. For a female, subtract 2" from average height and 10 lbs. from average weight. Weight is always determined after height.

***Dwarfism*** **-15 points**

Determine your height normally, and then reduce it by 60%; likewise, determine your Move and then reduce it by -1, and determine your jumping distance as though your ST was 4 less. You may not have (Average) appearance; you are either thought unappealing or (cute and charming). You also suffer all sorts of minor inconveniences, at the GM's option. However, ranged attacks on you are at -1; you are a smaller target!

***Fat*** **Variable**

For -5 points, you are *Overweight*. Determine weight normally for ST, and then increase it by 30%. Being overweight carries a reaction penalty of -1 among health-conscious societies and in areas where food is in especially short supply.

For -10 points, you are *Fat*. Determine weight normally from ST and then increase it by 50%. This gives -1 on *all* reaction rolls; HT may not be greater than 15.

For -20 points, you are *Extremely Fat*. Determine weight normally and *double* it. This gives -2 on all reaction rolls; HT may not be greater than 13.

In all cases, the extra weight counts as encumbrance which you cannot get rid of. (*Exception*: this does not count against you when swimming.) If you are Fat or Extremely Fat, normal clothes and armor will not fit you, and you will be at -3 to Disguise, or to Shadowing if you are trying to follow someone in a crowd.

Fat people get +5 to their Swimming roll, or +2 if merely Overweight.

### ***Skinny*** **-5 points**

After figuring your height, take average weight for that height and cut it by 1/3. You may not take Handsome or Very Handsome appearance, and your HT may not be more than 14. Normal clothes and armor will not fit you, and you will be at -2 to Disguise, or to Shadowing if you are trying to follow someone in a crowd.

### ***Odious Personal Habits*** **-5/-10/-15 points**

You behave, some or all of the time, in a fashion repugnant to others. The worse your behavior, the more bonus points you receive. Specify the behavior when the character is first created, and work the bonus out with the GM. Body odor might be worth -5 points, spitting on the floor would be worth -10 points; -15-point habits are left to the imagination of those depraved enough to want them.

For each -5 points your habit is worth, subtract 1 from all reaction rolls made by someone in a position to notice your problem. This reaction penalty is for members of your own race; it is up to the GM to handle differing reactions from other races.

### ***Unnatural Feature*** **-5 points per feature**

You look more or less normal, except for some very obvious strange feature. This may be supernatural in origin, but it may just as easily be the result of some weird medical condition or scientific accident. Examples include pointed ears, glowing red eyes, or a peculiar voice. Such features can usually be concealed, but only with an inconvenient effort. They are not automatically hideous (although they may explain why you have a poor Appearance), but they are terribly *inconvenient*, making you easy to describe and identify and sometimes triggering fear or hostility from superstitious or paranoid folk.

### ***Voice*** **10 points**

You have a naturally clear, resonant, attractive voice. You get a permanent +2 bonus on all the following skills: Bard, Diplomacy, Politician, Savoir-Faire, Sex Appeal, and Singing. You also get a +2 on any reaction roll made by someone who can hear your voice.

## **SOCIAL STANDING**

This section contains rules for defining your character's *extrinsic* social traits Ĩ his place in society. As for *Image and Looks*, above, traits with positive point values are advantages, while those with negative values are disadvantages. Most of these traits only have significance within the character's own society.

### ***Clerical Investment*** **5 points/level of rank**

This is the social/political advantage of being invested as a cleric of your religion. It represents your standing and influence within the church. You have a number of powers and privileges that a layman lacks, including a +1 reaction bonus *per level of rank* from followers of your religion and those who respect your faith. You will be

addressed by a title ĩ Father, Sister, Reverend, Shaman ĩ and may perform such ceremonies as Confirmation, Marriage, and Exorcism.

## ***Duty*** ***Variable***

You have a significant responsibility toward others. Duties usually come from jobs such as soldiering or law enforcement. By definition, a duty is imposed from outside, but you are also personally committed to that responsibility.

The GM rolls at the beginning of each adventure to see if each character will be ĩcalled to dutyĒ in that adventure. The point cost of a duty depends on the frequency with which it is demanded:

Almost all the time (roll 15 or less): *-15 points.*

Quite often (roll 12 or less): *-10 points.*

Fairly often (roll 9 or less): *-5 points.*

Occasionally (roll 6 or less): *-2 points.*

To be significant, a duty should be dangerous. An ordinary job is not a ĩdutyĒ. ĩIf a duty does not require you to risk your life, at least occasionally, reduce its value by 5, which negates those less frequent than ĩquite oftenĒ. ĩConversely, an *Extremely Hazardous Duty* (typical of some special forces units and ninja clans), where you are ĩon dutyĒ all the time and risk death or serious injury, is worth -20 points.

An *Involuntary Duty*, which is forced on you by mind control, threats to loved ones, etc., is worth an *additional -5 points.*

A *Reprogrammable Duty*, worth -25 points, is a special case of a full-time Involuntary Duty, usually only found among robots, supernatural creatures, and the like. It means that the master you must obey can be changed in some way not under your control; you have a computer brain which can literally be reprogrammed, you can be magically bound to obey the bearer of a particular amulet, or whatever.

## ***Legal Enforcement Powers*** ***5/10/15 points***

You are an officer of the law, with all the accompanying rights, powers, and restrictions. In some times and places, this amounts to a license to kill; in others, itĒs little more than the right to carry a badge and write parking tickets.

The point cost is determined by the rights and privileges of the characterĒs branch of law enforcement. Generally, a policeman with local jurisdiction, the ability to arrest suspected criminals, the right to perform searches with an appropriate warrant, and *possibly* the right to carry a concealed weapon, has 5 pointsĒ worth of Legal Enforcement Powers.

Someone with national or international jurisdiction, *or* not obligated to respect the civil rights of others, *or* free to engage in covert investigations, *or* able to kill with relative impunity, must pay 10 points for his powers.

An officer with three or more of the above abilities has 15 points of Legal Enforcement Powers.

Legal Enforcement Powers usually go hand-in-hand with an appropriate Duty disadvantage (above) and a Reputation (see below) which may be an advantage, a disadvantage, or both.

## ***Military Rank*** ***5 points/level***

Just as Status (p. 00) reflects your position in society, Military Rank (also called ĩgradeĒ) reflects your position in a military or paramilitary organization. Each rank has authority over lesser ranks ĩ regardless of personal ability. Cost: 5 points per rank, up to Rank 8.

Titles of ranks vary between organizations. Enlisted men are typically Rank 0, NCOs will be Rank 1 or 2, and officers will be Rank 3+, with generals or the equivalent being at least Rank 7.

In many lands, Military Rank carries automatic Status, which need *not* be paid for separately. The ĩdefaultĒ here is one level of Status for every 3 of Rank, rounding to the closest number.

Military Rank almost always involves a significant Duty (see above).

*Other Types of Rank:* In some games, non-military organizations may have formal rank structures akin to the military. (See Clerical Investment, above, for an example of this.) If the GM decides that an organization works

like this, then similar rules apply (including the option of +1 Status per 3 levels of Rank). Note that ordinary civilian companies, however hierarchical, do not grant Rank; the organization has to be approximately as formal and disciplined as a regular army. The BPRD, in the *Hellboy* stories, *doesn't* grant Rank, although it acts as a Patron and imposes a Duty; it's a relatively relaxed, civilian-style organization. However, other agencies may be more formal.

## **Reputation** **Variable**

Some people are so well-known that their reputation actually becomes an advantage or a disadvantage. For game purposes, reputation affects the *reaction rolls* made by NPCs. The details of your reputation are entirely up to you; you can be known for bravery, ferocity, eating green snakes, or whatever. If you have a reputation, either your name or your face will be enough to trigger a reputation roll to see if the people you meet have heard of you. Roll once for each person or small group you meet. For a large group, the GM may roll more than once if he likes.

There are three components to your reputation: *Type of Reputation*, *People Affected*, and *Frequency of Recognition*.

Type of Reputation affects the reaction modifier that you get from people who recognize you. For every +1 bonus to a reaction roll (up to +4), the cost is 5 points. For every -1 penalty (up to -4), the cost is -5 points.

People Affected modifies the value of your reputation. The larger the affected class (people who might have heard of you), the more your reputation is worth, as follows:

*Everyone you will meet in your campaign*: use listed value.

*Large class of people* (e.g., all people of a particular faith, nationality, or profession): 1/2 value (round down).

*Small class of people* (e.g., anyone from a specific town, every wizard in modern Alabama): 1/3 value (round down).

If the class of people affected is so small that, in the GM's opinion, you would not meet even one in the average adventure, your reputation doesn't count at all.

Frequency of Recognition also modifies the value of your reputation. The more often you are recognized by members of the affected class, the more important that reputation is:

*All the time*: no modifier.

*Sometimes* (roll of 10 or less): 1/2 value, rounded down.

*Occasionally* (roll of 7 or less): 1/3 value, rounded down.

## **Social Stigma** **-5/-10/-15/-20 points**

You are of a race, class, or sex that your culture considers inferior. The stigma must be obvious to anyone who sees you; otherwise it's a reputation. The point bonus depends on the reaction penalty:

*Second-class citizen* (e.g., members of some immigrant groups in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century U.S.A.): -5 points. -1 on all reaction rolls except from others of your own kind.

*Valuable property* (e.g., a woman in some seriously sexist cultures): -10 points. This usually takes the form of limited freedom or lack of intellectual respect.

*Minority group* (e.g., members of the 'wrong' race under an apartheid-style regime): -10 points. -2 on all reaction rolls made by anyone except your own kind, but +2 on rolls made by your own kind.

*Outsider, outlaw, or barbarian* (e.g., an Untouchable in backwoods India): -15 points. This only applies if the barbarian is outside his own culture. You get -3 on all reaction rolls, but +3 from your own kind when met outside your home culture.

Anyone who takes a Social Stigma must be bound by it. Roleplay the difficulties it causes!

## **Status** **Variable**

Status is an indication of your *class* in society. It's usually pretty easy to determine your Status by looking at you, your dress and your bearing. If you have very high Status, your *face* may be easily recognized and perhaps the gaggle of hangers-on who surround you will get the message across.



Status is measured in social levels. In a modern-day game, these range from -2 to 7; see the table below. The point cost is 5 points per level of Status; e.g., Status 5 costs 25 points, while Status -3 is a -15 point disadvantage.

*High Status:* High Status means that you are a member of the ruling class in your culture. As a result, others in your culture (only) will defer to you. High Status carries various privileges, different in every game world; these are up to the GM. Because of the common relationship between Status and Wealth (see below), a Wealth level of Wealthy or above lets you pay 5 fewer points for high Status. In effect, you get one level of Status free.

*Low Status:* You are a despised criminal or ghetto-dweller. Note that this is *not* the same thing as a Social Stigma (p. 00).

*Status as a Reaction Modifier:* When a reaction roll is made, the *relative* Status of the characters involved can affect the reaction. *Higher Status usually gives you a bonus.* If you have Status 3, for instance, those of Status 1 would react to you at +2. *Negative Status usually gives a penalty.* If your Status is negative, those of higher Status will react badly to you. Take the difference between your Status and the NPC's as a reaction penalty, but no worse than -4. *Lower Status may give a penalty.* If you are dealing with an NPC who is basically friendly, your Status won't matter (as long as it's positive). But if the NPC is neutral or already angry, lower Status makes it worse. And some low Status people hate or despise the upper classes, and may, at the GM's option, react badly to high Status.

*Cost of Living:* Every Status level has a Monthly Cost of Living, which includes food, drink, and accommodation. If you can't afford to live as your Status dictates, you slip down a level for *at least* that month, and may suffer a temporary or permanent negative reputation as a cheapskate or fraud.

((BEGIN BOX))

### **Status Table**

<i>Status Level</i>	<i>Example Social Position</i>	<i>Monthly Cost of Living</i>
7	Ruler of a major nation	\$20,000+
6	Governor, Senator	\$10,000
5	Major Corporate Head	\$8,000
4	Top businessman	\$6,000
3	Big city mayor	\$4,000
2	Mayor, top manager	\$2,400
1	Doctor, councilman	\$1,200
0	Man in the street	\$600
-1	Street scum	\$300
-2	Beggar, hobo	\$100

((END BOX))

## **WEALTH**

Wealth and poverty are relative; they depend on the game world. Wealth governs:

(a) how much money you start play with;

(b) how much money you earn per game month (though this depends on your specific job, too);

(c) how much time you must spend earning your living. All characters get the standard starting wealth for their world unless they paid extra character points for Wealth or took the disadvantage of Poverty; several wealth levels are presented below. Realistically, characters with a settled lifestyle should put 80% of their starting wealth into home, clothing, and so on, leaving only 20% for adventuring gear. Characters with unsettled lifestyles have no safe refuge to call home, may have problems with credits ratings and the like, and are vulnerable to having much of their property taken away from them by misfortune or enemy action.

For simplicity, **GURPS** uses a \$ sign to indicate money, regardless of the specific setting. Standard starting wealth is \$1,500 during World War 2, \$5,000 in the mid-20th century, and \$15,000 in the late 20<sup>th</sup>/early 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **Wealth Levels**

## **Variable**

**Dead Broke:** You have no job, no source of income, no money, and no property other than the clothes on your back. Either you are unable to work, or there are no jobs. *-25 points.*

**Poor:** Your starting wealth is only 1/5 average for your society. You spend 50 hours per week at your job. Some jobs are not available to you, and no job you find will pay you very well. *-15 points.*

**Struggling:** Your starting wealth is only 1/2 average for your society. You spend 40 hours per week at your job. Most jobs are open to you, but you don't earn much. This is appropriate for a 20<sup>th</sup>-century student, for example. *-10 points.*

**Average:** You have average starting wealth for your society. You spend 40 hours per week at your job, and support an average lifestyle. *No points.*

**Comfortable:** You work for a living, but your lifestyle is better than average. You spend 40 hours per week at your job. Your starting wealth is twice the average. *10 points.*

**Wealthy:** Your starting wealth is 5 times average; you live very well. Your job takes only 20 hours per week. This level of wealth, and higher ones, may not be chosen without the permission of the GM! *20 points.*

**Very Wealthy:** Your starting wealth is 20 times the average. You spend only 10 hours a week looking after business (this is hardly a job). *30 points.*

**Filthy Rich:** Your starting wealth is 100 times average. You spend 10 hours a week on business. You can buy almost anything you want without considering the cost. *50 points.*

**Multimillionaire:** Once you have purchased the Filthy Rich advantage, you may buy additional levels of Wealth. Each level increases your wealth by a factor of ten (e.g., the first level would increase total wealth to 1,000 the average). Each level also grants a free level of Status, to a maximum of +2 over the free level already given for high Wealth. *25 points/level.*

## **FRIENDS AND FOES**

Many characters have NPCs who are especially well or ill disposed toward them. Powerful friends you can call upon in times of need are an *advantage*; weaker friends you must defend are a *disadvantage*, as are powerful enemies.

**Frequency of Appearance:** When a character has friends or enemies like this, the GM rolls dice once per adventure to see if they will get involved. The chance on 3 dice of a powerful friend showing up or otherwise aiding you, or of a weaker friend or an enemy somehow complicating your life, is called his *frequency of appearance*. This adjusts a NPC's value as an advantage or disadvantage, after all other factors have been considered, as follows:

Appears almost all the time (roll of 15 or less): triple cost.

Appears quite often (roll of 12 or less): double cost.

Appears fairly often (roll of 9 or less): listed cost.

Appears rarely (roll of 6 or less): half cost (round up).

**A Note on Power Level:** The rules below all assume 100-point starting PCs; in a more (or less) powerful game, adjust the point values of these NPCs in proportion.

## **Dependents**

A NPC for whom you are responsible is a *Dependent*, and is considered a disadvantage. This may be your child, sidekick, spouse, or anyone else you feel an obligation to look after. If your Dependent is kidnapped during play, you must go to the rescue as soon as you can. If your Dependent is in trouble and you don't go to his aid

immediately, the GM can deny you bonus character points (see p. 00) for facting out of character. Furthermore, you can never get any character points for a play session in which your Dependent is killed or badly hurt.

The Dependent is created just like any other character, but instead of the 100 points used to create a PC, you use 50 points or less. A Dependent built with 0 or fewer points is worth -16 points; one who is built with 1 to 25 points is worth -12 points; one built with 26 to 50 points is worth -6 points. A Dependent built with 50+ points is not worth any bonus points.

The more important the Dependent is to you, the more you multiply his worth in points. For an employer, acquaintance or other person you may weigh risks to in a rational fashion, *halve* the value above. For a friend you must *always* protect, unless something even more important is on the line, use the listed value. For a loved one whose safety comes first, no matter what, *double* the listed value.

Finally, pick a frequency of appearance (see above) that fits the story behind the Dependent.

No character may ever earn points for more than two Dependents at once.

## **Allies**

These are loyal comrades, faithful sidekicks, or life-long friends who are competent enough to accompany you on adventures. Having an Ally is an advantage. An Ally is a NPC, and should be played as such. While Allies are usually agreeable to the suggestions of their PCs, they are not puppets. As well, a PC should receive no character points for any play session in which he betrays, attacks, or unnecessarily endangers his NPC Ally.

An Ally character is created just as though he were a PC. An Ally built on 51-75 points is worth no points, but must be protected like a Dependent. An Ally built on 76-100 points costs 5 points; one built on 101-150 points costs 10 points; and an Ally built on over 50 points more than his PC is actually a *Patron* (see below).

An Ally who has special abilities (magic powers in a non-magical world, equipment far beyond the world's tech level (see p. 00)) costs an extra 5 to 10 points, at the GM's discretion.

As for a Dependent, pick a frequency of appearance that fits the story behind the Ally.

Note that NPC Allies must all pay the points to have their PC as an Ally. For a normal, 100-point PC, this will cost 5 points.

## **Patrons**

The most powerful NPC friends are known as *Patrons*. Like Allies, Patrons are NPCs (or tightly-knit organizations), usually created by the player but controlled by the GM. A Patron may be an advisor, protector, or employer (but you can have a job without having a Patron; a Patron is more than an ordinary boss). Unlike an Ally, a Patron does not adventure with a PC. Instead, the Patron offers advice, knowledge, equipment, influence, or the like.

The point value of a Patron depends on his power. A single powerful individual (created with at least 150 points), or a group with assets of at least 1,000 times starting wealth for the world, is worth 10 points. An extremely powerful individual (created with at least 200 points) or a reasonably powerful organization (assets equivalent to at least 10,000 times starting wealth) is worth 15 points. A very powerful organization (assets equivalent to at least a million times starting wealth) is worth 25 points. A national government or giant multinational organization (net worth basically incalculable) is worth 30 points.

If a Patron supplies useful equipment, that increases its point value if you can use the equipment for your own purposes. In most cases, this adds 5 points to a Patron's cost. If the equipment is worth more than the standard starting wealth of the campaign, it adds 10 points.

Like an Ally, a Patron who has special abilities may cost an extra 5 to 10 points, at the GM's discretion.

Finally, pick an appropriate frequency of appearance.

## **Enemies**

An NPC or organization that is working against you, or just trying to kill you, is an *Enemy*. You are responsible for determining the nature of your Enemy when you first create your character, and must explain to

the Game Master why this Enemy is after you. The GM always has the right to veto your choice of Enemy if it seems silly or would be too hard to fit into the campaign.

The point value of an Enemy is governed by his (or its) strength: the more powerful the Enemy, the more points he, she or it is worth as a disadvantage. A single above-average individual (created with 50 points) is worth -5 points. A single very formidable individual (created with 100 points) or a group of 3 to 5 average 25-point people is worth -10 points. A medium-sized group (6 to 20 people) is worth -20 points. A large group (20 to 1,000 people) or a medium-sized group which includes some formidable or superhuman individuals is worth -30 points. An entire government or some other utterly formidable group is worth -40 points.

Once you know the base point value of the Enemy, pick an appropriate frequency of appearance.

Since too many Enemies can disrupt a game, no character may take more than two Enemies, or total more than 60 points bonus from Enemies.

## ADVANTAGES

These are innate abilities. In general, a character may only be given these advantages when he is first created. After that, there is no way to gain or learn them. (But magic or high technology may permit exceptions to this rule!) Each advantage has a cost in character points. A character may have as many advantages as he can afford.

For some advantages, the cost is fixed. Others are bought in levels, at a certain point cost for each level.

### ***Absolute Direction*** **5 points**

You always know which way is north, and you can always re-trace a path you have followed within the past month, no matter how faint it may be. This ability does not work in environments such as interstellar space or the limbo of the astral plane, but it *does* work underground, underwater, and on other planets. Also gives a +3 bonus on your Navigation skill.

### ***Acute Sense(s)*** **2 points/level**

You have better-than-average senses. *Acute Hearing* gives you a bonus to your IQ whenever you must roll to hear something, or when the GM rolls for you. *Acute Taste/Smell* gives you a bonus when rolling to notice a taste or smell. *Acute Vision* gives you a bonus when rolling to see something. Each acute sense is a separate advantage, and costs 2 points for every +1 bonus to your roll. E.g., Acute Hearing +6 costs 12 points.

### ***Alertness*** **5 points/level**

A general bonus you get on *any* sense roll (p. 00), or when the GM rolls against your IQ to see if you notice something. This advantage can be combined with any or all of the acute senses. *5 points for each +1 bonus to your roll.*

### ***Animal Empathy*** **5 points**

You understand animals and like them, and they like you. You get +2 on any reaction roll by a wild animal, and +4 on any reaction from a tame animal. You also get a +4 bonus on Animal Handling, Riding, and other animal skill rolls. However, you may never kill an animal without a good reason, and you should try to prevent others from doing so. Note that killing for food is acceptable, and in a hunting situation you will get a +3 bonus to find game.

### ***Combat Reflexes*** **15 points**

You have extraordinary reactions and are very rarely surprised for more than a moment. You get a +1 to any Active Defense in combat (see p. 00). You never freeze up in a surprise situation, and you get a +6 on any IQ roll to wake up or to recover from surprise or a mental stun (see p. 00).

### ***Common Sense*** **10 points**

Any time you start to do something that the GM feels is STUPID, he rolls against your IQ. A successful roll means he must warn you, "Hadn't you better think about that?" This advantage allows an impulsive *player* to take the part of a thoughtful character.

***Danger Sense*** ***15 points***

You can't depend on it, but sometimes you get this prickly feeling right at the back of your neck, and you know something's wrong . . . If you have Danger Sense, the GM rolls once against your IQ, secretly, in any situation involving an ambush, impending disaster, or similar hazard. A successful roll means you get a warning that something's wrong. A roll of 3 or 4 means you get a little detail as to the nature of the danger.

***Daredevil*** ***15 points***

Fortune seems to smile on you when you take risks. Any time you take an unnecessary risk (GM's option) you get a +1 to all skill rolls. Furthermore, you may reroll any critical failure that occurs while you are engaged in high-risk behavior.

*Example:* If you're attacked by a gang with Uzis, you don't get this bonus if you crouch behind a wall and return fire from cover, but you *do* get it if you vault over the wall and charge, screaming!

***Disease Resistant/Immunity to Disease*** ***5/10 points***

Your body naturally resists disease organisms. Virus and fungus invasions are also considered "disease," though larger parasites (e.g. tapeworms) are not. If you are Disease Resistant, you get +8 to HT to avoid catching any disease. *5 points.*

If you have Immunity, you will never catch any infection or disease, even if you are forcibly injected with it! You may not take Immunity unless you start with a HT of 12 or better. However, it will remain even if HT is later reduced below 12. *10 points.*

***Double-Jointed*** ***5 points***

Your body is unusually flexible. You get a +3 on any Climbing roll, on any roll to escape from ropes, handcuffs or other restraints, or on any Mechanic roll (to reach into an engine, of course)!

***Empathy*** ***15 points***

You have a "feeling" for people. When you first meet someone, or when you are reunited after an absence, you may request the GM to roll against your IQ. He will then tell you what you "feel" about that person. (A failed roll means the GM may lie to you.) This talent, when it works, is excellent for spotting imposters, ghostly possession, and the like, and determining the true loyalties of NPCs. You can also use it to determine whether someone is lying — not what the truth really is, but just whether they are being honest with you.

***High Pain Threshold*** ***10 points***

You are as susceptible to injury as anyone else, but you don't *feel* it as much. If you are hurt in combat, you are not stunned and do not have a "shock" penalty (p. 00) on your next turn. (*Exception:* a head blow can still stun you.) If you are tortured physically, you are at a +3 to resist. The GM may let you roll at +3 to ignore pain in other situations.

***High Technology*** ***20 points***

You have general access to technology that is one Tech Level (see p. 00) better than the campaign average. GMs should be cautious with this advantage, since it may give some characters *major* advantages. If the character has only a narrow range of advanced ideas, use *Invention* (below).

***Invention*** ***Variable***



Your eyes adapt rapidly to the darkness. You cannot see in *total* dark Ì but if you have any light at all, you can see fairly well. Whenever the GM exacts a penalty because of darkness, except for total darkness, this penalty does not apply to you.

### ***Rapid Healing***                      ***5 or 15 points***

This advantage is only available if your basic HT is 10 or above. You recover rapidly from all kinds of wounds. Whenever you roll to recover lost hit points (p. 00), *or* when you roll to see if you can get over a crippling injury (p. 00), add 5 to your effective HT. This ability does not help you get over stunning or similar incapacities. *5 points*.

*Very Rapid Healing:* As above, but when recovering lost hit points, a successful HT roll heals *two* hits, not one. *15 points*.

### ***Resistant to Poison/Immunity to Poison*** ***5/15 points***

You are largely or totally immune to the the effects of poisons (but not to corrosive substances such as strong acids; if there is a question as to what counts, the GMËs decision, as always, rules).

If you are Resistant to Poison (*5 points*), it merely affects you less; +3 to HT to resist all poison effects. If you have Immunity to Poison (*15 points*), it does not affect you at all. The latter is a cinematic advantage, and will usually be unavailable to normal human characters.

### ***Single-Minded***                      ***5 points***

When you put your mind to something, you *concentrate!* You get a +3 bonus when working on lengthy tasks, but you may ignore other important tasks while obsessed (make a Will roll to avoid this). Roll at -5 to *notice* interruptions.

### ***Strong Will***                          ***4 points/level***

You have more willpower than the average person. Your level of Will is added to your IQ when you make a Will roll (p. 00) for any reason, including any attempt to resist distraction, intimidation, seduction, torture, hypnosis, or mystical attempts to take over your mind. However, this advantage does not help against combat shock and the like. In questionable cases, the GMËs ruling is law. *4 points per +1 bonus*.

### ***Temperature Tolerance***            ***1 point/level***

For game purposes, assume that all creatures have a temperature Ícomfort zoneË of about 55<#161> (35 to 90<#161> for most humans). Each level of this advantage expands that zone, at top or bottom as you choose, by a number of degrees equal to your HT score. More than 2 levels is impossible for normal humans, but supernatural beings can have more. This generally grants no protection against attacks based on fire or ice, which cause damage through *sudden* temperature changes or physical impacts.

### ***Toughness***                          ***10/25 points***

Your skin and flesh are tougher than the average humanËs. Your body itself has a ÍDamage ResistanceË (DR) score (p. 00). This DR is treated just like the DR from armor: you subtract it from the damage done by any blow *before* you multiply the damage done by a cutting or impaling weapon.

Toughness does not let your skin ÍturnË weapons. They still break the skin Ì they may even draw blood. But youËre not *hurt*. If a poisoned weapon breaks your skin, the poison will do its normal damage.

Cost: 10 points for DR 1, or 25 points for DR 2. Higher bodily DRs are not possible for ÍnaturalË humans, and supernatural beings will usually buy Damage Resistance (p. 00) instead.

### ***Unusual Background***              ***Varies***

This is a Ícatch-allË advantage which may, at the GMËs option, be required for characters to buy certain *other* advantages or skills, unusual combinations of such, or character features normally limited to non-human beings.

In game terms, it is a way to control players who try too hard to come up with advantageously weird character stories.

In a *Hellboy* game, the GM may prohibit non-human characters and any with supernatural powers altogether, if he wants to run a low-key human investigators game; or he may allow them freely (and start PCs on 200 or more points), if he wants spectacular *super-action* plots; or he may charge an Unusual Background cost for such things, to make weird PCs possible while ensuring that they do not altogether overshadow the human characters.

The normal cost for an Unusual Background is 10 points, but a small advantage may only cost 5, and a truly unique combination of powers may cost as much as 50 points in some games.

## DISADVANTAGES

These are problems acquired before the character first comes into play. As a rule, a character may only be given disadvantages when he is created.

Each disadvantage has a *negative* cost in character points – the worse the disadvantage, the higher this cost. Thus, disadvantages give you extra character points, which will let you improve your character in other ways. Besides, an imperfection or two makes your character more interesting and realistic, and adds to the fun of roleplaying.

It is possible to *buy off* certain disadvantages and get rid of them later on by spending points equal to the value of the disadvantage; see p. 00.

*Good Disadvantages:* Virtues such as Truthfulness and Sense of Duty are listed as *disadvantages* because they limit your freedom of action. For instance, a Truthful person will have trouble lying, even for a good cause. Therefore, within the framework of the game, several virtues are treated as *disadvantages*. Thus, if you want a wholly heroic character, you don't have to take any *character flaws* at all. You can get points by choosing only those disadvantages that are actually virtuous!

*Limiting Disadvantages:* GMs should be careful how many disadvantages they allow players to take; too many disadvantages can turn your game into a circus. A suggested limit: disadvantages should not total more than -40 points. Negative social traits (poverty, ugliness, bad reputation, low Status, and so on), Dependents, Enemies, and points gained by reducing an attribute to less than 8 count against this limit. However, if only a single severe disadvantage is taken, it may have *any* cost.

*Mental Problems:* Many mental disadvantages let the afflicted character make IQ or Will rolls to avoid their bad effects. In these cases, any roll of 14 or over *still fails*. Otherwise, very smart or strong-willed people would be almost immune to their own bad habits – which isn't the way life works!

### ***Bad Sight***                      ***-10/-25 points***

You may be either nearsighted or farsighted – your choice. If you are nearsighted, you cannot read small print more than a foot away, or signs at more than about 10 yards. When using a weapon, you are at -2 to your skill rolls.

If you are farsighted, you cannot read a book except with great difficulty (triple the normal time), and you are at -3 DX on any close manual labor.

Any character at Tech Level 5 (see p. 00) or higher can acquire glasses which will compensate totally for bad sight while they are worn; in the 20th century, contact lenses are available. Remember that eyewear can be lost or damaged while adventuring! For anyone starting at a tech level in which vision can be corrected, Bad Sight is worth only -10 points. For a character in a setting in which vision cannot be corrected, Bad Sight is worth -25 points.

### ***Bad Temper***                      ***-10 points***

You are not in full control of your emotions. In any stressful situation, you must make a Will roll. A failure means you lose your temper, and must insult, attack, or otherwise act against the cause of the stress.

### ***Bloodlust***                          ***-10 points***



You want to see your foes *dead*. You don't necessarily start fights, or act any worse than anyone else in barroom brawls, but you never forget that a foe is a foe, and in serious battles, you have to make Will rolls to accept surrenders or take prisoners. This attitude may be tolerated among soldiers in wartime and others in life-and-death conflicts, but it is not recommended for cops or investigators.

***Bully*** **-10 points**

You like to push people around whenever you can get away with it. This may take the form of physical attacks, intellectual harassment, or social cutting. Make a Will roll to avoid gross bullying when you know you shouldn't, but to roleplay your character properly, you should bully anybody you can. Nobody likes a bully, others react to you at a -2.

***Code of Honor*** **-5 to -15 points**

You take pride in a set of principles which you follow at all times. Codes of Honor differ, but all require (by their own standards) brave and honorable behavior. A Code of Honor may also be called pride, machismo, or face. Under any name, it is the willingness to risk death rather than be thought dishonorable, whatever that means. Only one who truly follows a code may get points for it.

A Code of Honor is a disadvantage because it will often require dangerous (if not reckless) behavior. Furthermore, an honorable person can often be forced into unfair situations, because his foes know he is honorable.

The point value of a specific Code varies, depending on just how much trouble it gets its followers into, and how arbitrary and irrational its requirements are. As a general rule, an informal code that applies only when among one's peers (e.g., a pirate's or mercenary's code) is worth -5 points, a formal code that applies only among peers (e.g., the gentleman's code) or an informal one that applies all the time (e.g., the code of the Merry Men) is worth -10 points, and a formal code of conduct that applies all the time (e.g., chivalry) or which requires suicide if broken (e.g., *bushido*), is worth -15 points. The GM has the final word!

***Compulsive Behavior*** **-5 to -15 points**

You have a habit (usually, but not always, a vice) which you feel compelled to indulge on a daily basis. You waste a good deal of your time indulging your habit. Examples include gambling, attraction to another person, arguing, or even fighting.

In general, a Will roll is required if the player wants his character to avoid the compulsion in a specific instance (or for a specific day). Note that it is very bad roleplaying to attempt to avoid the compulsion often!

The specific point value of the disadvantage depends on what the behavior is, how much money it costs, and how much trouble it is likely to get the PC into. The GM is the final judge.

***Cowardice*** **-10 points**

You are extremely careful about your physical well-being. Any time you are called on to risk physical danger, you must roll against Will. If there is a risk of death, the roll is at a -5. If you fail the roll, you must refuse to endanger yourself, unless you are threatened with *greater* danger! Soldiers, police, and the like will react to you at -2 once they know you are a coward.

***Curious*** **-5, -10 or -15 points**

You are obsessed with *finding stuff out*, even worse than the usual scientist or adventurer. For -5 points, you must make an IQ (*not* Will) roll to refrain from pushing buttons, opening boxes, or asking nosy questions, whenever you encounter a mystery. For -10 points, all IQ rolls are at -2. For -15 points, they're at -5. Common Sense doesn't help.

***Fanaticism/Obsession*** **-15 points**

You are completely dedicated to some cause or objective, above *anything* else. You might be prepared to die for it if you are naturally brave, you might make sure that *other people* die for it, or you might just spend all your available time on this one thing and your spare cash supporting it. Your cause may be *noble* (freedom for the oppressed, *my* country right or wrong), selfish (your own glory, staying ahead of everyone else in some competitive field), or insane (destroying the world).

***Gluttony*** **-5 points**

You are overfond of good food and drink. You always burden yourself with extra provisions, and never willingly miss a meal. Presented with a tempting morsel or good wine which you should resist, you must make a successful Will roll to do so. Gluttony is not a terrible weakness, but by its nature it will soon be obvious to everyone who meets you.

***Greed*** **-15 points**

You lust for wealth. Any time riches are offered *as* payment for fair work, spoils of crime, or just bait *as* you must make a Will roll to avoid temptation. The GM may modify this roll if the money involved is small relative to your own wealth. Small amounts of money will not tempt a rich character (much), but a *poor* character will have to roll at -5 or even more if a rich prize is in the offing. *Honest* characters (see p. 00) roll at +5 to resist a shady deal and +10 to resist outright crime. However, almost any greedy character will eventually do something illegal.

***Hard of Hearing*** **-10 points**

You have some hearing loss. You are at -4 to IQ on any Hearing roll (so your roll is IQ-4, rather than IQ). You are at -4 to your language skill roll (p. 00) for any situation where you must understand someone. (If you are the one talking, this disadvantage doesn't affect you.)

***Honesty*** **-10 points**

You **MUST** obey the law, and do your best to get others to do so as well. You are compulsive about it; this is essentially another type of *Code of Honor* (see p. 00). This is a disadvantage, because it will often limit your options! Faced with unreasonable laws, you must roll against IQ to see the *need* to break them, and against Will to avoid turning yourself in afterward! If you ever behave dishonestly, the GM may penalize you for bad roleplaying.

You are allowed to lie if it does not involve breaking the law. *Truthfulness* (p. 00) is a separate disadvantage.

***Impulsiveness*** **-10 points**

You hate talk and debate. You prefer action! When you are alone, you will act first and think later. In a group, when your friends want to stop and discuss something, you should put in your two cents' worth quickly *if* at all *if* and then do *something*. Roleplay it! If it is absolutely necessary to wait and ponder, you must make a Will roll to do so.

***Jealousy*** **-10 points**

You have an automatic bad reaction toward anyone who seems smarter, more attractive, or better-off than you! You will resist any plan proposed by a *rival*, and will *hate* it if someone else is in the limelight. If an NPC is Jealous, the GM will subtract 2 to 4 points from his reaction to the victim(s) of his jealousy.

***Lame*** **-15/-25/-35 points**

You have some degree of impaired mobility. The point bonus depends on the damage:

*Crippled leg*: You have one bad leg; your Move and Dodge (see p. 00) are reduced by 3. You suffer a -3 penalty to use any physical skill that requires walking or running. This definitely includes all hand weapon and bare-handed combat skills (missile weapon ability is unimpaired). *-15 points*.

**One leg:** You have lost a leg. You have a -6 penalty on any physical skill that requires the use of your legs. You cannot run; using crutches or a peg leg, you have a maximum Move of 2. (Otherwise, you cannot walk at all.) If you have access to late 20<sup>th</sup> century prosthetics, you can reduce the effect to that of a crippled leg, but you must buy off the point difference in some way. (Very advanced technology might replace the leg, possibly with one that was better than the original, but then it's no longer a disadvantage.) -25 points.

**Legless or paraplegic:** You are confined to a wheelchair or wheeled platform. If you power it with your own hands, its Speed is 1/4 your ST, rounded down. Alternately, you may be carried piggyback or on a stretcher. The GM should assess all reasonable penalties for this handicap; e.g., you cannot pass through narrow doors, navigate staircases or steep curbs, travel except in specially equipped vehicles, fight effectively (except with guns or crossbows), and so on. If you have to fight with a hand weapon, you will be at -6 to skill. -35 points.

**Laziness** -10 points

You are violently averse to physical labor. Your chances of getting a raise or promotion in *any* job are halved. If you are self-employed, your weekly income is halved. You must avoid work – especially hard work – at all costs. Roleplay it!

**Miserliness** -10 points

Like *Greed* (p. 00), but you are more concerned with holding on to what you already have. You may be both greedy *and* miserly! You must make a Will roll any time you are called on to spend money, and you must always hunt for the best deal possible. If the expenditure is large, the Will roll may be at a -5 (or even greater) penalty. A failed roll means you will refuse to spend the money – or, if the money absolutely *must* be spent, you should haggle and complain interminably.

**Mute** -25 points

You cannot talk *at all*. The GM is entitled to tell you not to talk to the other players, unless your character could be communicating by gestures or notes. You do get +3 to Gesture or Sign Language skills (p. 00). Don't take this disadvantage unless you and the other players are prepared to deal with the consequences!

**One Arm** -20 points

You have lost an arm (or you were born without it). It is assumed that you lost the left arm if you were right-handed, or vice versa. You cannot use a sword and shield simultaneously, or any two-handed weapon, or do anything requiring two arms. Anything requiring only one hand can be done without penalty. In borderline cases, it is best to allow the character to attempt the action at a -4 DX penalty, or try a quick reality check if possible!

**One Eye** -15 points

You have only one good eye; you may wear a glass eye, or cover the missing eye with a patch. You suffer a -1 DX penalty on combat and anything involving hand-eye coordination, and a -3 to use missile weapons, throw objects or drive any vehicle faster than a horse and buggy. You will also suffer a -1 on any reaction roll except with utterly alien creatures. *Exception:* If you have Charisma, or are Handsome or Very Handsome, the patch just looks romantic, and does not affect reaction rolls.

**One Hand** -15 points

You have lost a hand (or were born without it); it may be replaced by an appropriate prosthetic. This may be a grabber or hook; a super-technological replacement negates the disadvantage entirely. An obvious replacement causes many people to react to you at -1. A mechanical grabber gives you -2 to DX (and DX-based skills) when using that hand; a hook gives you -4 in the same situations, and cannot be used for many tasks, but serves as a large knife in combat. Even larger weapons may be grafted to the stump, but tend to make that limb useless for anything but fighting.



You suffer from a self-imposed feeling of duty. If you feel a sense of duty toward someone, you will never betray them, abandon them when they're in trouble, or even let them suffer or go hungry if you can help. If you are known to have a sense of duty, others will react to you at a +2 to trust you in a dangerous situation. If you have a sense of duty, and go against it by acting against the interests of those you are supposed to feel duty toward, the GM will penalize you for bad roleplaying.

The player defines the group toward which the character feels the sense of duty, and the GM sets its point value. Examples: only toward close friends and companions (-5 points), toward a nation or other large group (-10 points), toward everyone you know personally (-10 points), toward all humanity (-15 points), toward every living being (-20 points).

### ***Stubbornness*** **-5 points**

You always want your own way. Make yourself generally hard to get along with in roleplay! Your friends may have to make a lot of Fast-Talk rolls to get you to go along with perfectly reasonable plans. Others react to you at -1.

### ***Truthfulness*** **-5 points**

You hate to tell a lie, or you're just bad at it. To keep silent about an uncomfortable truth (lying by omission), you must make a Will roll. To actually *tell* a falsehood, you must make a Will roll at a -5! A failed roll means you blurt out the truth, or stumble so much that your lie is obvious.

### ***Unluckiness*** **-10 points**

Circumstances conspire against you, usually at the worst possible time. Once per play session, the GM will arbitrarily make something go wrong for you. You may miss a vital die roll, or an enemy may show up at just the wrong moment. If the plot of the adventure calls for something bad to happen to someone, it's you.

The GM may *not* kill a character outright with bad luck, but anything less is fine. The misfortune should focus on you rather than hitting the entire group (it's *your* disadvantage), but of course, they'll sometimes get caught up in your problems.

### ***Vow*** **-1 to -15 points**

You have sworn an oath to do (or not do) something. You take this oath seriously. If you didn't, it would not be a disadvantage. The precise value of a Vow is up to the GM, but should be directly related to the inconvenience it causes the character. A *Trivial Vow*, like "Always wear red," is a -1 point *quirk* (see below). A *Minor Vow*, like vegetarianism, is worth -5 points. A *Major Vow*, like "Use no edged weapons," is worth -10 points. A *Great Vow*, such as "Always fight with the wrong hand," is worth -15 points.

### ***Weak Will*** **-8 points/level**

You are easily persuaded, frightened, bullied, coerced, tempted and so on. For every level taken, your IQ is effectively reduced by 1 whenever you make a Will roll (p. 00), including attempts to resist distraction, seduction, torture, mind control, and so on. Weak Will also affects all attempts to master phobias and avoid giving in to mental problems.

A character cannot have both Strong and Weak Will.

### ***Youth*** **-2 to -6 points**

You are underage by your culture's standards: 1 to 3 years underage, at -2 points per year. You suffer a -2 reaction roll whenever you try to deal with others as an adult; they may like you, but they do not fully respect you. You may also be barred from nightclubs, vehicle operation, war parties, guild membership, and so on, depending on the game world. You *must* keep track of time, and "buy off" this disability when you reach "legal age" (usually 18) for your society.

## QUIRKS

A *quirk* is a minor personality trait. It's not an advantage and it's not necessarily a disadvantage – it's just something unique about your character. For instance, a major trait like Greed is a disadvantage. But if you insist on being paid in gold, that's a quirk.

You may take up to five quirks at -1 point each . . . so, if you do, you will have 5 more points to spend on other things. These do *not* count against the maximum number of disadvantage points allowed in your campaign.

The only drawback to a quirk is this: you *must* roleplay it. If you take the quirk *dislike of heights*, but blithely climb trees and cliffs whenever you need to, the GM will penalize you for bad roleplaying. The points you lose this way will cost you much more than you earned for taking the quirk. So don't choose a quirk you aren't willing to play!

Examples of quirks include beliefs and goals, likes and dislikes, habits, expressions, peculiarities of dress, and so on.

## SKILLS

A *skill* is a particular kind of knowledge. Karate, auto mechanics and the English language are all skills.

Each of your skills is represented by a number called a *skill level*; the higher the number, the greater the skill. When you try to do something, you (or the GM) will roll 3 dice against the appropriate skill, modified as the GM sees fit for that particular situation. If the number you roll is *less than or equal to* your (modified) score for that skill, you succeed! But a roll of 17 or 18 is an automatic failure.

Certain skills are different at different *tech levels* (TL for short). Such skills are designated by /TL. See p. 00 for more on tech levels.

### **Learning Skills**

To learn or improve a skill, you must spend character points. Skills are divided into *mental* and *physical*. The tables below show the point cost to learn each skill.

The first column shows the skill level you are trying to attain, *relative to the controlling attribute*. This is usually DX for physical skills and IQ for mental ones; exceptions are noted in individual skill descriptions. If your DX is 12, then a level of *(DX-1)* would be 11, *(DX)* would be 12, *(DX+1)* would be 13, and so on.

The remaining columns show the point costs to learn skills of different *difficulties* – *Easy*, *Average*, *Hard*, and *Very Hard* – at that level. Harder skills cost more character points to learn!

### **Physical Skills**

<i>Your Final Skill Level</i>	<i>Difficulty of Skill</i>		
	<i>Easy</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Hard</i>
DX-3	1/2 point	1 point	2 points
DX-2	1/2 point	1 point	2 points
DX-1	1/2 point	1 point	2 points
DX	1 point	2 points	4 points
DX+1	2 points	4 points	8 points
DX+2	4 points	8 points	16 points
DX+3	8 points	16 points	24 points
DX+4	16 points	24 points	32 points

### **Mental Skills**

<i>Your Final Skill Level</i>	<i>Difficulty of Skill</i>			
	<i>Easy</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Hard</i>	<i>Very Hard</i>
IQ-4	1/2 point	1 point	2 points	4 points

IQ-3	1/2 point	1 point	2 points	4 points
IQ-2	1/2 point	1 point	2 points	4 points
IQ-1	1/2 point	1 point	2 points	4 points
IQ	1 point	2 points	4 points	8 points
IQ+1	2 points	4 points	6 points	12 points
IQ+2	4 points	6 points	8 points	16 points

Further increases follow the same progressions: 8 additional points per level for physical skills, 4 per level for Very Hard mental skills, 2 per level for other mental skills.

### ***Limit on Beginning Skills***

The *maximum* number of character points a starting human character can spend on skills is equal to twice his age. For instance, an 18-year-old could apply no more than 36 points to skills. This limit does not apply to skills added after a character is created.

### ***Skill Defaults***

Most skills have a *default level*. This is the level at which you perform the skill *without training*. A skill has a default level if it is something that everybody can do, a little bit.

For instance, the *default* for Lockpicking is IQ-5. If your IQ is 11, and you have to pick a lock, you can do it on a roll of 6 or less. Why? Because 11 minus 5 is 6, so 6 is your *default* skill at Lockpicking. You fumble around with the lock, sliding a credit card around the latch like the detective in a movie you saw once . . . and sometimes it works!

Some skills (especially Very Hard ones) have *no* default.

### ***The Skills Listings***

The listing for each skill gives the following information:

*Name.* The name of the skill. If the skill varies at different tech levels, this will also be shown (e.g., Blacksmith/TL).

*Type.* The variety of skill (mental or physical) and its difficulty (Easy, Average, Hard, or Very Hard).

*Defaults.* The basic attribute(s) to which the skill defaults if the skill itself is not known (for instance, DX-6). If there is more than one possible default, use the one that gives the highest default level.

*Description.* A *brief* description of what the skill is used for and when (or how often) to roll. The GM should permit routine tasks to be performed on a straight skill roll; more or less difficult tasks, or adverse or favorable conditions, will result in modifiers to skill, set at the GM's discretion.

### ***Acrobatics (Physical/Hard) DX-6***

This is the ability to perform acrobatic and gymnastic stunts, roll, take falls, and so on. A separate skill roll is required for each trick you attempt.

### ***Acting (Mental/Average) IQ-5***

The ability to counterfeit moods, emotions and voices, and to lie convincingly over a period of time. Roll a Quick Contest versus the IQ of each person you wish to fool.

### ***Administration (Mental/Average) IQ-6***

The skill of running a large organization; primarily useful for earning money, qualifying for jobs, and predicting the behavior of bureaucrats. Administration 15+ grants a +2 reaction bonus when dealing with a bureaucrat.

### ***Animal Handling (Mental/Hard) IQ-6***

This is the ability to train and work with all types of animals. Daily rolls are required when training an animal.

***Area Knowledge (Mental/Easy) IQ-4 for area residents only***

The skill of familiarity with the people, politics, and geography of a given area. Roll for each piece of knowledge required.

***Armoury/TL (Mental/Average) IQ-5***

The ability to build and repair weapons and armor at the appropriate tech level. Roll to make, repair, or find a problem with a weapon.

***Artist (Mental/Hard) IQ-6***

The ability to draw and paint with both accuracy and beauty. Roll once per work.

***Bard (Mental/Average) IQ-5***

The ability to tell stories and to speak extemporaneously. Also called *Public Speaking*. Roll once per speech or story.

***Blacksmith/TL (Mental/Average) IQ-5***

The ability to work nonprecious metals by hand, given the right tools. Roll once per hour of work.

***Camouflage (Mental/Easy) IQ-4***

The ability to use natural material or paints to disguise yourself, your equipment, your position, and so on. Roll once per person, vehicle, or campsite hidden.

***Carpentry (Mental/Easy) IQ-4 or DX-4***

The ability to build things out of wood, given the right tools. Roll once per hour of work.

***Climbing (Physical/Average) DX-5 or ST-5***

The ability to climb mountains, rock walls, trees, the sides of buildings, and so on. Roll once to start a climb; long climbs may require more rolls. See p. 00.

***Computer Operation/TL (Mental/Easy) IQ-4***

The ability to operate a computer. Roll whenever you need to call up data, run a program, or perform any similar task.

***Computer Programming/TL (Mental/Hard) No default***

The ability to write and debug computer software. Roll to write, debug, or figure out a program.

***Cooking (Mental/Easy) IQ-4***

The ability to prepare a pleasing meal from basic ingredients. Roll once per meal.

***Criminology/TL (Mental/Average) IQ-4***

The study of crime and the criminal mind. Roll to find and interpret clues, guess how criminals might behave, and so on.

***Demolition/TL (Mental/Average) IQ-5***

The ability to blow things up with explosives. A Demolition roll is necessary whenever you use explosives.

***Diagnosis/TL (Mental/Hard) IQ-6***



The ability to tell what is wrong with a sick or injured person, or what killed a dead person. Roll once per diagnosis.

***Disguise (Mental/Average) IQ-5***

The ability to make yourself look like someone else. Roll a Quick Contest of Skills (Disguise vs. IQ) for each person (or group) that your disguise must fool.

***Electronics/TL (Mental/Hard) No default***

The ability to design and build electronic apparatus. A successful roll will let you identify the purpose of a strange device, diagnose a glitch, perform a repair, or design a new system.

***Electronics Operation/TL (Mental/Average) IQ-5***

The ability to use electronics gear. For normal, everyday use of equipment, no skill roll is required. Rolls should only be required in emergency situations.

***Engineer/TL (Mental/Hard) No default***

The ability to design and build complex machinery. A successful roll lets you identify the purpose of strange machinery, diagnose a problem, perform a repair, or design new machinery.

***Escape (Physical/Hard) DX-6***

The ability to get free from ropes, handcuffs, and similar bonds. The first attempt to escape takes one minute; each subsequent attempt takes 10 minutes.

***First Aid/TL (Mental/Easy) Defaults to IQ-5***

The ability to patch up an injury in the field (see p. 00). Roll once per injury.

***Forensics/TL (Mental/Hard) No default***

The general science of laboratory criminology. Roll to analyze each piece of physical evidence.

***Forgery/TL (Mental/Hard) IQ-6 or DX-8***

The ability to produce a fake passport, banknote, or similar document. Roll once per forgery.

***Gambling (Mental/Average) IQ-5***

The skill of playing games of chance. A successful Gambling roll can tell you if a game is rigged, identify a fellow gambler in a group of strangers, or estimate the odds in a tricky situation.

***Hand Weapon (Physical/Varies) Defaults vary***

Each class of hand weapons requires a separate physical skill; roll against this when attacking. Most hand weapons may also *parry* (p. 00); this is done at 1/2 skill unless noted. Assume that P/E weapon skills default to DX-4, P/A ones to DX-5 and P/H ones to DX-6. Skills include:

*Axe/Mace (P/A)*: Any short or middle-sized, unbalanced, one-handed weapon, such as an axe, mace, or pick.

*Blackjack (P/E)*: The blackjack or sap. May not parry.

*Broadsword (P/A)*: Any 2- to 4-foot, balanced, one-handed weapon, such as a broadsword or baseball bat.

*Fencing (P/A)*: The rapier, smallsword, and saber. Parry is 2/3 Fencing skill, not 1/2. Your encumbrance must be Light or less to use Fencing.

*Flail (P/H)*: Any unbalanced weapon with the head attached to the handle by chain or rope, such as a flail, morningstar, or nunchaku. Any attempt to block a flail weapon is at -2; any attempt to parry it is at -4, and knives and fencing weapons cannot parry flails at all!

*Knife (P/E)*: Any knife, dagger, or stiletto.

*Polearm (P/A)*: Any very long, unbalanced pole weapon, such as a poleaxe, glaive, or halberd.

*Shortsword (P/A)*: Any balanced, one-handed weapon, 1-2 feet long, such as the shortsword, baton, or billy club.

*Spear (P/A)*: Any sort of spear, javelin, fixed bayonet, pike, or similar long, light, pointed weapon.

*Staff (P/H)*: Any quarterstaff or improvised pole like a quarterstaff, used in two hands. Parry is 2/3 skill, not 1/2.

*Two-Handed Axe/Mace (P/A)*: Any long, unbalanced, two-handed weapon, such as a battleaxe or maul.

*Two-Handed Sword (P/A)*: Any long (4- to 5-foot), balanced, two-handed weapon.

### ***Holdout (Mental/Average) IQ-5***

The skill of concealing items on your person or the persons of others, or finding such hidden items. Roll once per item.

### ***Humanities (Mental/Hard) IQ-6***

Each academic (humanity) or (arts) subject (such as History, Literature, Philosophy, or Theology) is a separate Mental/Hard skill that defaults to IQ-6. Roll versus skill to recall references, perform critical analysis, etc.

### ***Influence Skills (Mental/Varies) Default varies***

There are several ways to influence others; each is a separate *influence skill*. A successful roll will result in a good reaction from an NPC. Failure results in a bad reaction (except for Diplomacy, which is always safe). To actually coerce or manipulate an NPC, you must win a Quick Contest of your skill versus his Will. Methods of influencing others include:

*Diplomacy (M/H)*: Negotiation and compromise. Defaults to IQ-6.

*Fast-Talk (M/A)*: Lying and deceit. Defaults to IQ-5.

*Intimidation (M/A)*: Threats and implied violence. Defaults to ST-5.

*Savoir-Faire (M/E)*: Manners and etiquette. Mainly useful in (high society) situations. Defaults to IQ-4.

*Sex Appeal (M/A; based on HT, not IQ)*: Vamping and seduction, usually of the opposite sex. Defaults to HT-3.

*Streetwise (M/A)*: Contacts and (usually) subtle intimidation. Only useful in (street) and criminal situations. Defaults to IQ-5.

### ***Interrogation (Mental/Average) IQ-5***

The ability to question a prisoner. To do so, you must win a Contest of Skills: your Interrogation skill vs. the prisoner's Will.

### ***Jumping (Physical/Easy) No default***

This is the trained ability to use your strength to its best advantage when you jump (see p. 00). Roll once per jump.

### ***Law (Mental/Hard) IQ-6***

A successful Law roll lets you remember, deduce, or figure out the answer to a question about the law. An actual trial can be handled as a Quick Contest of Law skills.

### ***Leadership (Mental/Average) ST-5***

The ability to coordinate a group in a dangerous or stressful situation. Roll to lead NPCs into a dangerous situation.

### ***Lockpicking/TL (Mental/Average) IQ-5***

This is the ability to open locks without the key or combination. Each attempt to open a lock requires one minute and a skill roll; cracking a safe may take considerably longer!

**Masonry (Physical/Easy) IQ-3**

The ability to build things out of brick or stone, given the right tools. Roll once per hour of work.

**Mechanic/TL (Mental/Average) IQ-5**

The ability to diagnose and fix ordinary mechanical problems in machines of your TL. Roll once per diagnosis or repair.

**Merchant (Mental/Average) IQ-5**

The ability to act as a trader, buying and selling merchandise. A successful skill roll lets you judge the value of common goods, locate markets and so on.

**Meteorology/TL (Mental/Average) IQ-5**

The study of the weather and the ability to predict it, given the appropriate instruments. Roll once per prediction.

**Missile Weapon (Physical/Varies) Default varies**

Missile weapons are ranged weapons that launch projectiles, as distinct from *thrown* weapons (see p. 00). Each general class requires a separate skill; roll against this when attacking. P/E skills default to DX-4, P/A ones to DX-5, and P/H ones to DX-6. Add 1 to your skill for an IQ of 10-11, and 2 for an IQ of 12+, when using any missile weapon skill labeled with *TL*.

Missile weapon skills include:

*Beam Weapons/TL (P/E)*: Any beam-type weapon, such as a futuristic blaster or laser, is a separate *Beam Weapons* skill.

*Black Powder Weapons/TL (P/E)*: Each type of black-powder weapon, including the musket, pistol, and rifle, is a separate *Black Powder Weapons* skill.

*Bow (P/H)*: The longbow, shortbow and all similar bows, as well as the modern compound bow.

*Crossbow (P/E)*: All types of crossbow, including the *prodd*, which fires pellets rather than bolts.

*Guns/TL (P/E)*: Each type of cartridge firearm is a separate *Guns* skill. Types include pistol, rifle, shotgun, and light automatic.

*Sling (P/H)*: The sling and staff sling.

**Musical Instrument (Mental/Hard) No default**

The ability to play a musical instrument. Each instrument is a separate version of this skill. Roll once per performance.

**Natural Sciences (Mental/Hard) IQ-6**

Each specialty (such as Botany, Metallurgy, Physics, or Zoology) is a separate Mental/Hard skill that defaults to IQ-6. Roll versus skill to recall general knowledge within the field, analyze data, perform lab work, and so on.

**Naturalist (Mental/Hard) IQ-6**

A general knowledge of animals and plants, and of nature in its various forms. Roll to identify plants, animals, and so on.

**Navigation/TL (Mental/Hard) No default**

Ability to find position by the stars, ocean currents, etc. A successful roll will tell you where you are, at sea, or on land.

***Occultism (Mental/Average) IQ-6***

The study of supernatural practices as forms of human behavior. See p. 00 for more details.

***Parachuting (Physical/Easy) DX-4 or IQ-6***

The skill of making parachute jumps. Roll once per drop; a failure means that you missed the target zone and/or landed badly and suffered a minor injury, while a critical failure may indicate potentially fatal problems.

***Paraphysics/TL (Mental/Very Hard) No Default***

The *scientific* study of psychic powers and other manifestations of the paranormal. See p. 00 for details.

***Photography/TL (Mental/Average) IQ-5***

The ability to use a camera competently, use a darkroom, and so on. Roll once per roll of film shot or developed.

***Physician/TL (Mental/Hard) IQ-7***

The general professional ability to aid the sick, prescribe drugs and care, etc. This is the skill to use if the GM requires a single roll to test general medical competence or knowledge.

***Pickpocket (Physical/Hard) DX-6***

The ability to steal a small object (purse, knife, etc.) from someone's person. Roll once per theft; if the target is alert, treat this as a Quick Contest vs. the target's IQ.

***Research (Mental/Average) IQ-5***

General skill at library or electronic research. A successful Research roll in an appropriate place of research will let you find a useful piece of data, if that information is to be found.

***Riding (Physical/Average) DX-5***

The skill of riding a beast. A different version of this skill must be learned for each animal type. Roll once when the beast is first mounted and again any time a difficult situation is encountered while riding.

***Running (Physical/Hard) No default***

This skill is based on HT, not DX. It represents training in sprints and long-distance running. If you have studied this skill, divide your skill level by 8 (don't round down) and add the result to your Speed for the purpose of calculating your Move score (this affects land movement only). See p. 00 for details.

***Shadowing (Mental/Average) IQ-6***

The ability to follow another person through a crowd without being noticed. Roll a Quick Contest of Skill every 10 minutes: your Shadowing vs. the subject's Vision roll. If you lose, you lose the target or he spots you!

***Shield (Physical/Easy) DX-4***

The ability to use a medieval-type shield or police riot shield. The active defense from a shield is your Block score (p. 00) is equal to *half* your Shield skill.

***Singing (Physical/Easy) HT-4***

Study of this skill is based on HT, not DX. This is the ability to sing in a pleasing fashion. Roll once per performance.

***Social Sciences (Mental/Hard) IQ-6***

Each social science (e.g., Anthropology, Archaeology, Psychology or Sociology) is a separate Mental/Hard skill that defaults to IQ-6. Roll versus skill to recall general knowledge within the field, identify traits that characterize an individual, culture or society (as applicable), and so on.

***Stealth (Physical/Average) IQ-5 or DX-5***

The ability to hide and to move silently. Roll a Quick Contest of Skills between your Stealth and the Hearing roll of anyone you're trying to hide from.

***Surgery/TL (Mental/Very Hard) No default***

The skill of performing major surgery. Useful for getting a job and for dealing with extreme medical problems.

***Survival (Mental/Average) IQ-5***

Ability to live off the land, find food and water, avoid hazards, build shelter, etc. A different Survival skill is required for each type of terrain. Roll once per day in a wilderness situation.

***Swimming (Physical/Easy) ST-5 or DX-4***

This skill is used both for swimming and for saving a drowning victim. Roll once per swim, dive, or lifesaving attempt. See p. 00.

***Tactics (Mental/Hard) IQ-6***

The ability to outguess the enemy when the fight is man-to-man or in small groups. A successful Tactics roll during a battle will sometimes (GM's discretion) allow you information about immediate enemy plans.

***Teaching (Mental/Average) IQ-5***

The ability to instruct others. The GM may require one or more skill rolls to teach another character a skill.

***Thaumatology (Mental/Very Hard) IQ-6***

The science of magic – the formal study of magical forces. See p. 00 for details.

***Throwing (Physical/Hard) No default***

The ability to throw whatever random objects you can pick up, or small objects such as grenades. It helps both accuracy (roll against Throwing skill to throw anything you can lift) and distance (add 1/6 of Throwing skill to ST when determining distance).

***Thrown Weapon (Physical/Easy) DX-4***

The ability to throw any one type of *intentionally throwable* weapon. There is a different skill for each type of weapon; e.g., Knife Throwing, Axe Throwing, Spear Throwing, and so on.

***Tracking (Mental/Average) IQ-5***

The ability to follow a man or animal by its tracks. Make one Tracking roll to pick up the trail, and one further roll for every 5 minutes of travel.

***Traps/TL (Mental/Average) IQ-5 or DX-5***

The skill of building and avoiding traps and detection devices. Roll to build, detect, disarm, or reset a trap.

***Unarmed Combat (Physical/Varies) No default***

These are *trained* skills of fighting without weapons. (Anyone can fight in an untrained fashion, using DX). They all permit more effective bare-handed parries, at 2/3 skill; see p. 00.

**Boxing (P/A):** Formal fisticuffs. When you punch, roll against Boxing skill to hit, and add 1/5 of your skill (round down) to damage.

**Brawling (P/E):** Unscientific roaring and punching. When you punch or kick, roll against Brawling to hit (at -2 for kicks), and add 1/10 of your skill (round down) to damage.

**Judo (P/H):** Advanced throws and grapples. Judo can only be used if you have nothing in your hands, and your encumbrance is Light or less. It can be used for any roll in Close Combat (p. 00) for which you would normally use DX, except to punch, kick, draw a weapon, or drop a shield. You may also attempt Judo Throws (p. 00).

**Karate (P/H):** Advanced punches and kicks. Your encumbrance must be Light or less to use Karate. When you punch or kick, roll against Karate to hit, and add 1/5 of your skill level (round down) to damage.

### **Vehicle Skills (Physical/Varies) Default varies**

Each class of vehicle requires a different skill to operate it. Roll once to get under way and again each time a hazard is encountered; failure indicates lost time or even an accident. Vehicle skills default to DX at -4 (easy), -5 (average), or -6 (hard); *motor* vehicles also default to IQ, at similar penalties. Available types include *Bicycling (P/E)*, *Boating (P/A)* for rowboats and sailboats, *Driving (P/A)* for cars, *Motorcycle (P/E)* for motorbikes, *Piloting (P/A)* for aircraft, and *Powerboat (P/A)* for motorboats. Personal jet packs use a form of *Piloting*, different from that used for aircraft.

### **Writing (Mental/Average) IQ-5**

This is the ability to write in a clear and/or entertaining manner. Roll once per article, or daily for long works.

### **Languages**

Languages are treated as skills. The *Language Talent* advantage (p. 00), makes it easier to learn languages.

### **Language Skills (Mental/Varies) No default**

Each language is a separate Mental skill. Your native language skill starts out equal to your IQ, and costs only 1 point per level to improve. Other languages are improved like any other skill. Difficulty of languages varies:

**Easy:** Pidgin English, Esperanto, and the like.

**Average:** Most languages – French, Chinese, Elvish, Rumanian, etc.

**Hard:** Basque, Navajo, and most alien languages.

**Very Hard:** Alien languages which cannot be pronounced with your natural vocal equipment or simple mechanical aids.

When two people try to communicate in a language that is *not* the native language of one or both parties, roll against language skill to understand or be understood.

### **Gesture (Mental/Easy) IQ-4**

The ability to communicate through simple, improvised hand signals. Roll once to communicate each *general* concept.

### **Sign Language (Mental/Average) No default**

Any of the many true languages of gesture. Each form of sign language is a separate skill, and treated like any other language skill.

# Equipment

Now you need to decide what equipment you have. Usually, the GM sets a reasonable cost and weight for each item of equipment requested by a player. He may even refer players to real-life catalogs! Weapons and armor are a special case, however, since their use involves more intricate game mechanics.

*A Note on Buying Things:* You start with money equal to the campaign starting wealth, modified by your personal wealth level (p. 00). The GM will supply equipment lists that give cost, weight, and other information about important items, and give you a ruling about anything else you request. Subtract the price of each item you buy from your starting wealth to determine how much money you have left. If you work for an agency (such as the BPRD), they may issue you with equipment but they'll want it accounted for later, in detail, and *they* (represented by the GM) will decide what *you* need to carry.

## ARMOR

Armor is handy in combat situations. Heavy armor gives the best protection, but it's cumbersome. In the modern-day world of *Hellboy*, firearms make armor much less useful than it used to be, but not entirely useless.

Armor protects you in two ways. Its *passive defense* (PD) adds to your defense roll when you wear it. Its *damage resistance* (DR) protects you when you get hit. In both cases, higher numbers are better; see p. 00.

### Armor Stats

For each type of armor, the following information is listed:

*General Description:* The item's name and how it is used.

*Passive Defense (PD):* This adds to your defense roll, and represents the fact that some blows will bounce off the armor. PD of armor normally ranges from 1 to 6.

*Damage Resistance (DR):* This is the amount of protection the item gives, in terms of hits subtracted from a blow which strikes you; e.g., if you are hit while wearing DR 6 armor, and the attacker rolls 8 points of damage, only 2 will affect you.

*Weight:* This is given in pounds; it adds to your total *encumbrance* (see *Speed, Encumbrance, and Move*, below).

*Cost:* The price of the armor in \$.

((BEGIN BOX))

Type	TL	PD	DR	Cost	Weight
Ordinary clothing	any	0	0	varies!	1
Padded cloth armor		1-4	1	\$180	14
Leather jacket	1-8	1	1	\$50	4
Heavy leather armor		1-4	2	\$350	20
Chainmail	3-4	3*	4*	\$550	45
Heavy plate**	3-4	4	7	\$6,000	110
Flak jacket		6	2	\$220	17
Kevlar (light)		7	2*	\$220	5
Kevlar (heavy)		7	2*	\$420	9
Light body armor	7+	4	15	\$270	22

\* PD 1, DR 2 vs. impaling.

\*\* All combat skills at -1 due to helm; Vision and Hearing at -3.

g Protects torso only.      gg Protects torso and arms only.

((END BOX))

## SHIELDS

Shields are valuable in low-tech combat, if a bit cumbersome to carry around in the modern world. They protect the user both actively and passively. First, a shield will stop many blows automatically, with no particular

effort on the part of the user. The bigger the shield, the better it does this. This is its *passive defense* bonus (PD). Second, you may also deliberately try to *Block* a blow; this is an *active defense*. See p. 00 on defense rolls.

A shield has no damage resistance. It does not reduce the damage from any blow that hits you. It just makes you hard to hit.

((BEGIN BOX))

Type	PD	Cost	Weight
Buckler	1	\$25	2 lbs.
Small	2	\$40	8 lbs.
Medium	3	\$60	15 lbs.
Large	4	\$90	25 lbs.

((END BOX))

## WEAPONS

The weapons you carry should be determined first by your skills, and then by your strength and budget. If you can't use it, don't buy it. High-tech weapons (like guns) will work for anyone who knows how to use them. Low-tech weapons, such as clubs and swords, do more damage when wielded by a strong person.

### Basic Weapon Damage

*Basic damage* is the impact damage a weapon does, before its point or cutting edge is considered. Your basic damage depends on your ST. Damage is shown as  $\text{dice} + \text{add}$  (see p. 00). For example,  $1\text{d} + 1$  means that you roll two dice and add 1 to the result. Thus, a roll of 7 would mean 8 hits of damage.

### Types of Attack

There are two main types of weapon attack: *thrusting* and *swinging*. A swinging attack does more damage, because the weapon acts as a lever to multiply your ST. The following table shows how much basic damage each type of weapon does, according to the user's ST. The columns show the number of dice rolled to determine damage.

((BEGIN BOX))

#### Damage Based on ST

ST	Thrusting	Swinging	ST	Thrusting	Swinging
4-5	0	0	13	1d	2d-1
5-6	1d-5	1d-5	14	1d	2d
6-7	1d-4	1d-4	15	1d+1	2d+1
7-8	1d-3	1d-3	16	1d+1	2d+2
8-9	1d-3	1d-2	17	1d+2	3d-1
9-10	1d-2	1d-1	18	1d+2	3d
10-11	1d-2	1d	19	2d-1	3d+1
11-12	1d-1	1d+1	20	2d-1	3d+2
12-13	1d-1	1d+2	21	2d	4d-1

The progression continues from here; for example, ST 25 gives  $2\text{d} + 2$  Thrust,  $5\text{d} - 1$  Swing. However, from ST 27 onwards, Swing damage only goes up with every +2 ST, and from ST 45 on, both types of damage rise by +1d for every full +10 ST.

To simplify the necessary calculations, note the following examples:

ST	Thrusting	Swinging	ST	Thrusting	Swinging
35-36	4d-1	6d+1	65-66	7d+1	9d+2
39-40	4d+1	7d-1	79-80	9d	11d
45-46	5d	7d+1	95-96	10d+2	12d+2



59-60 7d-1 9d 119-120 13d 15d  
 (((END BOX)))

### Damage Types and Damage Bonus

Weapons do three basic types of damage: *impaling*, *cutting*, and *crushing*.

*Impaling* weapons strike with a sharp point. When you hit with an impaling weapon, the damage that gets through the armor is *doubled*.

*Cutting* weapons strike with an edge. When you hit with a cutting weapon, all damage that gets through the target's armor is *increased by 50%*, rounded down.

*Crushing* weapons strike with a blunt surface. They receive no bonus damage.

*Minimum Damage*: If you hit with a cutting or impaling attack, or a bullet, you always get at least one hit of basic damage before any DR is subtracted. Thus, if you strike with a dagger for 1d-4 damage, and roll a 2, you still do 1 hit of damage. However, if you hit the foe with a crushing attack, you *can* do zero damage.

*Maximum Damage*: Some weapons, especially impaling weapons such as daggers, can only do so much damage on any one blow, no matter how strong the user is.

### Recording Weapon Stats

*Cost* and *Weight* are copied directly from the *Weapon Tables* onto your character sheet (see p. 00). They include scabbards for swords, knives, etc.

*Minimum Strength* is the minimum ST required to use the weapon properly. You may still fight with a weapon if you are too weak for it, but for every point of ST by which you are too weak, you will be at -1 to your weapon skill.

*Damage* is also copied from the *Weapon Table*. Some weapons can be used in different ways. For instance, some swords can be swung for a cutting attack or thrust for an impaling attack. Before you strike with such a weapon, specify how you are attacking. To calculate damage, take your basic damage for that type of attack, and add the damage shown on the table for your weapon. If your ST is 10, your basic swinging damage is 1d; so if a broadsword does 1swing+1, your damage with a broadsword is 1d+1.

*Ranged Weapons*: If you have a ranged weapon (anything that can be thrown or fired), see p. 00. Copy the stats from the *Ranged Weapon Table*. Only Max. (maximum range) is used in *GURPS Lite*.

(((BEGIN BOX)))

## MELEE WEAPONS TABLE

Weapons are listed in groups, according to the skill required to use them. Weapons which can be used in two ways (for instance, a shortsword can either cut or impale) have two lines — one for each type of attack.

Reach indicates the distance at which the weapon can be used if you are playing with figures on a combat map marked off in hexagons; this stat is not used in *GURPS Lite*, but is retained to keep this table consistent with those in other *GURPS* books.

A rifle with fixed bayonet functions as a spear, but with -1 on attack rolls and reach limited to 1. A bayonet on its own functions as a knife.

Weapon	Type	Damage	Reach	Cost	Weight	Min ST	Special Notes
AXE/MACE							
Axe	cut	sw+2	1	\$50	4 lbs.	12	1 turn to ready.
Hatchet	cut	sw	1	\$40	2 lbs.	7	Throwable. 1 turn to ready.
Mace	cr	sw+3	1	\$50	5 lbs.	12	1 turn to ready.
BLACKJACK							
Blackjack or sap	cr	thr	C	\$20	1 lb.	7	May not parry
BROADSWORD							
Thrusting Broadsword	cut	sw+1	1	\$600	3 lbs.	10	
imp	thr+2	1					
Light club	cr	sw+1	1	\$10	3 lbs.	10	
FENCING (See p. 00 for fencing parry rules.)							

Rapier	imp	thr+1	1, 2	\$500	1 1/2 lbs.	İ Maximum damage 1d+1.
Saber	cut	sw	1	\$700	2 lbs.	7 Can also be used as a shortsword.
imp	thr+1	1				Thrust: maximum damage 1d+2.
FLAIL (See p. 00 for rules on parrying flails.)						
Morningstar	cr	sw+3	1	\$80	6 lbs.	12 1 turn to ready.
KNIFE						
Combat Knife	cut	sw-2	C, 1	\$40	1 lb.	İ Maximum damage 1d+2.
imp	thr	C				Throwable; Maximum damage 1d+2.
POLEARM (All polearms require 2 hands.)						
Glaive	cut	sw+3	2, 3*	\$100	8 lbs.	11 2 turns to ready after swing.
imp	thr+3	1-3*				1 turn to ready after thrust.
SHORTSWORD						
Shortsword	cut	sw	1	\$400	2 lbs.	7 Sabers can be used w/Shortsword skill.
imp	thr	1				
Baton	cr	sw	1	\$20	1 lb.	7 A short, well-balanced club.
cr	thr	1				
SPEAR						
Spear	imp	thr+2	1*	\$40	4 lbs.	9 Used 1-handed. Throwable.
	thr+3	1, 2*				Same spear used 2-handed.
STAFF						
Quarterstaff	cr	sw+2	1, 2	\$10	4 lbs.	6 Parry is 2/3 Staff skill
Cr	thr+2	1, 2				
TWO-HANDED AXE/MACE						
Great Axe	cut	sw+3	1, 2*	\$100	8 lbs.	13 1 turn to ready after swing.
TWO-HANDED SWORD						
Thrusting Greatsword	cut	sw+3	1, 2*	\$900	7 lbs.	12
imp	thr+3	2				

\*One turn to shift from long to short grip or vice versa.

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## RANGED WEAPONS TABLE

Weapons are listed in groups, according to the skill required to use them.

*MalF* is the malfunction number. As an optional rule for guns and a few other complex weapons, if the attack roll is equal to or greater than this number, the weapon jams or malfunctions; no shot is fired, and the user must take 2d turns and make a weapon skill or Armoury roll to clear it. An entry of *İcrit* means that the weapon only malfunctions on a critical failure.

*SS* and *Acc* are the Snap Shot and Accuracy numbers; see p. 00. *1/2D* and *Max* are ranges beyond which the weapon does only half damage or cannot shoot at all; they are not used in *GURPS Lite*, but are listed here for consistency with other *GURPS* books. *Wt.* and *Awt.* are the weight of the weapon and a standard reload (arrow, clip, etc.) respectively. *RoF* is Rate of Fire; see p. 00 and p. 00. *Shots* is how many rounds per reload (clip, cylinder, etc.). *Rcl* is the Recoil Number; see p. 00. Lastly, *Cost* is the price of the weapon, and *TL* is the Tech Level at which it first appears.

<i>Weapon</i>	<i>MalF</i>	<i>Damage</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>Acc</i>	<i>1/2D</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>Wt.</i>	<i>AWt.</i>	<i>RoF</i>	<i>Shots</i>	<i>Min</i>
<i>ST</i>	<i>Rcl</i>	<i>Cost TL</i>									
AXE THROWING											
Hatchet	-	sw	11	1	ST 1.5	ST 2.5	2	-	-	-	7 -
	\$40	1									
BOW											
Short bow	-	thr	12	1	ST 10	ST 15	2	0.1	1/3	1	7* -
	\$50	1									
Longbow	-	thr+2	15	3	ST 15	ST 20	3	0.1	1/3	1	11* -
	\$200	2									
CROSSBOW											
Crossbow	-	thr+4	12	4	ST 20	ST 25	6	0.1	1/5	1	7* -
	\$150	2									
KNIFE THROWING											

Combat Knife	-	thr	12	0	ST-2	ST+5	1	-	-	-	İ	-
	\$40	1										
SLING												
Sling	-	sw	12	0	ST 6	ST 10	1/2	0.1	1/3	-	İ	-
	\$10	0										
SPEAR THROWING												
Spear	-	thr+3	11	2	ST	ST 1.5	4	-	-	-	9	-
	\$40	0										
GUNS (Light Automatic)												
Schmeisser MP40	crit.	3d-1	10	6	160	1,900	10.5	1.8	8	32	10	-
1	\$1,000	6										
Uzi 9mm	crit.	3d-1	10	7	160	1,900	9.5	1.3	10	32	10	-
1	\$300	7										
H&K MP5	crit.	3d-1	10	8	160	1,900	7.3	1.1	10	30	10	-
1	\$700	7										
GUNS (Pistol)												
Luger 19mm	16	2d+2	9	4	175	1,900	2	0.4	3~	8	9	-
1	\$500	6										
Colt .45	crit.	2d	10	2	175	1,700	2.75	0.5	3~	7	10	-
2	\$500	6										
S&W .38 Special	crit.	2d-1	10	2	120	1,900	2	0.2	3~	6	8	-
1	\$300	6										
S&W M29, .44 Magnum	crit.	3d	10	2	200	2,500	3.3	0.3	3~	6	11	-
3	\$570	7										
Glock 17	crit.	2d+2	10	3	150	1,900	2	0.5	3~	17	9	-
1	\$450	7										
Hellboy's First Gun	crit.	9d	12	6	410	2,800	14.6	0.6	1	1	19	-
	\$1,050	6										
Hellboy's 1990s Gun	crit.	9d	12	7	450	3,000	12.6	0.6	1	1	18	-
	\$900	7										
GUNS (Rifle)												
Winchester J94	crit.	5d	13	8	450	3,000	7	0.3	2~	6	10	-
1	\$300	5										
Lee-Enfield .303	crit.	6d+1	14	10	1,000	3,800	10	0.6	1	10	12	-
2	\$450	6										
AK-47	crit.	5d+1	12	7	400	3,000	10	1.8	10	30	10	-
1	\$290	7										
M16	crit.	5d	12	11	500	3,800	8	1	12	30	9	-
1	\$540	7										
GUNS (Shotgun)												
Ithaca 10G	crit.	5d	12	5	25	150	10	0.4	2~	2	13	-
4	\$900	5										
Remington 870	crit.	4d	12	5	25	150	8	0.8	3~	5	12	-
3	\$400	7										

\*Bows are rated by user strength; this is the lowest ST for which a bow of this type can be made. You cannot use a bow rated for a ST higher than your own effectively, and a bow made for a ST lower than your own is used at its own ST rating. Crossbows are rated similarly, but you *can* use one with ST higher than your own; reloading just takes longer (see p. 00). When *firing*, any crossbow has Min ST 7.

*Damage Types:* Thrown axes do *cutting* damage; bows, crossbows, knives, and spears do *impaling*; sling-stones and guns do *crushing*.

*Ammunition:* Reloads cost \$2 for an arrow, crossbow bolt, or bullet for Hellboy's pistols, \$0.30 for a standard pistol or light automatic round, \$0.60 for a bullet for a rifle, or \$0.10 for a shotgun cartridge. Sling stones can be picked up for free.

((END BOX))

## Speed, Encumbrance, and Move

Your *Speed* score (or *Basic Speed*) determines your reaction time and running speed. It is figured from your HT and DX attributes, and shows how fast you can run without encumbrance (see below). An average person has a Speed of 5. If that is, with no encumbrance, he runs about 5 yards per second.

Add your HT and DX together. Divide the total by 4. The result is your Basic Speed Score; don't round it off! If (for instance) your Basic Speed is 5.25, your unencumbered movement is 5 yards per second. But there will be times when a 5.25 is better than a 5!

## **Encumbrance**

Your *encumbrance* is the total weight you are carrying, in pounds. Encumbrance reduces your movement rate. It also makes swimming and climbing much more difficult, and travel (p. 00) slower.

Your *encumbrance level* is a measure of that weight relative to your strength. A strong person can carry more than a weak one; therefore, the ratio of weight to strength determines encumbrance level, as follows:

*Weight up to 2 ST*: no encumbrance. You have no penalty.

*Weight up to 4 ST*: light encumbrance. Movement penalty of 1.

*Weight up to 6 ST*: medium encumbrance. Movement penalty of 2.

*Weight up to 12 ST*: heavy encumbrance. Movement penalty of 3.

*Weight up to 20 ST*: extra-heavy encumbrance. Movement penalty of 4. You cannot carry a weight more than 20 times your ST for more than a few feet at a time; 30 times ST is the absolute most you can carry.

## **Move**

Your *Move* is the distance (in yards) you can actually run in one second. To find your Move, add up the total weight of all your possessions and find your encumbrance level. Now subtract your encumbrance penalty from your Speed score, and round *down*. The result is your Move score. It's always a whole number, not a fraction. Your Move controls:

(1) How fast you can move. (If you have the Running skill, add 1/8 of your skill level to Basic Speed for this purpose only. Don't round off until the very end! Running doesn't affect your Speed score, but it will help your Move.)

(2) When you move.

(3) Your Dodge defense (p. 00). This *active defense* is equal to your Move. The less weighted-down you are, the quicker you can dodge!

Your Move can never be reduced to 0 unless you are unconscious, unable to use your legs, or lifting over 30 times your ST.

# Character Improvement

At the end of each session, the GM may award *bonus character points* for good play; these are the same kind of points you used to create your character. Good play is anything that advances your mission or shows good roleplaying (including adherence to your disadvantages and quirks) — preferably both.

Bonus points are awarded separately to each character. A typical award is 1-3 points, with 5 points being the absolute upper limit for *amazing* play. Note that you get no points for a session in which your Dependent (p. 00) is killed, seriously wounded, or kidnapped and not recovered.

Bonus points are used to develop and improve your character. Record them as *Unspent* on your character sheet. Then spend them the same way as during character creation, with a few differences:

**Basic Attributes:** To improve one of your basic attributes (ST, DX, IQ, or HT), you must spend character points equal to *twice* the beginning point-cost difference between the old score and the new one. E.g. to go from ST 10 (beginning cost 0) to ST 11 (beginning cost 10) would cost 20 points.

If you improve an attribute, all skills based on that attribute also go up by the same amount.

*Advantages:* Most advantages are inborn, and cannot be bought later on. Exceptions include Combat Reflexes and Literacy, which can be learned, and social advantages like Status, which can be earned (in some societies). To add an advantage, you must pay the appropriate character points.

*Buying Off Disadvantages:* No character may get extra points by adding disadvantages after he is created. However, you may *get rid* of most beginning disadvantages by buying them off with points equal to the bonus earned when the disadvantage was taken, as long as the player and GM can agree on a *logical* explanation for this.

*Adding and Improving Skills:* Earned character points can be used to increase your skills or add new ones. Normally, these must be skills that, in the GM's opinion, were significantly used in the adventure in which those character points were earned. When you improve a skill, the cost is the difference between your current skill level and the cost of the new skill level.

## Playing the Game

We've seen the rules for creating and equipping characters. Now here's how to *do* things. Essentially, the GM describes a situation and asks each of the players what his character is doing. The players answer, and the GM tells them what happens next. At some point, the GM won't be certain that the characters can automatically do what the players say they are doing . . . You're carrying *what* and jumping the chasm? . . . and the dice come out.

## PHYSICAL FEATS

### *Running*

In combat, running is just a series of Move maneuvers. Your running speed is equal to your Basic Speed score, plus Running skill bonus (p. 00), plus a one yard per second sprint bonus if you are running in a straight line for more than one turn. This is modified downward by encumbrance (p. 00).

When figuring *long-distance* speed (i.e., for runs of a few hundred yards, as opposed to combat movement), do *not* round down your Speed. A Basic Speed of 5.5 would let you run 65 yards in 10 seconds, if you were unencumbered.

### *Jumping*

Usually, when you want to jump over something, the GM should say "OK, you jumped over it, and get on with play. In combat, jumping over an ordinary obstacle costs 1 extra yard of movement but is automatically successful. Only when the obstacle seems really significant should you resort to math to see if the character can actually make the jump!

The maximum distance you can jump is determined by your ST score, as follows:

*High jump:* (3ST)-10 inches. Add 2 feet to the above if you have 4 yards for a running start.

*Standing broad jump:* (ST-3) feet.

*Running broad jump:* As above, but add 1 foot for every yard of takeoff distance, up to double your standing broad jump distance.

*Jumping Skill:* If you have this skill, you may *substitute* your skill level for ST in the height and distance formulas above.

### *Climbing*

To climb anything more difficult than a ladder, a Climbing roll is required. One roll is required to start the climb, with a further roll every five minutes; a failed roll means you fall. Modifiers to the roll depend on the difficulty of the climb - see the table below. Your encumbrance level is also subtracted from your Climbing skill.

((BEGIN BOX))

<i>Type of Climb</i>	<i>Modifier</i>	<i>Short Climb</i>	<i>Long Climb</i>
----------------------	-----------------	--------------------	-------------------

Ladder going up	no roll	3 rungs/sec.	1 rung/sec.
Ladder going down	no roll	2 rungs/sec.	1 rung/sec.
Ordinary tree	+5	1 ft./sec.	1 ft./3 secs.
Ordinary mountain	0	1 ft./2 secs.	10 ft./min.
Vertical stone wall	-3	1 ft./5 secs.	4 ft./min.
Modern building	-3	1 ft./10 secs.	2 ft./min.
Rope, going up	-2	1 ft./sec.	20 ft./min.
Rope, going down			
(w/o equipment)	-1	2 ft./sec.	30 ft./min.
(w/equipment)	-1	12 ft./sec.	12 ft./sec.

((END BOX))

### ***Lifting and Moving Things***

In general, the GM may let characters lift whatever they need to, without die rolls; but when very heavy weights are involved, a check against ST may be needed. The maximum weight you can lift is governed by ST.

*One-Handed Lift:* 6 ST pounds.

*Two-Handed Lift:* 25 ST pounds.

*Carry on Back:* 30 ST pounds. Thus, you can carry more than you can lift by yourself. (Note that every *second* you carry more than 20 ST pounds, you lose one *fatigue* point; see p. 00.)

*Shove and Knock Over:* 25 ST pounds, or 50 ST pounds with a running start.

*Shift Slightly:* 100 ST pounds.

*Drag:* On a rough surface, you can drag only about as much as you can carry. If you are dragging something on a smooth, level surface, halve its effective weight.

*Pull on Wheels:* As for dragging, but divide effective weight by 10 for a two-wheeled cart, or by 20 for a good, four-wheeled wagon. Halve effective weight again if it is being pulled on a good road.

*Picking Things Up in Combat:* In combat, a light item is picked up with the Ready maneuver, which takes 1 second. It takes 2 seconds to pick up a heavy item (weight in pounds greater than your ST).

### ***Throwing Things***

Anything you can lift (i.e., anything with a weight of 25 your ST or less) can be thrown. To hit a target, roll against DX-3 or an appropriate skill (see p. 00 for rules on throwing weapons). To lob something into a general area, roll against an appropriate skill or DX. (On a failure, the thrown object misses by one yard per point by which the roll was missed or half the distance to the target, whichever is less, in a random direction.) The distance you can throw an object depends on its weight and your ST. Find the weight nearest to that of the object on the table below, then multiply the distance listed there by your ST to get the distance, in yards, that you can throw it.

((BEGIN BOX))

<i>Weight</i>	<i>Distance</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Distance</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Distance</i>
1 lb. or less	3.5	7.5 lbs.	1.0	40 lbs.	0.3
1.5 lbs.	3.0	10 lbs.	0.8	50 lbs.	0.25
2 lbs.	2.5	15 lbs.	0.7	60 lbs.	0.2
3 lbs.	1.9	20 lbs.	0.6	80 lbs.	0.15
4 lbs.	1.5	25 lbs.	0.5	100 lbs.	0.1
5 lbs.	1.2	30 lbs.	0.4	200 lbs.	0.05

((END BOX))

*Grenades:* These usually weigh 1-2 lbs.; See p. 00 for explosive damage rules.

*Throwing Skill:* If you have the Throwing skill, divide it by 6 (round down) and add the result to your ST to determine how far you can throw an irregular or unbalanced object.

*Throwing Things in Combat:* Throwing an object during combat (whether as an attack or not) requires the Attack maneuver (p. 00). You must pick it up first, as described above. To see if you hit, roll against the Throwing skill or an appropriate Thrown Weapon skill.

If something weighs more than 25 times your ST, forget the formula – you can't throw it!

If you are hit by a (blunt) thrown object, the damage it does depends on its weight and the ST with which it was thrown.

((BEGIN BOX))

**ST 1/2 to 10 lbs. 10+ to 50 lbs. 50+ to 100 lbs. over 100 lbs.**

5-6	1d-5	1d-4	1d-5	1
7-8	1d-4	1d-3	1d-3	1
9-10	1d-3	1d-2	1d-2	1d-3
11-12	1d-2	1d-1	1d-1	1d-2
13-14	1d-1	1d	1d	1d
15-16	1d	1d+1	1d+2	1d+2
17-18	1d+1	1d+2	2d-2	2d-1
19-20	1d+2	2d-2	2d-1	2d

((END BOX))

A fragile object (or a thrown character) will take the same amount of damage it inflicts. Roll damage separately for the thrown object and the target.

## **Swimming**

Swimming short distances, your Move is equal to 1/10 your Swimming skill (round down), minimum 1 yard per second. Over long distances, the number of yards you swim in 10 seconds equals your Swimming skill minus *twice* your encumbrance. Swimming long distances can cause fatigue – see p. 00.

Make a Swimming roll when you enter the water, and again every 5 minutes. Subtract *twice* your encumbrance level, and add 3 if you entered the water intentionally. Fat characters (p. 00) get a bonus here. If you fail this roll, lose one point of fatigue (p. 00) and roll again in 5 seconds, and so on until you reach ST 0 and drown, get rescued, or make the roll. If you recover, roll again in 1 minute. If you make that roll, go back to rolling every 5 minutes.

Swimming skill can be used to rescue a drowning person. Make a Swimming roll at -5, plus or minus the difference in ST between you and the person you are rescuing.

## **Travel**

Distance traveled in a day, either on foot or horseback, is a direct function of your encumbrance. Under ideal travel conditions, a party in good shape may plan on traveling the following distances in one day's march:

*No encumbrance:* 50 miles

*Light encumbrance:* 40 miles

*Medium encumbrance:* 30 miles

*Heavy encumbrance:* 20 miles

*Extra heavy encumbrance:* 10 miles

A party's speed is equal to the speed of its slowest member. Whatever your daily mileage, you will spend about the same amount of time traveling. But the heavier your load and the worse the traveling conditions, the more slowly you will walk and the more frequently you will stop to rest.

Parties with mechanical transport will move at its best speed, depending on the terrain. Remember that driving or piloting for over 8 hours a day, or about 4 hours at a single shift, can be dangerously tiring or boring and may require a roll against the appropriate Vehicle skill to avoid a mishap.

# MENTAL FEATS

## ***Sense Rolls***

Sense rolls include Vision rolls, Hearing rolls, and Taste/Smell rolls. All Sense rolls are made against the character's IQ. The Alertness advantage is a bonus to *all* Sense rolls.

### ***Vision***

To see something small or hidden, make a Vision roll with a bonus equal to your level of Acute Vision (if any). The GM may make this roll easier or harder for things that are more or less well-hidden. Partial darkness can give from -1 to -9. A nearsighted person has -6 to Vision rolls for items farther away than 3 feet; a farsighted person has -6 on Vision rolls for things within 3 feet. Blind characters, or those in total darkness, can see nothing!

### ***Hearing***

To hear a faint sound, roll against IQ with a bonus equal to your level of Acute Hearing, if any; Hard of Hearing gives -4. The GM may make this roll easier or harder, depending on the loudness of the sound, surrounding noises, and so on. Once a sound is heard, a regular IQ roll may be required to *understand* its significance.

### ***Smelling and Tasting***

These are two manifestations of the same sense. To notice an odor or a taste, roll vs. IQ with a bonus equal to your level of Acute Smell/Taste, if any. In some cases, the GM may require a separate IQ roll to *understand* the significance of a smell or taste that everyone notices.

## ***Will Rolls***

When someone is faced with a frightening situation, or needs to overcome a mental disadvantage, the GM should require a *Will roll*. Normally, Will is equal to IQ, so this is just an IQ roll. However, if the character has the Strong Will advantage or the Weak Will disadvantage, this is added to or subtracted from IQ.

On a successful Will roll, the character overcomes his fear, bad impulse, or whatever. On a failed roll, he is frightened or gives in to the lower impulse, whatever that is. Any Will roll of 14 or over is an automatic failure (this does *not* apply to Will rolls made to resist influence skills and mind control).

Furthermore, if someone has an IQ of more than 14, treat his IQ as only 14 *before* subtracting Weak Will. If you have an IQ of 14 or higher and 3 levels of Weak Will, your Will is only 11.

## ***Fright Checks***

Fright Checks are a special case of Will Rolls. A character faced with something so blatantly unnatural or ghastly that it may threaten his sanity, or forced into close contact with the subject of a Phobia (p. 00), must make a Will Roll. A medieval person, taken for a ride in a modern sports car, would probably have to make a Fright Check. An ordinary civilian might well have to make one on first seeing a dead body, but a battle-hardened soldier wouldn't (unless the cause of death was really bizarre and unpleasant). The GM may assign bonuses (for brief or distant contact, say, or prior warnings or heat of battle excitement) or penalties (for sudden or prolonged contact with something really bad).

If the player fails the roll, roll another 3d and add the amount by which the first roll was failed by, then consult the following table:

- 4-5 Ĩ Mentally Stunned (p. 00) for one turn, then automatic recovery.
- 6-9 Ĩ Mentally Stunned for at least one turn, then roll as normal to recover.
- 10-11 Ĩ Mentally Stunned for at least 2d turns, then roll as normal to recover.
- 12 Ĩ Lose your lunch. Treat as being Physically Stunned for 15 turns, then roll as normal for recovery.
- 13 Ĩ Acquire a new *Quirk* (p. 00), even if this takes you over 5.
- 14-15 Ĩ Mentally stunned for at least 1d turns, *and* lose 1d fatigue.
- 16 Ĩ Mentally stunned for at least 1d turns, *and* gain a new Quirk.
- 17-18 Ĩ Faint for 1d minutes, then roll vs. HT every minute to recover.



19-20 Ĩ Faint for 3d minutes, then roll vs. HT every minute to recover.

21 Ĩ Panic; run around screaming, sit down and weep, or something equally useless for 1d minutes, then roll vs. IQ every minute to snap out of it.

22+ Ĩ The character acquires a new Disadvantage at the GMĴs option (a relevant Phobia, Delusion, or similar, or even a physical effect such as white hair), and probably also spends some turns, minutes, or hours stunned, in shock, or even catatonic.

## COMBAT

As violent and dangerous as it may be, combat is a staple of adventure stories, and PCs are very likely to end up fighting at some point. Here is a simple system for resolving such conflicts:

### *Combat Turn Sequence*

Characters act one at a time, until they have all taken a *turn*; then they start over. The *sequence* in which they act is set as follows:

Before combat begins, compare the Move scores of all characters. The highest Move goes first, the second-highest Move score goes next, and so on. In case of ties, the highest *Basic Speed* goes first; here is where a 5.5 is better than a 5.25, for instance. If anyone is *still* tied, roll dice to see who goes first.

Your turn *starts* when you choose a maneuver, and *ends* when you choose your next maneuver Ĩ that is, after *all* other characters have acted once. Each turn represents *one* second of real time. You can *Wait* with an action in hand Ĩ allowing, say, an opponent to run up to you so you can skewer him Ĩ but if you donĴt act before your turn comes round again, youĴve lost that chance.

### *Maneuvers*

Start each turn by choosing any one of the following maneuvers. The maneuver you choose will also affect your defenses (see p. 00) if you are attacked before your next turn. You do not select a defense until you are actually attacked Ĩ but the maneuver you choose will govern the defenses you can use.

### *Move*

Move, and do *nothing* else (except for a ĩfreeĴ action ĩ see below). You may use any legal active defense.

Movement and special actions are wholly abstract; no gameboard is required. (The full **GURPS** system includes Advanced Combat rules which allow for use of a map divided into hexagons, each 1 yard across.) If a detail about movement is important (ĩHow long will it take me to run across the room and grab the jewel?Ĵ), the GM decides. The number of yards you can run per second is equal to your Move score.

### *Change Position*

Go from standing to prone, kneeling to standing, or any other position change. (It takes two turns to go from prone to standing: first you kneel, then you stand.) *Exception*: You can go from kneeling to standing, or vice versa, and attack on the same turn.

You can use any defense on the turn you change position. The following table summarizes the effects of various positions on combat:

((BEGIN BOX))

### *Table of Positions*

<i>Position</i>	<i>Attack</i>	<i>Defense</i>
Standing	Normal	Normal
Crouching	-2 with Ranged weapons	Normal vs. others
	-2 to hit you	
Kneeling	-2 with Ranged weapons	-2 to any active defense

-2 to hit you  
 Crawling Cannot attack with Ranged weapons -3 to any active defense  
 -4 to hit you  
 Sitting -2 As for kneeling  
 Lying down (2 hexes) -4, except with crossbow or gun As for crawling  
 (((END BOX)))

## **Ready**

Ready any weapon or other item. Any weapon is *unreadied* if it is in its scabbard or holster. An axe, mace or other heavy weapon becomes *unreadied* when you swing it; it must be readied again before each use! Some weapons must be *readied* for more than one second after each use.

You can parry with a weapon, or block with a shield, as soon as you have readied it *!* that is, on the same turn! You can also use any other legal active defense on the turn when you ready an item. *Exception:* If you are *readying* a missile weapon by reloading it, your only defense is to dodge *!* and if you dodge, you lose the benefit of that turn of reloading.

Note that, even if you are ambidextrous, you cannot ready one weapon on the same turn you attack with another.

## **Reload**

Use the *Ready* maneuver to reload a missile weapon. This takes several turns. With a sling, for instance, you need a second to *ready* the rock, and a second to put the rock in the sling. If you don't aim, you can fire on the third second. Crossbows take much longer. First you must *cock* the bow *!* this takes 2 seconds for a bow of your ST, or more for a heavier bow. Then you must ready the arrow (1 turn) and load the bow (1 turn).

Some sample reload times:

*Sling:* 2 seconds to reload *!* can be fired every 3 seconds.

*Bow:* 2 seconds to reload *!* can be fired every 3 seconds.

*Crossbow* (your ST or less): 4 seconds to cock and reload *!* can be fired every 5 seconds. If ST is up to 2 greater than yours: 8 seconds to cock and reload *!* can be fired every 9 seconds. More powerful crossbows than *that* require very lengthy work with special mechanical devices.

*Guns:* Changing replaceable magazines for a gun takes 3 seconds. Revolvers and *break open* weapons such as some shotguns (and Hellboy's handguns) require take *at least* 3 seconds of preparation, plus one additional second for each round loaded.

*Listed Rates of Fire:* Where a weapons Rate of Fire (RoF) listed on the table is a fraction, this reflects the above reload time; for example, a bow has RoF 1/3, as it can be fired once every 3 rounds. Firearm RoF entries assume that a full magazine is already loaded.

Note that *Aiming* a weapon (see below) reduces the effective rate of fire, as it takes one or more rounds.

## **Aim**

Aim a ready *ranged* weapon at a specific target. You must name your target. Your attack is at -4 if you use a ranged weapon without aiming *unless* your effective skill is at least equal to the weapon's *Snap Shot* number (listed on the *Weapon Tables*, pp. 00-00). If you aim for 1 turn, your attack is at your normal skill level plus the weapon's *Accuracy* modifier (also on the *Weapon Tables*). You may aim for up to 3 more turns, getting a further +1 bonus for each additional turn you aim.

You can use any defense while aiming . . . but it spoils your aim and you lose all the accumulated benefits. If you are injured while aiming, you must make your Will roll or lose your aim.

## **Attack**

Attack any foe with your ready weapon. The GM always has the option of ruling (for any reason having to do with the situation) that some combatants may not attack certain foes. If the battle is in close quarters, bows and similar missile weapons should only be allowed one shot each. Then the fight will go to hand weapons.

You may parry (with a ready weapon), block (with a ready shield) or dodge on the same turn you attack.

### ***All-Out Attack***

Attack any foe with hands, feet, or a ready hand weapon. You have three choices:

(a) Make two attacks against the same foe, if you have two ready weapons, or one weapon that does not have to be readied after use;

(b) Make a single attack, at a +4 bonus to your skill!

(c) Make one attack, at normal skill, doing +2 damage if you hit.

However, if you choose any form of all-out attack, you may make *no active defenses at all* until your next turn!

### ***All-Out Defense***

Defend yourself; do nothing else this turn. If you fail your defense roll against any attack, you may try *another* (different) defense. In other words, you get two defense rolls, using two *different* active defenses against the same attack. You are limited to *two* blocks and *two* parries per turn when you choose All-Out Defense, and you can't parry twice with a weapon that becomes unready after a parry.

### ***Long Action***

This is a generic choice that allows for one second's worth of *any* multi-second action (picking a lock, for instance, or defusing a bomb). The GM decides how many turns each long action will take. As a rule, no defense except dodging is possible during a long action, but the GM can vary this as he sees fit. Any sort of defense may also interfere with whatever you are trying to do.

### ***Free Actions***

Things you can do during any maneuver, including talking, dropping a weapon or other object, and crouching down behind cover (not kneeling).

## **MAKING AN ATTACK**

If you choose the *Attack* or *All-Out Attack* maneuvers, you may try to hit a foe. You may attack any foe, unless the GM rules that attack is impossible for some reason.

You cannot attack unless your weapon is *ready*. A sword or knife is ready every turn. An unbalanced weapon, such as an axe, becomes unready when you swing it, so it can only be used every other turn.

Each attack is resolved by three die rolls. First is your *attack roll*. If this roll is successful, your attack was a good one. Now your *foe* must make a *defense roll* to see if he can defend against your blow. If he makes this roll, he is not hit. If he misses his defense roll, your blow struck home and you *roll for damage*.

### ***Rolling to Attack***

Your attack roll is a regular success roll. Figure your *effective* skill (your *basic skill* plus or minus any appropriate *modifiers*) with the weapon you are using.

Applicable modifiers include:

*Bad light*: -1 to -9 (GM's decision); -10 for total darkness.

*One eye*: -1 for hand-weapon attacks, -3 for ranged attacks.

*Blind*: -6; blinded *suddenly*: -10.

*Bad footing*: -2 or more (GM's option).

*Attacker is in a strange position* (e.g., hanging upside down): -2 or more (GM's decision).

*Attacker is Crawling or Lying Down:* -4.

*Attacker is Crouching, Sitting, or Kneeling:* -2.

*Off-hand attack:* -4 (no penalty if Ambidextrous).

*Shield:* -2 to attacks if using a large shield (it gets in your way).

*ST under minimum ST for that weapon:* -1 for each point of difference.

*Wounds:* Penalty equal to hit points you lost on the preceding turn. High Pain Threshold advantage eliminates this penalty.

Now roll 3 dice. If your roll is *less than or equal to* your effective skill, you have rolled well enough to hit the foe, and he must roll to defend. Otherwise, you missed!

*Critical Hits:* No matter what your skill, a roll of 3 or 4 always hits, and is a *critical hit*. A roll of 5 or 6 *may* be a critical hit, depending on your skill. If your effective skill is 15, then a roll of 5 or less is a critical hit. If your effective skill is 16 or more, then a roll of 6 or less is a critical hit.

On a critical hit, the blow automatically hits home *if* your foe does *not* get a defense roll. As well, on an attack roll of 3, you do not roll for damage *if* your blow automatically does the *most* damage it could do. For instance, maximum damage for a 1d+2 blow would be 6+2, or 8 hits. Other critical hits bypass the defense roll, but roll normally for damage.

*Automatic Misses:* Regardless of skill, a roll of 17 or 18 always misses.

## DEFENSE

If you make your attack roll, you have not (yet) actually struck your foe, unless you rolled a critical hit. You have thrown a blow that is *good enough* to hit him *if* *unless* he defends.

Your foe's defense is equal to the sum of his *passive* defenses (armor and shield) and his *active* defense (Dodge, Block, or Parry). Passive defenses always protect, but active defenses must be specifically chosen from those that are *legal* at the moment. This depends on the maneuver he chose on his last turn *if* see p. 00.

The defender rolls 3 dice. If his roll is *less than or equal to* his total defense, he blocked the blow (or dodged or parried it). Otherwise, his defense was ineffective and your blow struck home. If your blow hits your foe, you can roll for damage.

A defense roll of 3 or 4 is *always* successful *if* even if your total defense is only 1 or 2! A roll of 17 or 18 always fails.

Your foe does not get to attempt a defense roll if you rolled a critical hit against him.

### *Active Defense*

There are three *active defenses* that can protect you against an attack. Each of these defenses is calculated in advance. When you are attacked, you may choose *one* active defense as part of your total defense roll. (If you took *All-Out Defense*, you may make *two* separate defense rolls, using different defenses.)

Your active defense will depend on your situation *if* *especially* the maneuver you chose last turn. Some maneuvers limit the active defenses you can make. A stunned character's active defense is at -4.

Sometimes you will have *no* active defense. A stab in the back from a *friend's* sniper's shot, or a totally unexpected booby trap would be attacks against which no active defense is possible.

The Combat Reflexes advantage gives a +1 to each of your active defenses. If you're standing up with open space behind you, you can declare *once per turn* that you are retreating backwards as you defend against melee attacks (not against missiles!), and add +3 to your defense. You can also retreat while lying down (by rolling). This can save your life, but note that it means that you're giving ground (which may be bad in itself), it's less useful against multiple foes *if* and anyway, you're bound to run out of space eventually.

### *Dodging*

Your Dodge defense is the same as your Move score (*not* modified for Running skill, however). An *animal's* Dodge score is half its Move or half its DX, whichever is better *if* up to a maximum of 10. Boxers are specially

trained to Dodge punches; add 1/8 of any Boxing skill (rounded down) to your Dodge against bare-handed or thrusting attacks (but not against swung attacks or missiles).

You may dodge *any* attack, except one that you didn't know about! There is no limit to the number of times you may dodge in one turn.

### ***Blocking***

You must have a ready shield, which you use to block the attack. Your Block defense is half your Shield skill, rounded down. In general, you can block any hand weapon, whether it is thrust, swung, or thrown. You may also block arrows and similar low-tech missiles. You *cannot* block bullets or beam weapons . . . these come too fast to be stopped with a shield. (However, the shield's *passive* defense helps against all missile weapons.)

You may only block one attack per turn, unless you chose the *All-Out Defense* maneuver. This lets you block two attacks per turn.

### ***Parrying***

Hand weapons (blades, clubs, axes, spears, polearms) can be used for defense as well as offense. When you parry with a weapon, *half* your skill with that weapon (round down) counts as active defense. Thus, if you have a Sword skill of 20, you would have a Parry defense of 10 when you use a sword. See p. 00 for rules on parrying with bare hands.

You cannot parry unless your weapon is *ready*. Parrying with an unbalanced weapon will make it *unready*. For instance, you can't parry with an axe on the same turn you attacked with it; you have to re-ready it first.

A weapon parry won't stop anything except hand-weapon attacks. A further exception: A weapon has a 1/3 chance of breaking if it parries anything of three or more times its own weight! (If it breaks, that parry counts.)

You may only parry one attack per turn, unless you have two weapons or two empty hands and Judo skill (in which case you may parry once with each weapon or hand) or you chose the *All-Out Defense* maneuver (in which case you may parry twice or twice with each weapon or hand, if you have more than one).

If you successfully parry a bare-handed attack with a weapon, you may injure your attacker. Immediately roll against your own weapon skill (at -4 if your attacker used Karate). If you hit, your parry struck the attacker's limb squarely; roll normal damage.

Some special parrying rules:

*Thrown weapons* may be parried, but at -1. Thrown knives and similar small, hurled weapons are parried at -2.

*Knives* and equally small weapons are at -1 to parry *with*.

*Flails* are at -4 to parry *against*.

*Quarterstaves* parry at 2/3 skill rather than 1/2.

*Parrying Empty-Handed* is done with DX/2, or 2/3 Unarmed Combat skills. See p. 00 for details.

*Fencing weapons* use a unique fighting form that emphasizes defense. If you have the Fencing skill and appropriate gear (a smallsword, rapier, or saber; no larger than a small shield and no greater than light encumbrance), your Parry is 2/3 your Fencing skill (round down). Furthermore, you may parry *twice* per turn, rather than just once. (An All-Out Defense will let you parry *any number* of times!)

### ***Passive Defense***

When you are attacked, you *may* also have a *passive* defense factor operating in your favor, thanks to armor or shield. Passive defense *always* protects you, even if you are unconscious or unaware of the attack. If you have any passive defense at all, a defense roll of 3 or 4 will succeed for you!

*Armor*: The passive defense from your armor depends on its type, see p. 00.

*Shield*: The passive defense of your shield depends on its size; see p. 00. It does not protect against attacks from behind.

## **WEAPON DAMAGE**

## ***Rolling for Damage***

If an enemy fails his defense roll, you have hit him and may make a damage roll. This roll tells how much damage you did to your target. The number of dice you roll for damage is determined by your weapon (and, for low-tech weapons, by your own strength).

If the enemy is wearing armor or has innate Damage Resistance, the total DR from all sources is subtracted from the damage you roll. If you are lucky, you will roll enough damage to exceed your foe's protection and injure him!

## ***Injury***

If the total damage you roll *exceeds* the Damage Resistance of your foe, the excess hits are taken as damage.

*Example:* Your basic damage when swinging your sword is 2d. You roll 2 dice and get an 8. The target has 3 points of DR, so 5 points of damage get through. Add the 50% damage bonus for a cutting weapon (2 points, because you always round down). The total is 7. So the target takes 7 hits of damage.

## ***Effects of Injury***

All injuries are assumed to be to the torso; specific hit locations are beyond the scope of *GURPS Lite*.

Subtract the hits you take from your hit points score. See p. 00 for more details.

*Shock:* If you take a wound, your attack roll will be reduced, on your next turn only, by the number of hit points you took. Wounds taken during the same turn are cumulative for this purpose. See p. 00.

*Knockdown and Stunning:* If you take a single wound that does damage of *more than half* of your *basic* hit points, you must roll against your HT. If you fail the roll, you are *knocked down!*

Whether or not you fall down, you are *stunned*. All active-defense rolls are at -4 until your next turn. At that time, you must roll against your HT. A successful roll means you recover, and can act normally that turn and thereafter. A failed roll means you are still stunned, and continue to stand there (or lie there) without making any maneuvers and continue to take -4 on each active-defense roll!

*Severe Wounds:* If you are reduced to 3 hit points or less, your Move and Dodge scores are both cut in half (round down). Your wounds are slowing you!

*Unconsciousness:* If you take enough wounds to reduce your hit points to *zero or less*, you are hanging on to consciousness by sheer willpower. At the beginning of each turn that your hit points are zero or less, make a roll against HT, modified by Strong or Weak Will (if you have either). A successful roll means you can take your turn normally; a failed roll means you fall unconscious! Roll each turn, until you fail a roll and fall unconscious.

*Death:* If your hit points go fully negative (for example, -10 if your starting hit points are 10), you risk death! see p. 00.

# **RANGED WEAPON NOTES**

The basic rules for ranged combat are much like those for melee; make your attack roll, let your foe make his defense roll, and then roll for damage. In *GURPS Lite*, assume all attacks are at a fairly close range unless the GM rules otherwise. A Snap Shot (one made without aiming) is at a -4; see *Aim*, p. 00.

## ***Thrown Weapons***

Do *not* roll against your melee weapon skill when you throw a weapon; roll against the appropriate Thrown Weapons or Throwing skill instead. All Thrown Weapon skills are *easy*, defaulting to DX-4. The *generic* skill called Throwing is *hard*, and is used when throwing irregular or unbalanced objects (bricks, rubble, grenades, monsters at larger monsters, etc).

Your target can dodge, block, or parry a thrown weapon.

If you hit, you do normal damage. Whether you hit or miss, your weapon falls on the floor. In a big fight, the GM probably shouldn't let you recover the weapon at all; in a small battle, he might roll one die to see how many turns it takes you to get your weapon back.

## ***Missile Weapons***

The target of a missile weapon may dodge, but may not parry. Arrows and quarrels may be blocked with a shield; higher-tech missiles cannot be blocked.

Bows and slings do not fire every turn. A bow, for instance, normally takes 2 seconds to reready, so it can only fire no more than every third second. See *Ready*, p. 00.

## ***Modifiers for Ranged Attacks***

The GM may wish to apply the following situational modifiers to ranged attacks. If the target is:

Prone or crawling: -4 (-7 if behind cover).

Crouching, sitting, or kneeling: -2 (-4 if behind cover).

Behind someone else: -4.

Only partially exposed: -3.

*Recoil:* If a gun is fired more repeatedly without pausing for a turn between shots, its Recoil Number (see the table) is applied as a penalty to the second and all subsequent attacks. This penalty is doubled if the user's ST is less than the weapon's Minimum ST.

## ***Multiple Shots***

Firearms with a Rate of Fire (RoF) number greater than one can fire several shots in a round. If the number on the table is marked with a ~ they are not actually automatic, but the user can pull the trigger repeatedly in one round; make a separate attack roll for each shot. Otherwise, the gun is capable of selective fire either single shots or multiple rounds in one burst. In this case, divide the burst into groups of four, and roll for each burst as one separate attack. (Any spare shots less than four make up a final burst.) The gun's Recoil Number is applied as a penalty to the first burst, and *accumulates* for all subsequent bursts in that and all subsequent turns so a gun with Recoil -3 is at -3 to the first burst, -6 to the second, -9 to the third, and so on. If the attack roll is missed by 1, one round hits; if it is made by 0 or 1, two hit; if it is made by 2, 3, or 4, three hit; and if it is made by 5 or more, all four bullets hit. (For a burst of less than four bullets, of course, only as many can hit as were fired.)

## ***Shotguns***

The wide spread of small pellets from a shotgun gives +1 to hit, but less penetration; roll each die of damage and apply it to the target's DR separately.

# CLOSE AND BARE-HANDED COMBAT

Anyone can engage in combat without weapons, but certain skills will make you more effective. Whereas most melee weapons are used at a distance of a yard or so, most bare-handed combat (along with knife and blackjack fighting) takes place at Close range, with characters almost or actually touching.

*Use of Weapons:* Only the shortest weapons (knives, blackjacks, pistols) can be used in Close Combat, and even they are at -2. The hilts or pommels of larger one-handed weapons may be used to give +1 or +2 to punching damage, at the GM's option.

## ***Moving to Close Range***

If the GM rules that you are adjacent to an opponent (e.g. if you are within melee weapon reach), you may move into Close Combat and make an Attack. If you are further away but within your Move distance, you can either just move to Close Range preparatory to attacking next turn (and hope that he doesn't step away), or try a *Slam* or *Flying Tackle*.

*Slam:* This is just running into a foe and trying to knock him down. Roll a Quick Contest of DX; he's at -2 if you hit him from the side, or he's already kneeling. On a win or tie, you hit him; otherwise, he dodged and you sail on past. If you do hit, roll a Quick Contest of ST; you get +2 if you got a good run-up, -2 if he was running at you, +2 if you have a medium or large shield, -2 if he has one of those, and +2 if you hit him from behind. The

loser falls down; so does the winner, if he missed his ST roll. If either combatant rolled 17 or 18, he's *stunned* (p. 00). If you won by more than 5 points, you can run right over him and keep on going.

*Flying Tackle:* This is a special type of slam. The attacker gets +1 move distance, and the target may attempt a Dodge unless being tackled from behind. If he fails, he's at -2 on the contest of ST. The attacker gets +2 on that contest, but automatically falls down, whatever happens. If he wins by more than 4, he automatically *Grapples* the target (see below).

*Warning:* Running up to (or past) a foe who's waiting with an unused action in hand is very dangerous. He can attack you as you arrive, even in the middle of your movement. If he has space, he can also step backwards, out of Close Range, unless you can move fast enough to follow him and even then, you can't try any attacks except a *Slam* or *Flying Tackle*.

### **Close Combat Options**

*All-Out Attack, All-Out Defense, Feint, Aim, Concentrate* and *Waiting* aren't possible in Close Combat. Things are just too confused and intense.

The only active defenses that work in Close Combat are Dodge, or a bare-handed Parry based on an Unarmed Combat skill. If you are not grappled (see below) and the GM rules that you have space, you can *Retreat* out of Close Range and add +3 to your Active Defense.

### **Punching**

A punch is a Close Range attack. Your skill for it is the best of DX, Boxing, Brawling, or Karate. Damage is Thrust-2 crushing, determined from the table on p. 00. *Example:* With ST 12, your Thrust damage is 1d-1, so your punch does 1d-3.

Brass knuckles or plate-mail gauntlets add +2 to your punching damage. A rock or roll of coins in your fist will add +1 to the damage you do with a punch. Unarmed Combat skills also give bonus damage (see the skill descriptions for details).

### **Kicking**

A kick has a reach of 1 yard (like most weapons). It is treated much like a punch, but you roll against the best of DX-2, Brawling-2, or Karate, and you do straight thrust/crushing damage (thrust+1 if you are wearing heavy boots or similar). If you kick and *miss*, you must make a DX or skill roll to avoid falling down! If you have Karate skill, you can kick at Close Range, but for -1 damage.

### **Parrying Bare-Handed**

If you are fighting bare-handed, you may parry a *kick* or *punch* with your hands, using half your basic DX as your Parry. Unarmed Combat skills give you better bare-handed parries, at 2/3 of the skill (rounded down), and let you parry twice per turn (once with each hand).

If you parry a *weapon* bare-handed, your defense is at -3 unless you parry a *thrust* or are using Judo or Karate. Also, Boxing parries are at -2 against kicks. A failed parry means the attack hits; the attacker may choose to hit where he was aiming, or to hit your arm! If your arm takes damage of more than half your starting hit points, it is automatically *crippled* (see p. 00).

### **Grappling, Pinning, and Trampling**

The following Close Range actions all count as attacks:

*Grapple:* If you have at least one hand free, you can attempt to grab an opponent at Close Range. To do so, you must win a Quick Contest of DX (or Judo); you are at +3, or +6 if he is kneeling or lying down (but then, you have to kneel or lie down yourself, as part of the attack). Grappling does no damage, but holds an opponent in place until he breaks free or you let go. (However, an opponent with twice the grappler's ST can act freely despite being grappled; a human can grab an elephant, but it doesn't do much good.)



**Grab Weapon:** Grabbing an opponent's weapon requires a Quick Contest of DX. On subsequent turns, you can try to wrestle it free with a Quick Contest of ST; the loser releases all hold on the weapon.

**Grab Weapon Arm:** As above, but safer for weapons you can't grab, such as daggers. If you win the subsequent contest of ST, you can force your foe to *drop* the weapon.

**Takedown:** To put a grappled opponent on the ground, roll a Quick Contest of ST, DX, or Judo skill vs. the victim's ST. The loser ends up lying down.

**Pin:** If an opponent is on the ground, you may roll a Quick Contest of ST to pin him down. The *heavier* fighter gets +1 for every 10 lbs. of advantage. If you win, your victim is pinned, and you have one hand free to take other actions.

**Choke:** If you have grappled an opponent by the neck with both hands, you may attempt a Quick Contest of your ST vs. his HT. If you win, you do as many points of damage as you won the contest by. Prolonged choking will usually cause someone to lose consciousness, even if he doesn't take much damage.

**Break Free:** To break a grapple, roll a Quick Contest of ST. Your foe is at +5 if he's using both hands, or if he has you pinned but is only using one hand, or +10 if he has you pinned and is using both hands (in which case, you can only try to break free once every 10 seconds).

**Trampling** is mostly used by animals and monsters. If an opponent is on the ground (perhaps after being slammed), a *larger* standing attacker may trample them. (Humans can only trample small creatures.) Roll a Quick Contest of DX; if the attacker wins, he does ST-based Thrust-2 damage to the victim. Damage is halved if the attacker just runs over the victim and keeps going, and may be modified up or down if the surface is especially hard or soft (GM's option).

## **Judo Throws**

If you successfully parry using Judo skill, you may try to throw that foe on your next turn (as an attack) if he is adjacent to you (even if he's not at Close Range). You may also attempt a throw while Grappling an opponent. Roll vs. Judo (at -5 if you are lying down); if you succeed, your opponent can use an active defense (p. 00), but his armor PD doesn't count. If he fails, he is on the ground, and must roll vs. HT or be stunned (see p. 00).

If you roll a 17 or 18 on an attempt to throw, *you* are the one who falls. With an All-Out Attack (p. 00), you cannot attempt two throws, but you can attempt one at +4. If you throw someone into someone else, *they* must roll vs. ST+3 or DX+3 or also fall.

## **Escape or Evade**

If you start your turn at Close Range but your foe isn't Grappling you, you can simply step away — an *Escape*. (You can even do this after making a Close Range attack.) However, if you're trying to get *past* him for some reason — say, to reach another foe who's performing an evil ritual you want to stop — you must *Evade* him. If he doesn't try to stop you, this is automatic. Otherwise, roll a Quick Contest of DX, with *your* DX modified as follows:

-5 if the foe is standing up.

-2 if the foe is kneeling.

+2 if you moved to Close Range that turn from his side, or +5 if you did so from behind him (GM rules).

+5 if the foe is lying down.

If you win, you got past him. If you lose or tie, he got in your way and stopped you.

# IMPROVISED WEAPONS

Hellboy himself often makes use of anything he can get hold of as a weapon in combat. His superhuman strength helps with this, but any character can grab a loose object and swing it.

When this happens, the GM has to improvise, or treat a thing as the nearest comparable item on the Weapons Tables. For example, a good-sized length of wood simply counts as a baton or club, while a heavy metal candlestick might count as a mace. A tent pole or long metal rod might be treated as a spear, but unless it had

been deliberately sharpened, or at least had the end broken off to give a jagged effect, it should do crushing rather than impaling damage.

Most improvised weapons are less effective than equivalent real weapons; that's why people pay for specially made weaponry. To represent this, the GM is free to impose a penalty of -1 or more on attack rolls, and either reduce the damage done or change it from impaling to cutting or cutting to crushing. Even a hatchet made purely as a tool takes -1 to hit in melee. Furthermore, improvised weapons are very likely to break after one or two solid blows.

## Injury, Illness, and Fatigue

The life of an adventurer is not all song and glory. You get tired. You get dirty. You may actually get *hurt*, or even worse, *dead*.

Wounds and other injuries cause bodily damage, or hits. Your starting hit points (usually the same as your HT for normal humans) tell how many hits you can take. A character who goes down to 0 hit points will soon fall unconscious. It is possible to survive with a negative hit point total.

### **General Damage (Lost Hit Points)**

Someone who is wounded repeatedly will eventually weaken and collapse, even if no single injury is very great. Record hits on your character sheet. The effects of lost hit points are:

3, 2, 1 points left: Your Move and Dodge are cut in half; you are reeling from your wounds.

0 or less points left: You are in immediate danger of collapse. At the beginning of each turn, roll against your HT, plus or minus Strong/Weak Will. A success means you may take your turn normally. A failed roll means you fall unconscious.

-starting hit points: You must make your HT roll or die. Another roll is required after each further loss of 5 hit points.

-5 starting hit points: Automatic death. You have lost a total of 6 times your original hit points; no one can survive that much injury.

### **Shock**

When you are injured, your IQ and DX are reduced by that amount, *on your next turn only*. Example: If you take 3 hits of injury, your IQ, DX, and skills will be at -3 on your next turn. Active defenses are *not* skills for this purpose.

This subtraction will most often affect weapon attacks but *any* use of IQ, DX, or skills is affected. Therefore, on the turn after you are badly hurt, it may be a good idea to try flight, All-Out Defense, or the like, rather than counterattacking instantly.

This is only a temporary effect due to shock. On your following turn, your skills are back to normal.

### **Knockdown**

Anyone who takes damage *greater than* half his hit points in one blow must immediately roll against his HT. If he fails the roll, he *falls* and is *stunned* (see below). If he makes his HT roll, he keeps his footing, but he is still stunned.

### **Stunning**

Someone will be *stunned* if he takes damage *greater than* half his hit points in one blow.

If you are stunned, all your active defenses are at -4 until your next turn. At that time, roll against HT to see whether you recover. A successful roll means you can act normally *on that turn*. A failed roll means you are still stunned and stand there mindlessly . . . The *stunned* state continues until you can make your HT roll and snap out of it. You may act again on the turn you roll successfully and shake off the daze.

*Mental Stun:* Someone who is surprised or shocked may also be *mentally* stunned. The effects of this sort of stunning are just the same, but you must make your IQ roll, rather than your HT roll, to snap out of it. You're not hurt – you're confused.

### ***Crippling Injuries***

Sometimes, the GM may rule that a particular limb has been injured (by a trap, failed bare-handed parry, or similar mishap). In this case, enough damage to an arm, leg, hand, or foot in one blow will cripple it. A hand or foot is crippled if it takes damage *greater than* 1/3 your starting hit points. An arm or leg is crippled if it takes damage *greater than* half your starting hit points.

For simplicity, any body part that has been rendered useless will be referred to as *crippled*. A crippled arm or hand cannot be used to attack or hold anything; for the effects of a crippled leg or foot, see the *Lame* disadvantage. Make a HT roll for each crippled limb. On a success, the limb will work again once the victim has regained *all* his lost hit points. On a failure, the limb will be crippled for 1d months. A critical failure indicates that the limb is *severed* or otherwise rendered permanently useless.

### ***First Aid***

Most of the hit point loss from an injury is due to shock rather than actual physical damage. Therefore, prompt treatment after a fight can restore some of the lost hit points.

Simple bandaging, *even done by a totally unskilled person*, will restore 1 lost hit point per fight – but no more, no matter how bad the injury. This takes 30 minutes per victim.

*First aid* (a successful First Aid or Physician skill or default roll) will restore a variable number of hit points, depending on the tech level of the skill (see the table right) and the degree of success. A minimum of 1 point is always restored. This is *not* cumulative with simple bandaging . . . sometimes, first aid is no more effective than plain bandaging.

((BEGIN BOX))

<i>Tech Level</i>	<i>Time per Victim</i>	<i>Hits Restored</i>
1	30 minutes	1d-4
2-3	30 minutes	1d-3
4	30 minutes	1d-2
5	20 minutes	1d-2
6-7	20 minutes	1d-1
8+	10 minutes	1d

((END BOX))

*Great Success or Failure:* On a critical success, the victim regains the maximum possible hit points for that tech level. On a critical failure, the victim *loses* 2 hits, and bandaging will not help.

### ***Natural Recovery***

*Natural recovery* will cure any number of hits. At the end of each day of rest and decent food, the victim may roll against his HT. A successful roll results in the recovery of 1 hit point. The GM may modify the roll downward if conditions are bad, or upward if conditions are very good.

If the victim is under the care of a competent Physician (skill level 12 or better) the victim gets a +1 on all healing rolls.

### ***Recovering From Unconsciousness***

This depends on the severity of your injuries. If your hit points are still positive, roll vs. HT every hour to awaken (or, if you have lost no more than 2 hit points, roll every 15 minutes).

If your hit points are negative, but not fully negative, you will become conscious in as many hours as your hit points are negative, or a maximum of 12 hours. *Example:* Your hit points are -8 after the battle. You will wake up (still with -8 hit points) in 8 hours. When you awaken, you can call for help or even try to drag yourself to shelter.

If your hit points have gone fully negative (e.g., hit points of -10 or worse for someone with a starting hit points of 10) you are in bad shape. If you can make a roll against HT, you will awaken (as above) after 12 hours, and can try to help yourself. If you fail the roll, you stay in a coma and die unless you are helped within (HT) hours.

## OTHER HAZARDS

Adventurers often face other dangers, including . . .

### **Flame**

Walking through fire does 1d-3 damage per second; actually *standing* in fire does 1d-1 damage per second. Armor protects you completely against ordinary heat or flame for a number of turns equal to 3 times its DR. After that, it still protects against flame, but the wearer must roll vs. HT every turn to resist the heat of the fire. A failed roll costs 1 point of fatigue (p. 00). *Example:* Heavy leather protects against all damage for 6 turns. After that, the wearer starts making HT rolls.

### **Explosions**

Explosions do concussion damage to *everything* nearby. World War II grenades would do from 2 to 5 dice damage, depending on type. A mere 10 lbs. of TNT would do 6d 20 damage. Apply full damage to anyone within 2 yards. More distant targets divide damage by 4 per 2 yards range (1/4 at 2 yards, 1/16 at 4 yards, and so on). Only innate DR or fully sealed armor protect against concussion.

Explosions may also produce fragments; the radius of fragment effect is 5 yards times the number of dice of concussion damage. The chance of someone's being hit depends on far too many factors (cover, position, type of explosion) to discuss here; the GM should just assign a chance he thinks reasonable, and roll the dice! Anyone who is hit takes cutting damage, from 1d-4 for thrown dirt to 2d for grenade shrapnel.

### **Falling**

When you fall, roll for damage as follows:

1 or 2 yards: (1d-4) damage per yard

3 or 4 yards: (1d-3) per yard

5 or more yards: (1d-2) per yard

Terminal velocity (the maximum speed a falling object can achieve) is normally reached after 3 or 4 seconds of falling. Therefore, treat any fall of more than 50 yards as only 50 yards.

If you land on something soft, subtract 1 point per yard fallen. A successful Acrobatics roll will reduce the effective distance of your fall by 5 yards.

For simplicity, assume that armor protects against falling damage at half its usual DR.

### **Falling Objects**

If you are hit by a *hard* falling object, calculate the damage done as follows: round its weight off to the nearest 10 pounds, and the distance it fell to the nearest 10 yards. Multiply the number of 10-pound and 10-yard increments . . . and take that many dice of damage. For simplicity, when dealing with falling objects, treat any fall of more than 200 yards as 200 yards.

*Example:* A 20-lb. rock, falling 30 yards, does (23)=6 dice of damage.

A very *light* object, or one that falls a short distance, does less damage. Any weight or distance of 2 or less should be treated as 10 but halve the final damage. *Soft* objects (living things, for instance) do half damage for their weight.

### **Poisons**

Poison is commonly met on weapons; on darts, needles, or spikes in traps; in food or drink offered by a treacherous foe; and in the bite of certain animals. Types include *contact* agents (which only have to touch the skin); *blood* agents (which must enter the body through a wound or injection); *digestive* agents (which must be swallowed); and *respiratory* agents (which must be inhaled).

The effects of an individual poison are up to the GM. Aside from damage, poisons may temporarily reduce ST, DX or IQ (and all related skills and abilities). Most poisons are slow; the time they take to work will be specified.

As a rule, anyone who is poisoned will get a modified HT roll to avoid the poison's effects. The more toxic the poison, the harder the HT roll. Some especially virulent poisons will have a reduced effect even on those who resist!

## ***Disease***

Anyone in a disease-ridden area, or encountering a disease carrier, is at risk. Most diseases allow a HT roll to resist, made in secret by the GM. Roll once per day; a failed roll means you catch the disease. The roll should be modified by circumstances; avoiding all possible contact with the disease is worth +4 or more, merely talking to victims gives +2, using infected blankets gives an unmodified roll, and close or prolonged physical contact with victims gives -2 or -3. Advanced medical techniques may give *near* complete protection.

Disease symptoms usually appear at least 24 hours after the disease is caught. Most diseases aren't contagious until after that. Typical symptoms include daily HT loss (which may also reduce hit points and thus doubly endanger the victim) for several days; loss of ST, DX, or IQ; fatigue; sneezing, coughing, spots, sores, or rash. Severe symptoms could include delirium, unconsciousness, blindness, and so on. Diagnosis skill can identify a *known* disease from its symptoms, or analyze a new disease and suggest some treatments.

*Recovery:* Typically, a disease sufferer must make a daily HT roll (possibly at a penalty). This roll, and the effects of failure, vary with each illness. For a generic disease, a failed roll might mean you lose 1 HT; a success would let you regain 1 HT. For some diseases, recovery will be aided by use of appropriate drugs. For most diseases, a physician's care (as for injuries) will aid attempts to recover.

When you have recovered all HT lost to an illness, you are cured. If your illness allows HT rolls to attempt to recover, a roll of 3 or 4 means the disease has vanished (lost HT must be recovered in the normal fashion).

## **FATIGUE**

Fatigue represents lost strength, just as injury represents lost health. Most humans have fatigue points equal to their ST; if their ST is 10, they can lose 10 fatigue points before falling unconscious from exhaustion. Some beings have variations in their fatigue levels, including reserves they can use only for specific purposes, such as magic. Keep separate track of any fatigue you lose or regain. Fatigue does not affect HT at all.

You can suffer fatigue from exertion, running long distances, heatstroke, and so on. You will also suffer fatigue at the end of each battle that lasts more than 10 seconds; the amount is equal to your encumbrance, plus 1. Fighting in armor is hard work!

While your fatigue is reduced due to fatigue, any test of skill, attempt to lift or throw an object, or other use of ST will be made at the same reduction. Likewise, your score in any ST-based skill will be reduced by the amount of your fatigue.

*The basic damage you do with weapons is unchanged. This is for playability, to avoid constant re-figuring of weapon effects!*

Likewise, your Move score is not affected by fatigue *until your fatigue points fall to 3 or less*. At that point, cut your Move in half, rounding down.

If your fatigue points fall to 0 or below, you fall unconscious and automatically rest until your total reaches 1 and you awaken. You cannot have negative fatigue or a negative ST.

### ***Sample Fatigue Costs***

*Marching:* Each hour of road travel gives fatigue equal to your encumbrance level +1. Add 1 more in hot climates.

*Running or Swimming:* After each 100 yards traveled, roll vs. HT. A failed roll costs 1 point of fatigue.

*Overexertion:* Carrying more than 20 ST, or pushing or pulling a very heavy load, costs 1 fatigue per second.

*Losing Sleep:* A night without sleep costs 5 fatigue. Losing a half-night of sleep costs 2 fatigue.

*Very Hot or Cold Weather:* If the ambient temperature is outside your natural comfort zone and you don't have appropriate protection, roll against HT (or an appropriate Survival skill) every 30 minutes, or lose 1 fatigue. When your total fatigue falls to 3, you start losing hit points instead. More extreme conditions may temporarily reduce your effective HT and hit points.

### ***Recovering from Fatigue***

Anyone suffering fatigue may regain the loss by resting quietly. Talking and thinking are allowed; walking, or anything more strenuous, is *not* rest! Each 10 minutes of rest will cure 1 point of fatigue. The GM may allow an extra point of fatigue to be regained if you eat a decent meal while resting.

Fatigue due to *lost sleep* is regained only by getting a *full* night of sleep! This restores *all* lost fatigue.

## GAME TIME

Game time is the time that passes in the game world. The GM is the judge of how much time has passed.

### ***Time During Adventures***

Combat is played out in *slow* time. One combat turn equals one second. It may take a minute or so for each combat turn, especially if players are inexperienced or the battle is a large one. But combat is usually a life-or-death situation, and you need to give players time to think.

Conversations, attempts to pick locks, attempts to escape from traps, and similar situations are played in *real* time. If the players spend 10 minutes discussing how to best approach an NPC merchant . . . their *characters* spent 10 minutes talking outside the shop.

Routine travel, and so on, is handled in *fast* time. When the party is walking along a trail, for instance, the GM can simply skip the time between encounters. Tell the players when they meet someone, when they come into a town, or when night falls. Just compress the rest of the time.

### ***Time Between Adventures***

In a continuing campaign, you also need to keep track of time between adventures. This can always be the same amount of time, or the GM and the players can simply agree on a *logical* time to pass between the end of one adventure and the beginning of the next. It is often a good idea to let a month or two go by, to allow time for healing, earning money at *ordinary* jobs, and so on.

Of course, no game time at all has to pass between *sessions*, if you can't finish an adventure in one session. If, when you quit play, the party has just confronted a rampaging *Tyrannosaurus*, that *Tyrannosaurus* will get no closer in the real-world week before you can play again!

## TECH LEVELS

A *tech level* (TL) is a general description of a culture's highest achievement in technology. It is possible for a locale, nation, or world to have widely varying TLs in different subjects. **GURPS** defines tech levels as running from 0 to 16, although PCs are unlikely to encounter the extreme ends of this scale in ***Hellboy RPG*** scenarios.

Standard tech levels are:

0: Stone Age.

1: Bronze Age.

2: Iron Age.

3: Medieval: Plate Armor.

- 4: c. 1450-1700: One-shot firearms and the printing press.
- 5: c. 1701-1900: The Age of Steam.
- 6: 1901-1950: prop planes and valve radios. The basic level of the world during World War 2 (although some inventions late in the war, such as jet propulsion, presaged TL 7).
- 7: 1951-2000: Jet aircraft, transistors, and nuclear power. The Tech Level prevailing in most *Hellboy* stories.
- 8: 2001-2050? The industrialized world is just entering this TL at the start of the 21st century, with advances in computers and biotechnology showing what may soon be possible.
- 9: Starfaring technology, or perhaps fully sentient computers and unlimited genetic tinkering.
- 10-14: Super-technology: force beams and gravity control.
- 15: Matter transmission and cosmic power.
- 16: Miraculous/godlike technology.

### ***Characters and Tech Levels***

Many skills are different at each tech level. These are indicated by a /TL on the Skill List. When you take such a skill, supplement the TL with the tech level at which you learn the skill. A medieval engineer, for instance, would learn Engineer/TL3, while his modern counterpart would learn Engineer/TL7; for game purposes, these are *separate skills*.

When characters are from differing tech levels, being from a higher TL than the campaign norm is an advantage; being from a lower TL is a disadvantage. To reflect this, use the advantage High Technology (p. 00) or the disadvantage Primitive (p. 00).

See Chapter 5, and especially p. 00, for more on Tech Levels in Hellboy's world.

[[[Hellboy, revised (2) first draft, by Phil Masters <phil@philm.demon.co.uk> and Jonathan Woodward <woodward@io.com>]]]

# 2. THE BUREAU FOR PARANORMAL RESEARCH AND DEFENSE

The BPRD is the premiere international organization dedicated to investigating and, where necessary, stopping paranormal phenomenon. Until very recently, it was also Hellboy's home.

## History of the Bureau

Over the past half-century and more, the Bureau has gone from its origins in a trio of investigators, to its world-class status today.

## BRITISH PARANORMAL SOCIETY

The BPRD's roots lie in an organization founded in 1877 by a group of Oxford researchers for the purpose of investigating psychic and paranormal phenomenon using scientific methods. In the 60 years between its founding and the outbreak of World War II, the Society never truly became respectable in the eyes of the so-called illegitimate scientific community. It did, however, bring together many brilliant men and women, and accumulated libraries of data and evidence regarding the supernatural. As of 1944, three of the leading members were Professor Trevor Brutenholm, Lady Cynthia Eden-Jones, and Dr. Malcolm Frost. (Their individual histories are given on pp. 00, 00, and 00, respectively.)

## THE HELLBOY INCIDENT

Late in 1944, Lady Eden-Jones sensed something dark building. The Society investigated, and determined that the Nazis were planning an occult ritual, intended to turn the tide of the war. Their attempts to convince the Allied Forces met with skepticism, until an American special agent came forward with corroborating evidence. Lady Eden-Jones and Professor Brutenholm determined that the ritual's center was in East Bromwich, England, a small and gloomy town north of Birmingham. They were half right.

Backed up by a platoon of U.S. Army Rangers, the trio of Professor Brutenholm, Lady Cynthia, and Dr. Frost set up camp in a ruined church outside of East Bromwich. Brutenholm had spent close to a decade investigating the site, and had learned very little of its history, save that whatever happened there was so awful, the locals refused to discuss it. The actual Nazi ritual, however, took place not at the church, but in an ancient stone circle on Tarmagant Island, off the Scottish coast. Agents of the BPRD didn't learn about this Project Ragna Rok (p. 00) until 1948, but the effects were immediately apparent. The miracle the Ragna Rok Team attempted to summon appeared not on Tarmagant Island, but at East Bromwich. A demon-child materialized in a gout of flame, and was promptly dubbed Hellboy.

## AFTERMATH

With that demonstration of Nazi occult power, Professor Brutenholm immediately began lobbying for the creation of the Bureau for Paranormal Research and Defense. With dozens of witnesses, and Hellboy himself as evidence, the Allied powers quickly agreed. Funded by the United States and the United Kingdom, the BPRD came into formal existence in 1945. Its staff was initially an eclectic mix of former members of the British Paranormal Society, military men from both the U.S. Army and the Royal Air Force, and a few American psychics. It initially set up shop at an Army Air Corps base in New Mexico (at the time, what came to be the U.S. Air Force was part of the Army). There, its headquarters was isolated, far from the war, and close to the geniuses creating the atomic bomb. The obvious choice for the initial Director of the Bureau was Professor Brutenholm, who served in that capacity until the late 1950s, when he gave up his administrative post to return to investigating.

The Bureau did not come into being until after the war was won, and thus its anti-Nazi efforts were limited to tracking down and neutralizing the few Nazi occultists to survive the war. As the Cold War began, the Bureau found itself in occasional conflict with similar organizations in the Soviet Union and China. However, most of its foes were non-political, in the form of dangerous supernatural beings like vampires and werewolves.

One of the Bureau's initial objects of study was, of course, Hellboy himself. They raised him, studied him, and in the end pronounced him harmless. The Bureau was responsible for the United Nations declaring Hellboy an honorary human in 1952, and immediately thereafter he joined the Bureau as an agent, rather than an object of study. He is emblematic of one of the Bureau's reasons for being: To serve as a home for unusual beings who might not be able to get by in the normal world.



# TODAY

Over the decades the BPRD has remained largely the same, growing somewhat, and remaining the foremost agency of its kind in the world. It currently employs between 100 and 200 people, including contractors. Most of them are researchers and scientists, and most of them are normal humans.

The Bureau is a private organization, international in scope, funded primarily by the United States, with some money coming from the United Kingdom and other nations. In return, the Bureau handles their paranormal problems. Several of the nations have considered setting up government agencies to replace the BPRD, but the Bureau already has the knowledge, the resources, and (perhaps most importantly) the people. A new agency would have to essentially hire away all the BPRD's experts in order to compete. It's more cost-effective simply to fund the Bureau, and it also provides plausible deniability. Nations that do not fund the Bureau still tend to cooperate if the Bureau wishes to perform an investigation in their territory – this even extends to nations on unfriendly terms with the United States. In general, this is because the Bureau is very good about sharing information about a completed operation; it also has a history of stamping out problems before they get truly serious.

This international cooperation depends on the Bureau's public image. This puts the Bureau in the fragile position of being a low-profile organization with a secret headquarters, that nevertheless is always in the market for good publicity. It also trades very heavily on the prestige of having Hellboy, and other famous oddities, on its staff.

## *Headquarters*

The BPRD's headquarters is located in Fairfield, Connecticut, a half-hour from New York. It occupies a building whose design combines Art Deco and Asian design elements, on carefully landscaped grounds. It is, by intent, isolated from the city, and the building is not visible from the road. There are no signs indicating its purpose, and visitors who don't belong there are politely escorted off the premises by security. Despite the beauty of the surroundings, the site has a definite tinge of the unearthly, the effect of decades of research into the supernatural.

Inside, the building gives the impression of an awkward collision between a business office, a small hotel, and a museum. Most of the horizontal surfaces throughout the building are covered with papers, books, and odd archaeological artifacts. Only higher-ranking administrators have private offices; most of the employees work in large open-plan seas of desks and computers.

The building also includes a number of labs and workshops. The equipment necessary for research into archaeology, chemistry, botany, forensics, genetics, geology, and metallurgy is all available. If more exotic facilities are required, the Bureau has a solid relationship with Yale, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and other research centers. In the fields of history and the occult, the Bureau's library is one of the best in the nation. The workshops are used for the development and maintenance of the field equipment agents use, including jetpacks and Hellboy's customized guns (but see *ZinCo*, p. 00).

Bureau agents know all too well that careless research into magic and paranormal powers leads to disaster, so there is little day-to-day experimentation in those areas and related fields like alchemy. Nevertheless, when necessary, some of the world's greatest experts in these fields work for the Bureau, and there are facilities in the building and on the grounds that can be used as sacred space for rituals, for alchemical work, or for training people in the use of their psychic powers.

While most of the employees live in Fairfield or the surrounding towns, some live on the premises. There are a dozen private suites in the main building, and two private cottages elsewhere on the grounds. These quarters are normally used by the Bureau's unique members, those who are not to be accepted by the public. However, some are used by employees who simply wouldn't feel comfortable in the world at large, even if they appear human. While not lavish, each suite or cottage includes a bedroom, sitting room, bathroom, and a small kitchenette. Currently, Hellboy, Abe Sapien, Roger, and Johann Kraus have suites, while Liz Sherman occupies one of the cottages. The

rest are occupied by other employees, or are empty. Whenever a unique agent quits, the Bureau quietly keeps their room clean and ready until they return.

Other features of the headquarters include a chlorine-free swimming pool, health facilities, a cafeteria, a shooting range, a fast (and very secure) Internet connection, a helicopter pad, and hiking trails. There are medical facilities (including a surgery usually used for forensics), and several medical doctors on the staff, but anyone seriously injured is taken to St. Vincent's Hospital in Fairfield, if possible. The Bureau has an extremely good relationship with local law enforcement, due in part to the Bureau's rapid and intense, yet measured response to local oddities. The Fairfield police simply never have to deal with ghosts and monsters themselves, and they're grateful.

### ***Organizational Structure***

The administrative head is called the Director of the Bureau. This position was held by Professor Brutenholm for the first 15 years of the Bureau's existence, and since then by a series of bureaucrats. This position has little to do with day to day operations. Instead, the Bureau Director spends most of his time flying from one national capital to another, justifying the Bureau's budget requests. Any time spent in Fairfield is devoted to paperwork. The current Director of the Bureau is Dr. Flora Blake.

As a result, the Bureau Director frequently being away, the effective head of the BPRD is usually one of the departmental directors. At the moment, that weight falls on the Director of Field Operations, Dr. Thomas Manning. The Field Director determines what events around the world require investigation, assigns teams, and coordinates the logistics necessary to get them there. Since the world's perception of the BPRD is based on what its agents do outside Fairfield, the Director of Field Operations is also responsible for the Bureau's public image, above merely sending agents into life-or-death situations.

Technically equal in rank to the Field Director is the Director of Research. This position's duties are much less stressful, and the job is usually held by an administrator who is also skilled in gathering, winnowing, and synthesizing information. The current Research Director is Dr. Spencer Stillman.

There are several departments under the Director of Research, including the Library Department, the Historical Department, the Current Affairs Department, and the Psychics Department. The last is currently headed by Dr. Izar Hoffman, and is where those psychics unsuited to field operations end up. Some monitor the worldwide ether for disturbances, others serve on 'cleanup' teams after the field agents have neutralized a threat, while others examine evidence as it comes in.

The last major director is the Director of Internal Affairs. This position oversees security, building maintenance, the motor pool, and the Personnel Department. (The Bureau has refused to adopt the modern term 'Human Resources,' for obvious reasons.) At the moment, the Internal Affairs Director is Mrs. Ignacia Quevedo. The most important position under her is the Head of Security, a position usually held by ex-military personnel. Currently, the job is filled by Mr. (formerly Captain) Anton Duchatel. Security personnel are tasked with protecting Headquarters, and do not go on field operations unless absolutely necessary. If the Bureau needs more armed men for an operation, Dr. Manning much prefers to work with the locals, or the U.S. or U.K. armed forces.

### ***Relations With Other Agencies***

In the United States, the BPRD has a good working relationship with the Armed Forces, dating back to the mid '40s, when it was closely associated with the Army Air Forces, and had several military officers on its staff. Currently, there are no active military personnel who are also members of the Bureau. However, soldiers occasionally end up helping the Bureau with particularly dangerous threats. Those who do sometimes find themselves curious to learn more about the paranormal, or wanting to help defend people from unambiguous evil, and join the Bureau after their service. Their connections back to the forces are invaluable. The military agencies the Bureau works most closely with are the various intelligence and investigation services. The Bureau's relationship with the United Kingdom military is similar, though slightly cooler.

Other U.S. agencies the Bureau works well with include the Center for Disease Control, the National Park Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, all of whom occasionally stumble across something weird, and

are more than happy to call in the experts. The Bureau rarely interacts with the Drug Enforcement Agency or the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and when it does, they tend to have similar priorities (e.g., drugs that enhance psychic powers are dangerous, or vampires should not be allowed to immigrate).

The Bureau's relationship with the FBI is emblematic of its relationship with most law-enforcement agencies. The FBI is very territorial about its cases, but it also recognizes the expertise the Bureau can provide. In most situations where both the FBI and the BPRD are on the scene, the FBI will take charge, and then allow the Bureau's agents a great deal of latitude, so long as they share data. State and local authorities behave much the same way, though there are always exceptions. In a few instances, police officers have had the impression that the BPRD was a federal agency, and Bureau agents are not above taking advantage of this when necessary.

The one government agency that actively dislikes the BPRD is the CIA, who believe the BPRD tends to bumble into international incidents and start blowing things up. Fortunately, the CIA is rarely interested in the same things as the Bureau.

In the United Kingdom, the BPRD still has ties with the British Paranormal Society. The Society remains a civilian organization of scholars and scientists, and is nowhere near as large as the Bureau. It does not conduct field operations. The Bureau regards it as a source of information, and the Society is quite willing to provide what aid it can to agents in Great Britain.

U.K. intelligence operations are controlled by the Joint Intelligence Committee, and the JIC has a coldly polite relationship with the Bureau. Enough high-ranking officials in the Committee are friendly to ensure cooperation, but by and large the JIC shares the CIA's opinion of the Bureau's techniques.

Within the United Kingdom, paranormal threats usually come to the attention of the Security Service (MI5) or its police associates, the Special Branch. The Bureau has worked closely with MI5 on many occasions, and their agents mostly welcome Bureau involvement when they're needed.

The agencies of the rest of the world's nations have many and varied opinions of the BPRD, but the overall average is a combination of gratitude (for having someone willing to tackle weird problems), and resentment (over needing help in the first place). A few governments regard the Bureau as the leading *cause* of paranormal problems; the Bureau stays away from their territories unless absolutely necessary. During the Cold War, one of the Bureau's missions was specifically countering Soviet research into the paranormal. Hellboy's 1964 visit to the Russian village of Bereznik, in search of Baba Yaga, was covert. When the Russians learned about it, they were furious, and it took the fall of the Soviet Union for the Russian authorities to even begin to warm up to the Bureau. The People's Republic of China, on the other hand, still considers the BPRD to be hostile, and the Bureau has only dared to send agents into China when it is absolutely vital.

## BPRD Personnel

The members of the BPRD are eclectic – even when they're human. Here are some of the most important.

### PROFESSOR TREVOR BRUTTENHOLM

175 POINTS

Age 80; 5'8"; 145 lbs. A thin, elderly, distinguished Englishman, with white hair, a moustache and beard. This character description represents Bruttenholm as he was in 1990, a few years before his death.

**ST** 9 [10]; **DX** 10 [0]; **IQ** 15 [60]; **HT** 12 [20].

Speed 5.50; Move 6.

Dodge 5.

**Advantages:** Charisma +1 [5]; Language Talent +2 [4]; Patron (BPRD, 15 or less, Provides standard equipment, Significant special qualities) [75]; Reputation +2 (Recognized by those knowledgeable about the paranormal: Small class) [3]; Status +1 [5]; Strong Will +1 [4].

**Disadvantages:** Curious (Roll: IQ2) [10]; Duty (12 or less) [10]; Pacifism (SelfDefense Only) [15]; Sense of Duty (Friends) [15].

**Quirks:** Always polite; Prefers his home cluttered; Uncomfortable around women. [3]

**Skills:** Administration-13 [1/2]; Alchemy/TL7-11 [1/2]; Anthropology-14 [2]; Archaeology-14 [2]; Botany/TL7-12 [1/2]; Chemistry/TL7-12 [1/2]; Diplomacy-14 [2]; Geology/TL7-12 [1/2]; History-17 [8]; Law-12 [1/2]; Literature-14 [2]; Occultism-18 [8]; Paraphysics/TL7-12 [1]; Philosophy-14 [2]; Physics/TL7-13 [1]; Politics-15 [2]; Psychology-13 [1]; Research-17 [6]; Ritual Magic-12 [1]; Running-10 [1]; SavoirFaire-14 [1/2]; Teaching-15 [2]; Thaumatology-12 [1]; Theology-14 [2].

**Languages:** English (native)-17 [0]; Ancient Egyptian-14 [1/2]; Ancient Greek-15 [1/2]; French-15 [1/2]; Latin-15 [1/2]; Norwegian-15 [1/2]; Old English-15 [1/2]; Old Lemurian-14 [1/2]; Old Norse-15 [1/2]; Spanish-15 [1/2].

Professor Brutenholm (pronounced *ÍBroomL*) was one of the three members of the British Paranormal Society present at the Hellboy Incident. Described as a *Íparanormal whiz-kidL*, Brutenholm, was a British national in his mid-thirties at the time. After he inadvertently named Hellboy, he became his mentor and surrogate father. He joined Hellboy in New Mexico during his formative years, and eventually became a U.S. citizen. Simultaneously, he pushed through the creation of the BPRD, and was its first director. Unfortunately, he chafed in that administrative position, and quit the job in 1958 to return to his first love, investigating the paranormal. He remained a valuable field agent into his 80s, occasionally accompanying Hellboy on his cases. In 1993, he took a temporary leave of absence from the Bureau to join the Cavendish brothers, and explorer Sven Olafson, on an expedition to the Arctic. The purpose of the expedition was to investigate a Cavendish family legend relating to certain ancient ruins. The expedition vanished.

Ten months later, Brutenholm called Hellboy from his home in Brooklyn. Hellboy heard his story, but was unable to save Brutenholm from a murderous attack by one of Rasputin's frog-beasts.

((START QUOTE))

*ÍHellboy. I could not guess then that I was *naming* him.L*

((END QUOTE))

In life, Professor Brutenholm was endlessly curious, warm, yet reserved. His upper-class British accent was tinged with Brooklyn towards the end of his life. While unfailingly polite, he sometimes seemed slightly uncomfortable around women. From first sight, he was dedicated to Hellboy's well-being, and the two were as close as if they were truly father and son. He always wished Hellboy would concentrate more on research and the intellectual side of their work, and less on *Íbashing* things,L but this was never more than a film of disappointment on top of oceans of pride.

*Note: If the full version of the GURPS rules is being used, Professor Brutenholm would qualify for the Age disadvantage. However, given that he remained very active to the end of his life, he might well also qualify for the Longevity advantage.*

## DOCTOR THOMAS MANNING

130 POINTS

Age 60; 5'8"; 145 lbs. A dark-haired, balding Caucasian man who looks like a quintessential businessman.

**ST** 9 [10]; **DX** 10 [0]; **IQ** 14 [45]; **HT** 10 [0].

Speed 5.00; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

**Advantages:** Patron (BPRD, 15 or less, Provides standard equipment, Significant special qualities) [75]; Strong Will +1 [4]; Status +2 [10].

**Disadvantages:** Duty (to the BPRD, 12 or less) [10]; Sense of Duty (Those endangered by the paranormal) [10].

**Quirks:** Always wears a rumpled suit and tie, even in the field; Uncertain about non-humans. [2]

**Skills:** Acting-12 [1/2]; Administration-15 [4]; Archaeology-11 [1/2]; Computer Operation/TL7-14 [1]; Criminology/TL7-16 [6]; Diplomacy-13 [2]; Driving (Automobile)/TL7-9 [1]; FastTalk-12 [1/2]; Forensics/TL7-11 [1/2]; Guns (Pistol)/TL7-11 [1/2]; History-13 [2]; Interrogation-12 [1/2]; Law-13 [2]; Leadership-13 [1]; Occultism-13 [1]; Politics-13 [1]; Research-13 [1]; SavoirFaire-16 [0]; Tactics-12 [1]; Teaching-12 [1/2]; Writing-12 [1/2].

**Languages:** English (native)-14 [0]; French-12 [1/2]; German-12 [1/2].

((START QUOTE))

“Okay, that’s it. There’s a plane waiting. I want everyone suited up and on board in fifteen minutes. *Go!*”

((END QUOTE))

Dr. Thomas Manning is the current Director of Field Operations at the BPRD, and has been since 1980. Day to day, he is the most powerful individual in the Bureau, a job he doesn’t take lightly. He has sent over a dozen agents to their deaths, and takes sole responsibility for that. He also has the burden of *keeping* agents on the team, when their jobs are manifestly dangerous.

Prior to coming to the BPRD, Manning pursued and received his doctorate in criminology, and then became an agent and administrator in the FBI. He came in contact with Hellboy and the BPRD during the investigation of a serial killer in Columbus, Ohio, in the mid-1970s. The killer turned out to be undead, and, without the BPRD, Manning and the FBI wouldn’t have been able to stop it. He decided on that day that his desire to protect people could be better met in the BPRD. He spent a brief period as a field agent, before his obvious management skills led to him becoming first a mid-level administrator, and eventually Director of Field Operations.

Manning strongly feels that the survival of the Bureau depends on keeping its unique field agents, including Hellboy and Abe Sapien. Only their second-hand prestige keeps the Bureau funded. On the other hand, he tends to regard non-humans as devoid of rights until they prove themselves. This came to a head when he had a bomb planted inside Roger, to forestall another murderous rampage like the one that killed Bud Waller. Learning of this has caused all the non-human agents to be gravely suspicious of Manning, and the future of the Bureau is uncertain.

In person, Manning is businesslike and slightly distant. He tries to combine going by the book with the flexibility necessary in his unique profession. He has a slight sense of humor, but it doesn’t come up much on the job. He is convinced that the BPRD is a vital and necessary defense, and everything else is secondary to preserving the Bureau.

## HELLBOY

830 POINTS

Age unknown; 7'0"; 280 lbs. A tall, red-skinned humanoid. He has a tail, cloven hooves, a giant stone right hand, and the stubs of filed-off horns on his forehead. His eyes are pupilless and orange; his hair is confined to sideburns, a small beard, and a tiny ponytail. Despite his appearance, most people find him only a little startling, not frightening.

This description represents Hellboy immediately after he quit the BPRD in 2001.

**ST** 30 [175]; **DX** 15 [60]; **IQ** 13 [30]; **HT** 20/35 [175].

Speed 8.75; Move 10.

Dodge 9; Parry 13 (brawling).

**Advantages:** Alertness +3 [15]; Ambidexterity [10]; Charisma +2 [10]; Combat Hand [10]; Combat Reflexes [15]; Daredevil [15]; DR 15 (Everything) [45]; DR 85 (Combat Hand Only: 175%) [64]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Language Talent +3 [6]; Modified Arm ST +10 (Right Arm Only: 170%) [2]; Passive Defense 2 [50]; Regeneration [25]; Reputation +2 (Paranormal Investigator) [10]; Status 1 [5]; Strong Will +4 [16]; Temperature Tolerance 5 (Min. Temperature -15, Max. Temperature 140) [5].

**Disadvantages:** Unattractive Appearance [15]; Bad Grip (Right Hand Only: 150%) [15]; Bad Temper [10]; Curious [15]; Sense of Duty (to all good people) [15]; Unluckiness [10]; Unnatural Feature (Demonic) [15].

**Quirks:** Favors the direct approach; Keeps his horns filed down; Likes old movies; Likes spicy ethnic food; Occasionally smokes. [15]

**Skills:** Acrobatics-12 [1/2]; Alchemy/TL7-9 [1/2]; Animal Handling-10 [1/2]; Anthropology-10 [1/2]; Archaeology-10 [1/2]; Brawling-18 [8]; Broadsword-13 [1/2]; Climbing-16 [4]; Computer Operation/TL7-12 [1/2]; Cooking-12 [1/2]; Criminology/TL7-12 [1]; Demolition/TL7-14 [4]; Diplomacy-11 [1]; Driving (Automobile)/TL7-14 [1]; Electronics Operation/TL7-12 [1]; Escape-12 [1/2]; Fast-Talk-12 [1]; First Aid/TL7-13 [1]; Flail-12 [1/2]; Guns (Pistol)/TL7-16 [1/2]; Guns (Shotgun)/TL7-16 [1/2]; History-12 [2]; Interrogation-12 [1]; Intimidation-14 [4]; Jumping-14 [1/2]; Knife-14 [1/2]; Law-10 [1/2]; Literature-10 [1/2]; Lockpicking/TL7-11 [1/2]; Naturalist-10 [1/2]; Navigation/TL7-11 [1]; Occultism-12 [1]; Parachuting-14 [1/2]; Philosophy-10 [1/2]; Piloting (Rocket Pack)/TL7-13 [1/2]; Psychology-10 [1/2]; Research-11 [1/2]; Ritual Magic-9 [1/2]; Running-17 [1/2];

Shortsword-13 [1/2]; Spear-13 [1/2]; Stealth-13 [1/2]; Streetwise-12 [1]; Survival (Arctic)-11 [1/2]; Survival (Desert)-11 [1/2]; Survival (Mountains)-11 [1/2]; Swimming-14 [1/2]; Thaumatology-9 [1/2]; Theology-10 [1/2]; Throwing-16 [8]; Tracking-12 [1]; Traps/TL7-12 [1].

**Languages:** English (native)-16 [0]; French-14 [1/2]; German-14 [1/2]; Latin-14 [1/2]; Old Lemurian-13 [1/2]; Spanish-14 [1/2]; The Infernal Tongue-12 [1/2].

((START QUOTE))

ÍLady, I was gonna cut you some slack, IJcause youÊre a major mythological figure . . . but now youÊve just gone *nuts!*Í

((END QUOTE))

Hellboy is the offspring of a liaison between a powerful demon of Hell, and a mortal girl. The girl lived in East Bromwich over 300 years ago, and by choice called to and lay with the demon. Decades later, as she was dying, she renounced the Devil, and begged her children (a priest and a nun) to keep vigil over her, and prevent the demon from taking her soul. They failed. The demon came to her coffin, in the church in East Bromwich, killed her children, and took her soul to Hell. He promised her that she would always be young in his eyes, and that her greatest son, his favorite son, was still within her, waiting to be born. (Hellboy saw all this in a vision in 1994.)

In 1944, Rasputin, with the aid of the Ragna Rok project, tried to summon into the world the power needed to free the Ogdru Jahad (p. 00). At the moment of the ritualÊs conclusion, Hellboy appeared in East Bromwich. Physically an infant, his right hand was made of stone, and nearly as large as the rest of him. It is the tool necessary to free the Ogdru Jahad.

Hellboy grew up on an Air Force base in New Mexico. His earliest memories date from this period. Professor Bruttonholm became like a father to him during this time, and the greatest minds of the period, including Einstein and Oppenheimer, sometimes came to visit. He grew very quickly, and was a functional adult by 1952. He began filing his horns down in the early 1950s, leaving only stumps.

In 1952, the United Nations declared him an honorary human being. This was widely publicized, and was for many people their first proof that the paranormal was real. Immediately thereafter he joined the BPRD, and quickly became its top field agent. In 1954 he attempted to slay a dragon for the Osiris Club (p. 00). Though he got some help from beyond, in the aftermath his blood caused lilies to sprout where it fell, just like a monk who fought the dragon around 600 A.D. Hellboy himself did not notice this, and remained unaware of it until 2001.

In 1962, Hellboy met with Lady Cynthia Eden-Jones. She begged him to re-open the investigation into his origins. He didnÊt, and she died shortly thereafter. For the next 40 years, despite frequent hints and outright statements that he and his hand are important to the fate of the world, he refused to investigate his roots. As he said in 1996, ÍI sleep good *not knowing.*Í

In 1994, Professor Bruttonholm returned from the Arctic, and Hellboy watched his surrogate father die (see p. 00). During the ensuing investigation into the Cavendish family, Hellboy met Rasputin for the first time Í though he found his voice strangely familiar. Rasputin claimed to be HellboyÊs master, and told him how he summoned Hellboy to Earth, to use him to free the Ogdru Jahad and bring about the end of the world. Rasputin briefly hinted at the power contained in HellboyÊs right hand. Regardless, Hellboy refused, and with the help of Abe Sapien, Liz Sherman, and the ghost of Elihu Cavendish, killed Rasputin.

Afterwards, Hellboy returned to East Bromwich, and learned about his conception and parents. He didnÊt pursue things any further, however. Later that year he appeared on the cover of *Life* magazine, in a celebration of his 50th Íbirthday.Í This renewed his fame as a public figure.

Then, in 1996, came the disastrous Giurescu investigation. During it, he met (and fought) Hecate, who told him that it was his destiny to preside over Armageddon, and that she will be his bride in the world thereafter. He defeated her, but was knocked unconscious in an explosion. While he was unconscious, Rasputin came to him, and told him that, by having refused his fate, he had become a purposeless thing, and thus must die. Shortly after Hellboy woke up, he encountered Hecate again, and she trapped him inside herself. He was told his true name, Anung Un Rama, and of the crown of fire he wears invisibly on his head, and his horns were made to grow. Again, Hellboy denied his destiny, and broke off his horns.

Hellboy was shaken by these revelations, but again set them aside, pretending to himself that his last refusal had left him free. This lasted until 1998, when he agreed to meet with Father Adrian Frost. He told the story of his life to Frost, who presented him with a scrap of paper. Depicted on the paper were Hellboy's right hand, and (in Old Lemurian) "Behold the Right Hand of Doom." Frost told him that he suspects the hand is the key to the bottomless pit, and can be used to end the world. Hellboy was made to realize what an immense burden he bears.

The following year, the thief Igor Bromhead (p. 00) freed the demon Ualac (p. 00), and together they ensnared Hellboy, binding him with his true name, Anung Un Rama. Ualac took the crown of fire from Hellboy's head, and used it to dramatically increase his power. Unfortunately for him, "Anung Un Rama" means "Upon his brow is set a crown of fire." By taking the crown, Ualac also took the name, and Hellboy was freed from the binding. He defeated Ualac, and handed him over to the powerful demon Astaroth. Astaroth offered to return Hellboy's crown, but he refused it. Astaroth promised to keep it for him in Hell, until Hellboy called for it.

Afterwards, Hellboy had a long talk with Professor Corrigan, who had come to be his best friend. He told her how he always tried to avoid learning about his origin, but it kept on being thrown in his face. She suggested it might be time to investigate it, but he decided " . . . Maybe I'll bury my head just one more time. . . "

In 2001, during the "Conqueror Worm" incident, Hellboy encountered a strange being, who claimed to have been watching over Hellboy since 1944, and to have originally intended to kill him. However, the being saw free will in Hellboy, and let him live. He told Hellboy about the lilies in 1954, and (more importantly) about the nature of the Conqueror Worm. The being then died.

In the aftermath of the investigation, disillusioned with the Bureau and curious about the being's story, Hellboy quit the BPRD, and set out to find some answers. What he will learn is unknown.

Hellboy would be a perfectly ordinary guy, if he wasn't a seven-foot demon who investigates the paranormal. Despite looking like a figure out of Dante's *Inferno*, he doesn't usually scare people. His personal charisma seems to negate the effects of his red skin, cloven hooves, tail, and horn-stubs. While his arrival does sometimes provoke panicked reactions, those panicking usually had other reasons to be frightened. His unluckiness tends to manifest in the form of falling out of planes, or losing his gun before getting off a shot.

Hellboy finds the paranormal fascinating, and he also enjoys a good fight. He has no compunctions about killing beings who are endangering innocents. When not in the field, he is an ordinary guy, and likes to hang around his apartment at the Bureau, watching TV with his friends and eating spicy food.

For most of his life, Hellboy was in deep denial about his clearly demonic origins, and professed not to be curious. Over the last decade events have forced him to confront the truth, and now he is looking for answers with all the zeal he has shown on Bureau investigations. Regardless of what he finds, Hellboy loves the world, and humanity, and will do nothing to endanger them. He once offered to cut off his own hand, if it would protect the world. While that would not help, he would clearly give his life to save humanity, if he felt it was the only way.

((START BOX))

## What Has He Got In His Pockets?

Hellboy's belt pouches are crammed full of items he has collected over the decades. He never bothers to clean them out or do inventory. At a minimum, he has assorted charms and amulets (see Chapter 4, and particularly the Chaperone, Curse Sanctum, and Charm Against Demonic Animals rituals), various flares and grenades (see p. 00), and certainly his current gun. He probably also carries a flashlight, a few common tools, snacks, maps, scraps of paper with phone numbers on them, etc. If Hellboy ever desperately needs something specific, he probably has one, but not more than one.

((END BOX))

**PROFESSOR KATE CORRIGAN** 166 POINTS

Age 42; 5'7"; 130 lbs. A blue-eyed woman with short blond hair.

**ST** 10 [0]; **DX** 10 [0]; **IQ** 15 [60]; **HT** 11 [10].

Speed 5.25; Move 6.

Dodge 5.

**Advantages:** Language Talent +1 [2]; Patron (BPRD, 15 or less, Provides standard equipment, Significant special qualities) [75]; Reputation +2 (Recognized by those knowledgeable about the occult: Small class) [3]; Status 1 [5].

**Disadvantages:** Duty (to the BPRD: 12 or less) [10]; Sense of Duty (Friends) [i5]; Truthfulness [i5]; Weak Will 1 [i8].

**Quirks:** Cautious; Has trouble reconciling theory and practice; Stubborn. [i3]

**Skills:** Administration-14 [1]; Alchemy/TL7-11 [1/2]; Anthropology-14 [2]; Archaeology-13 [1]; Botany/TL7-12 [1/2]; Climbing-9 [1]; Computer Operation/TL7-14 [1/2]; Criminology/TL7-13 [1/2]; Driving (Automobile)/TL7-9 [1]; First Aid/TL7-14 [1/2]; Guns (Pistol)/TL7-11 [1/2]; History-16 [6]; Law-12 [1/2]; Literature-14 [2]; Occultism-17 [6]; Philosophy-12 [1/2]; Psychology-12 [1/2]; Research-16 [4]; Ritual Magic-12 [1]; Running-10 [2]; Stealth-9 [1]; Teaching-14 [1]; Thaumatology-11 [1/2]; Theology-13 [1]; Writing-16 [4].

**Languages:** English (native)-16 [0]; Ancient Greek-14 [1/2]; Ancient Mayan-13 [1/2]; Classical Greek-14 [1/2]; Japanese-14 [1/2]; Latin-14 [1/2]; Spanish-14 [1/2].

((START QUOTE))

I've got something for you, Hellboy. If I'm right, this town has an ugly little secret.

((END QUOTE))

Professor Katharine Corrigan is one of the world's leading experts on folklore and occult history, and the author of nearly two dozen books on the subject. Her first contact with the Bureau was in 1984, while she was pursuing her doctorate at New York University. The Bureau hired her as a consultant on vampire legends of central Europe, one of her areas of expertise. During this initial job, she met Hellboy, and had her first epiphany about the difference between theory and practice. Hellboy was tangible evidence of the occult, yet acted like an ordinary guy. After getting her doctorate, she became a professor at NYU, but also continued to consult for the Bureau, though her first field mission wasn't until 1994. During this time she and Hellboy became fast friends. She became a full member of the Bureau in the late 1990s, and today is the Assistant Director of Field Operations, while still often participating in missions herself.

Professor Corrigan (she prefers 'Professor', 'Doctor', 'Agent', or 'Director') is fearsomely intelligent, but still sometimes has trouble translating book-learning into field practice. She has a tendency to lecture, but the information she gives is almost always useful. Hellboy remains her closest friend, and she has good working relationships with everyone in the Bureau.

## ABE SAPIEN

315 POINTS

Age unknown; 6'1"; 170 lbs. A gray-skinned combination of fish and man.

**ST** 14 [45]; **DX** 15 [60]; **IQ** 13 [30]; **HT** 14 [45].

Speed 7.25; Move 7.

Dodge 7; Parry 10 (Judo/Karate).

**Advantages:** Acute Vision +3 [6]; Double-Jointed [5]; Fully Amphibious [20]; Patron (BPRD, 15 or less, Provides standard equipment, Significant special qualities) [75]; Rapid Healing [5]; Strong Will +3 [12]; Toughness 1 [10].

**Disadvantages:** Appearance (Ugly) [i10]; Dependency (Immersion in water: Common, Weekly) [i10]; Duty (to the BPRD: 12 or less) [i10]; Sense of Duty (Paranormal people) [i5]; Unnatural Feature (Fishman) [i5]; Weakness 1 (extreme heat and desiccants: 1d/30 Min., Occasional) [i5].

**Quirks:** Book collector; 'Dogears' books instead of using bookmarks; Likes pop music; Loves chess; Romantically interested in Liz Sherman. [i5]

**Skills:** Acrobatics-14 [2]; Acting-12 [1]; Boating-13 [1/2]; Chess-12 [1/2]; Climbing-16 [1/2]; Computer Operation/TL7-12 [1/2]; Diplomacy-13 [4]; Disguise-13 [2]; Driving (Automobile)/TL7-13 [1/2]; Electronics Operation/TL7-13 [2]; Escape-15 [1/2]; First Aid/TL7-14 [2]; Guns (Pistol)/TL7-16 [1/2]; Guns (Rifle)/TL7-16 [1/2]; History-13 [4]; Interrogation-11 [1/2]; Intimidation-12 [1]; Judo-15 [4]; Jumping-14 [1/2]; Karate-15 [4]; Literature-13



[4]; Lockpicking/TL7-13 [2]; Meteorology/TL7-12 [1]; Naturalist-12 [2]; Occultism-14 [4]; Piloting/TL7-13 [1/2]; Piloting (Rocket Pack)/TL7-13 [1/2]; Research-12 [1]; Stealth-15 [2]; Throwing-14 [2]; Writing-13 [2].

*Languages:* English (native)-13 [0].

((START QUOTE))

I don't need anyone telling me my friends are too volatile to have around.

((END QUOTE))

Abraham Sapien's origins are a mystery, even to himself. In 1978, two plumbers working at St. Trinian's Hospital in Washington, D.C. found a room that hadn't been opened in years. Inside was a life-support tube, containing an apparently-adult being best described as a cross between man and fish. (There was also another full-sized tube, and a similar head-sized container, but both were broken and empty.) A piece of paper pinned up near the tube read I<sup>C</sup>HTHYO SAPIEN APRIL 14 1865. The meaning of the date is unknown, though it is (apparently coincidentally) the date Abraham Lincoln was assassinated. The plumbers promptly dubbed the being Abe Sapien.

The inert fish-man was handed over to the BPRD. In March of the next year, Bureau scientists Dr. Cobb and Dr. Roddel were making preparations to dissect him, when he revived under electrical stimulation. His mind was a nearly-complete blank, but he learned quickly, and became a Bureau agent in short order.

Sapien is the only known amphibious humanoid. His origins remain mysterious, though Bureau scientists suspect genetic engineering. Over the years he has become one of the Bureau's top agents, and he is close friends with Hellboy, Liz Sherman, and Roger. Many of the other members of the Bureau find him a little off-putting. He lacks Hellboy's innate charisma, and his face is difficult to read at best. Nevertheless, he is fundamentally a kind and decent being.

## LIZ SHERMAN

315 POINTS

Age 40; 5'7"; 130 lbs. An attractive Caucasian woman with shoulder-length red hair; her eyes vary from brown to gold.

**ST** 10 [0]; **DX** 11 [10]; **IQ** 13 [30]; **HT** 11 [10].

Speed 5.50; Move 5.

Dodge 5; Parry 8 (Judo).

*Advantages:* Appearance (Attractive) [5]; Patron (BPRD, 15 or less, Provides standard equipment, Significant special qualities) [75]; Strong Will +1 [4] (Will: 14).

*Disadvantages:* Duty (12 or less) [i10]; Sense of Duty (Friends) [i5]; Stubbornness [i5].

*Quirks:* Cigarette smoker (but carries no lighter); Doesn't feel at home anywhere; Has frequent nightmares; Trusts her intuition. [i4]

*Powers:* Pyrokinesis 5 [15]; Pyrokinesis 95 [143] (Unconscious Only: i20%; Uncontrollable: i30%).

*Skills:* Acting-13 [2]; Alchemy/TL7-9 [1/2]; Artist-10 [1/2]; Botany/TL7-10 [1/2]; Chemistry/TL7-12 [2]; Climbing-12 [4]; Computer Operation/TL7-13 [1]; Cooking-12 [1/2]; Criminology/TL7-12 [1]; Diplomacy-13 [4]; Driving (Automobile)/TL7-10 [1]; Electronics Operation/TL7-13 [2]; FastTalk-13 [2]; First Aid/TL7-13 [1]; Geology/TL7-10 [1/2]; History-12 [2]; Intimidation-11 [1/2]; Judo-12 [8]; Lockpicking/TL7-13 [2]; Occultism-13 [2]; Philosophy-11 [1]; Physics/TL7-11 [1]; Psychology-10 [1/2]; Pyrokinesis-14 [6]; SavoirFaire-12 [1/2]; Streetwise-12 [1].

*Languages:* English (native)-13 [0].

((START QUOTE))

In twenty-three years I've quit thirteen times, but I always come back. Where else am I going to go?

((END QUOTE))

Elizabeth Anne Sherman is a native of Kansas City. As a child, she often dreamed of fire. When she was 11, and had just started puberty, a neighborhood bully teased her about her ponytails. Her pyrokinesis manifested, and left a city block destroyed and 32 people dead, including Sherman's family. No one knew how the fire started, so she was shuttled around to foster homes for a few months, until the BPRD tracked her down. Over the next decade, they trained her to control her powers. Along the way, she became one of the Bureau's better field agents, specializing more in the social aspects of investigations, and only providing raw pyrokinetic force when necessary. She often finds the Bureau frustrating, and has quit and returned over a dozen times.

Sherman's last uncontrolled outbreak was in 1984 (not counting a few instances where outside forces have taken control of her powers). Some people outside the BPRD have suggested that she is controlling her abilities through brute force, instead of making peace with them, and that this is unhealthy and futile. No one (including Sherman) is certain if that is the correct way of looking at it. In recent years the more mystical aspects of her power have been forcibly brought to her attention, as when Rasputin used them to fuel a magic ritual, and when they were briefly sucked out of her by the homunculus Roger. The latter incident nearly killed her, and made it clear that she would have to accept her abilities as part of her, not something she could get rid of.

In person, Liz Sherman is attractive, but mildly morose and usually quiet. She smokes cigarettes, lighting them with her finger (one of many tricks she picked up while learning to control her powers). She has never completely gotten over losing her family, and has only recently felt anything positive about her powers. Nevertheless, the few times she's been able to cut loose have been very refreshing for her.

## ROGER

565 POINTS

Age unknown; 6'5"; 210 lbs. A tall humanoid, with no hair, dusky red skin, pupilless yellow eyes, and a small metal hatch on his chest. He normally wears at most a BPRD field vest, and a wooden codpiece.

**ST** 25 [150]; **DX** 12 [20]; **IQ** 13 [30]; **HT** 15/20 [60].

Speed 6.75; Move 6.

Dodge 6; Parry 9 (Brawling).

**Advantages:** DR 25 (Everything) [75]; Homunculus [146]; Patron (BPRD, 15 or less, Provides standard equipment, Significant special qualities) [75]; Strong Will +2 [8] (Will: 15).

**Disadvantages:** Appearance (Ugly) [10]; Duty (12 or less) [10]; Sense of Duty (All good people) [15]; Truthfulness [15].

**Quirks:** Doesn't hesitate to do the right thing; Feels guilt strongly; Gives fair warning in combat; Stoic; Wears very little. [15]

**Skills:** Acting-12 [1]; Alchemy/TL7-11 [2]; Brawling-14 [4]; Climbing-12 [2]; Disguise-11 [1/2]; Driving (Automobile)/TL7-10 [1/2]; Electronics/TL7-10 [1/2]; First Aid/TL7-12 [1/2]; History-12 [2]; Intimidation-11 [1/2]; Jumping-12 [1]; Mechanic/TL7-11 [1/2]; Occultism-12 [1]; Philosophy-10 [1/2]; Research-11 [1/2]; Stealth-10 [1/2]; Theology-10 [1/2]; Throwing-11 [2].

**Languages:** Romanian (native)-13 [0]; English-11 [1/2]; German-11 [1/2].

((START BOX))

# Homunculus 146 points

Homunculi, as artificial beings, have some special abilities that constitute an advantage. Any homunculus will have the following abilities:

A homunculus can steal power from sources as diverse as a psychic's pyrokinesis or an electric generator. To do so, it must touch the target, and roll vs. IQ, plus its Strong Will or minus its Weak Will. The target may resist with Will (see p. 00). If successful, the homunculus gets the target's energy, stored as Fatigue Points. For a pyrokinetic or similar source, it gets 1 energy per level of Power, and also steals the target's abilities! For an electric generator and other targets that aren't characters, the GM must decide how much energy the homunculus gets, and what abilities (if any) it acquires. The theft is permanent, until the homunculus either uses up all the energy, or voluntarily expels the power.

A homunculus that has its ST reduced to 0 by fatigue falls dormant, unable to move or speak, but still vaguely aware of its surroundings, and able to use its limited telepathic ability. Roger used this when he first encountered Liz Sherman; it allowed him to learn about her power, and to encourage her to give it to him. This only works when the homunculus is dormant. Homunculi have Telepathy Power 5 and both Telereceive and Telesend at IQ (see pp. 00-00 for the rules for Telepathy).

Most homunculi are very tough, strong, and hard to kill, but this can vary from individual to individual. Miniature ones can be much weaker than humans. All are obviously non-human, and are sometimes treated as constructs, not people. Homunculi do not age, as per the Unaging advantage, p. 00.

When born, Roger had the defect (apparently unique to him) of Unhealing (Fatigue Only), worth 10 points (p. 00). The BPRD has since fitted him with an electric generator that removes this disadvantage.

For those who wish to integrate this book with the rest of *GURPS*, here are the details on the Homunculus racial template. For most people, the description above covers everything necessary.

## RACIAL ADVANTAGE

Unaging [15].

## RACIAL DISADVANTAGES

Social Stigma (Valuable property) [-10]; Unnatural Feature (Homunculus) [-5].

## SUPER POWERS

Drain Super Ability 1 (Link, +10%; Touch Only, 20%; Instantaneous, +20%; Can steal technological and natural IIsuper abilities, 100%; Permanent until given up, +500%; Must win Quick Contest of skill + Will vs. Will, not Powers, +10%) [50]; Mimic Super Ability 1 (Link, +10%; Touch Only, 20%; Instantaneous, +20%; Can steal technological and natural IIsuper abilities, 100%; Permanent until given up, +500%; Levels are stored as Fatigue Points +100%; Reduced Fatigue Cost 5, +100%) [57]; Telepathy 5 (Only when dormant, -40%) [15].

## SUPER SKILLS

Drain Super Ability at IQ [8]; Mimic Super Ability at IQ [8], Telereceive at IQ [4]; Telesend at IQ [4].

((END BOX))

((START QUOTE))

You said that we are not less than human. Perhaps, but we certainly are not more . . .

((END QUOTE))

Roger (no last name) was created 500 years ago in Romania. A homunculus, he was grown from roots, herbs, and blood, and formed into the shape of a man by an alchemist. The alchemist used a bolt of lightning to animate him, but, due to a defect in Roger's construction, the animating force did not last. In a short time, he was inert, but still aware of the passage of time. He stayed that way for five centuries.

In 1996 the BPRD team of Bud Waller, Liz Sherman, and Sidney Leach discovered Roger in a secret room inside a ruined castle. The receptacle on his chest, where the lightning's energy had entered him, was open. He sensed their presence, and that Sherman had a power she wanted to be rid of. He planted a suggestion in her head, and she put her finger in his chest. He stole her pyrotechnic powers. Waller managed to get Sherman away from him, and Roger went berserk, attacking Waller, and fleeing through the wall. The encounter left Sherman shot and dying from her power-loss, Leach burned, and Waller dead.

Over the next week, Roger roamed the countryside, praying for God to forgive him. He was eventually found by his elder brother, another homunculus created by the same alchemist. The elder was constructing a giant

homunculus body for them to inhabit together, with the plan of conquering or killing all humanity. This plan was interrupted by Hellboy and Kate Corrigan. In the end, Roger turned against his brother to save Hellboy's life, using his stolen pyrotechnic abilities to melt the giant body. He then demanded that Hellboy leave him alone, but Hellboy instead knocked him unconscious, and took him to where Sherman was hospitalized (naming him along the way). Roger returned Sherman's powers, reviving her and leaving him once more inert.

The Bureau tried a number of techniques to revive him, but ended their attempts after multiple failures and chose to dissect him instead. Abe Sapien, recognizing the parallels to his own experience, secretly entered the lab after the scientists had left. Sapien rerouted the lab's electricity in a successful attempt to revive Roger, although doing so burned out the power in the building. The Bureau Director initially ordered that a bomb be placed in Roger, in case he should run amuck again. Roger proved himself to everyone's satisfaction in the Conqueror Worm affair, but the lack of trust and respect demonstrated by the bomb may cause Roger and the Bureau's other top agents to leave permanently.

Roger is a fast learner, and has picked up the basics of modern life quickly. His personality is stolid, and he carries a great deal of guilt for killing Waller and his brother, and for what he did to Sherman. He is extremely brave and self-sacrificing.

## JOHANN KRAUS

157 POINTS

Age 25; 5'8"; weight uncertain. An ectoplasmic cloud, contained in a black containment suit. His head is a clear glass globe with a small speaker grill.

**ST** 9 [110]; **DX** 10 [0]; **IQ** 12 [20]; **HT** 10 [0].

Speed 5.00; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

**Advantages:** Ectoplasmic Form, With Suit [65]; Patron (BPRD, 15 or less, Provides standard equipment, Significant special qualities) [75]; Strong Will +3 [12] (Will: 15).

**Disadvantages:** Curious [15]; Duty (12 or less) [110]; Unnatural Feature (Containment Suit) [15].

**Quirks:** Polite; "Old World" mannerisms. [12]

**Skills:** Computer Operation/TL7-11 [1/2]; Criminology/TL7-10 [1/2]; Dancing-9 [1]; Diplomacy-11 [2]; Disguise-11 [1]; Driving (Automobile)/TL7-8 [1/2]; English-10 [1/2]; First Aid/TL7-11 [1/2]; German (native)-12 [0]; History-11 [2]; Interrogation-10 [1/2]; Occultism-13 [4]; Research-11 [1]; Ritual Magic-9 [1]; SavoiriFaire-12 [1]; Thaumatology-9 [1].

[[[Note: We will add more detail to Kraus once the BPRD miniseries is concluded, and we know more about him.]]]

((START QUOTE))

I was a medium, once . . . Now I'm . . . something else.

((END QUOTE))

Prior to joining the Bureau, Johann Kraus was a talented physical medium. Unfortunately, he was out of his body during the mystical, continent-spanning Chengdou Disaster. This incident killed anyone involved in a sance at the time, leaving Kraus trapped in ectoplasmic form. He managed to stay alive, and made his way to the Bureau, where the technical staff designed and built a containment suit for him. It provides him with an approximation of a physical body, and may have made him immortal. (For details on his ectoplasmic form and containment suit, see p. 00.)

Kraus is polite and reserved. As the newest member of the Bureau, he is worried about finding his place and being an asset to the team. He is immensely curious about his fellow unique agents.

## SIDNEY LEACH

165 POINTS

Age 32; 5'9"; 150 lbs. A brown-haired Caucasian man in a baseball cap and glasses.

**ST** 10 [0]; **DX** 10 [0]; **IQ** 14 [45]; **HT** 12 [20].

Speed 5.50; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

**Advantages:** Empathy [15]; Patron (BPRD, 15 or less, Provides standard equipment, Significant special qualities) [75]; Strong Will +1 [4].

**Disadvantages:** Bad Sight (Correctable) [10]; Curious [15]; Duty (12 or less) [10]; Impulsiveness [10]; Sense of Duty (Teammates) [15].

**Quirks:** Tries to be cautious in the field; Wears his baseball cap constantly. [2]

**Powers:** Metal Sense 5 [5].

**Skills:** Armoury/TL7-12 [1/2]; Blacksmith/TL7-9 [1/2]; Chemistry/TL7-13 [2]; Computer Operation/TL7-13 [1/2]; Computer Programming/TL7-12 [1]; Demolition/TL7-13 [1]; Diplomacy-11 [1/2]; Driving (Automobile)/TL7-11 [4]; Electronics/TL7-13 [2]; Engineer/TL7-14 [4]; Escape-9 [2]; First Aid/TL7-13 [1/2]; Geology/TL7-12 [1]; Guns (Pistol)/TL7-12 [1]; History-11 [1/2]; Holdout-12 [1/2]; Lockpicking/TL7-15 [4]; Mechanic/TL7-14 [2]; Metal Sense-14 [4]; Metallurgy/TL7-15 [6]; Occultism-12 [1/2]; Paraphysics/TL7-10 [1/2]; Photography-12 [1/2]; Physics/TL7-13 [2]; Traps/TL7-14 [2].

**Languages:** English (native)-14 [0].

((START QUOTE))

‘Ah . . . human metal detector detects metal.’

((END QUOTE))

While pursuing his mechanical engineering degree, Sidney (sometimes ‘Sid’) Leach discovered he had the ability to sense metal at range of a few yards, even through solid wood or rock. After getting his degree, he decided he wanted both to better understand his ability, and to seek out some adventure. The natural choice was to join the BPRD.

Leach was hired in 1996, and his first field mission was the infamous Giurescu investigation. He was present when the homunculus Roger sucked out Liz Sherman’s pyrokinetic abilities and killed Bud Waller. He himself was badly burned in that incident, though he made a full recovery. Despite this brutal introduction to field operations, he stayed with the Bureau. Possibly thanks to his rather intense initiation, Leach is today regarded as one of the senior field agents, specializing in gadget-orientated investigations (such as finding traps, and figuring out occult electronics).

Leach is normally earnest and cheerful on the way to a mission, but his more serious side comes out in the field. He never wants to repeat his first mission, and his natural impulsiveness is moderated by caution.

## DOCTOR IZAR HOFFMAN 131 POINTS

Age 57; 5'8"; 145 lbs. A dark-haired, balding Caucasian man.

**ST** 9 [10]; **DX** 10 [0]; **IQ** 14 [45]; **HT** 10 [0].

Speed 5.00; Move 5.

Dodge 5.

**Advantages:** Charisma +1 [5]; Patron (BPRD, 15 or less, Provides standard equipment, Significant special qualities) [75]; Reputation +2 (Recognized by paraphysics researchers: Small class) [3]; Single-Minded [5]; Status 1 [5].

**Disadvantages:** Duty (12 or less, not dangerous) [15]; Hard of Hearing [10]; Sense of Duty (Psychics in his department) [15].

**Quirks:** Smokes a pipe; Truly cares about his people. [2]

**Skills:** Administration-12 [1/2]; Alchemy/TL7-10 [1/2]; Chemistry/TL7-12 [1]; Computer Operation/TL7-13 [1/2]; Criminology/TL7-12 [1/2]; Diplomacy-11 [1/2]; Driving (Automobile)/TL7-8 [1/2]; Fast-Talk-12 [1/2]; History-11 [1/2]; Law-11 [1/2]; Occultism-12 [1/2]; Paraphysics/TL7-14 [8]; Philosophy-12 [1]; Physics/TL7-12 [1]; Psychology-15 [6]; Research-14 [2]; Ritual Magic-10 [1/2]; Thaumatology-10 [1/2].

**Languages:** English (native)-14 [0].

((START QUOTE))

‘All of my people were upset by the atmosphere of the place.’

((END QUOTE))

Dr. Hoffman is the head of the Psychics Department. Under his care are a number of espers, telepaths, psychometrists, and other psychics who are not suited to be field agents, either due to temperament or physique. Hoffman is not a psychic himself, but has made the study of wild talents his life's work. His doctorate is in psychology, and he also has degrees in physics and other fields.

Hoffman is in his late 50s, and not as fast as he used to be, but still goes with his people when they need to investigate a site. He usually wears a suit and tie, and smokes a pipe. He cares strongly about the well-being of the psychics under his care, and will be reluctant to take them into any danger. Years of working in a field of research still regarded as quackery by some means he has had to become an even more rigorous scientist, and he is careful not to give his team preconceptions before sending them into a site, to avoid tainting their information.

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## Other Personnel

### MR. CLARK

Mr. Clark was a Bureau field agent up through 1996. He had been a member of the Bureau for several years long enough to recognize the signs of a vampire infestation, to be experienced with a jetpack, and to lose his left eye. He was Caucasian man in his 40s. Clark had a tendency toward understatement, and a low tolerance for faulty equipment. As a military veteran, his specialization was combat. He died in a pit trap during the Giurescu investigation.

### BUD WALLER

Bud Waller was also a field agent in 1996, with an expertise in occultism, old languages, and alchemy. He was of African descent, in his late 30s, and kept his hair cut extremely short. He was good-natured, and in addition to his academic talents, had a knack for finding hidden doors, and was a quick thinker in a crisis. During the Giurescu investigation, he was killed by Roger the homunculus in a fit of rage.

### LLOYD

Lloyd is one of the Bureau's engineers, with a fondness for jetpacks. Hellboy has gotten quite tired of field-testing his latest designs, particularly since one (with ZinCo parts) exploded on him in mid-air. Lloyd has no patience for unadventurous field agents, and an odd sense of humor. He is of African descent, in his 30s, and wears an earring.

### GENERAL RICKER

Lieutenant General Norton Ricker was the Army's liaison to the BPRD in the late 1940s and early 1950s. He had a strong interest in Hellboy, and would probably have been his father-figure if Professor Bruttonholm hadn't been around. While he clearly cared for Hellboy's well-being, Ricker was just as concerned that he grow up disciplined, and free of the obvious evil in his heritage. Ricker was involved with several investigations during his time with the Bureau, but retired in 1955 and died a few years later.

### MR. JOHNSON

The enigmatic Mr. Johnson was a field agent in the 1980s. Taciturn and reclusive in the extreme, he was a bear of a man, possessed of great physical resilience and strength. He also had a strong but unreliable telekinetic

talent. He was an excellent field agent, and even substituted for Hellboy from time to time. Johnson mysteriously vanished in the early 90s.

## KEVIN AND REDFIELD

Kevin and Redfield are two of the Bureau's pilots. Their skills include flying both planes and helicopters, and they also have a range of mechanical and engineering skills. Since they usually only see the beginning of field operations (when the agents are complaining about long flights and cranky electronics), and the end (when the agents are usually battered, bleeding, and standing in front of some type of smoking wreckage), they have a dark sense of humor about both agents and operations.

((END BOX))

# Creating BPRD Agents

The player characters in a *Hellboy* roleplaying game are, by default, agents of the BPRD. This section shows how to create them.

### *Standard Features*

The Bureau acts as a Patron (p. 00) to its agents. It is a reasonably powerful organization (15 points), that allows its agents to use equipment for their own purposes (+5 points), and has special qualities (extensive knowledge of the paranormal, +5 points). Its base value as a Patron is 25 points. Agents have no trouble contacting the Bureau when they need to, so its Frequency of Appearance is 15 or less, tripling cost to 75 points. While this is considered the standard for most campaigns, it's possible for the party to be made up of consultants or associates of the Bureau, who can't use its equipment freely (lowering base cost), or who are working so far from civilization that they have trouble reaching the Bureau (lowering the Frequency of Appearance). The GM should feel free to change the cost of the Bureau as Patron as required.

The Bureau also imposes a Duty (p. 00) on its agents. The Bureau requires most of its agents' time, but not all of it, so the frequency is 12 or less, for 10 points. This is for field agents, whose duties are occasionally dangerous. Those employees who specifically avoid danger (such as Dr. Hoffman, p. 00) only get 5 points for the same Duty.

### *Common Features*

While the Bureau has no standard training program for its agents, it encourages them to pick up the basics of First Aid/TL7, Guns (Pistol)/TL7, History, and Occultism. Most agents also acquire Computer Operation/TL7 and Driving (Automobile)/TL7 along the way.

Two of the most common disadvantages among agents are Curious and Sense of Duty. The degree of their Sense of Duty varies from encompassing mostly their friends and teammates, up through a desire to protect all humanity (or, indeed, all sentient beings) at all costs. Field agents are unlikely to have close family (such as Dependents, p. 00). The job is dangerous, and the possibility of a lingering curse endangering one's spouse or kids is a frightening thought.

### *Starting Points*

**Average Agents (165 points):** At this level, the characters are usually human beings, with perhaps a special power at a low level. Professor Corrigan and Sidney Leach are two examples, and can be used as player characters in this kind of campaign. Characters are built on 100 total points, with up to 40 points in disadvantages and 5 points in quirks. They then get a 75-point Patron (BPRD), and a 10-point Duty (to the BPRD), for a total of 165 points.

**Enhanced Agents (315 points):** At 315 points, player characters are either extremely-skilled humans, humans with exotic abilities, or powerful non-humans. Liz Sherman and Abe Sapien are examples, and can be

used as PCs. Characters are built on 250 points, with up to -100 points in disadvantages and -5 points in quirks. They then get the same Patron and Duty as for average agents.

**Powerful Agents (565 points):** With 565 points, characters are either extremely powerful non-humans, or paragons of humanity. Roger is an example. Characters are built on 500 points, with up to -100 points in disadvantages, 5 points in quirks, and the same Patron and Duty as above.

**Mixed Point Totals:** In many published *Hellboy* stories, the team consists of a mix of high- and low-point characters. In a roleplaying game, the danger is that the lower-point characters will be overshadowed, and their players won't have any fun. However, so long as each character has a unique strength, and the GM gives each a chance to shine, a mixed-level group can still be a fun possibility. For example, Hellboy is good at hitting things, but often needs Professor Corigan's knowledge to find the things that need hitting.

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## Playing a Non-Human

Many of the stars of the *Hellboy* comics are non-human, and players will naturally want to have the option of playing non-human PCs. Unfortunately, no two of the non-human Bureau agents are alike, so there are no simple rules for what abilities a PC non-human should have. However, here are a few guidelines.

First, the player should decide on the PC's history. Both Abe Sapien and Roger were abandoned lab experiments, and that's always a valid choice. Hellboy himself simply mysteriously appeared during an investigation, his mind a blank slate. A third option is for the character to be a minor foe of the BPRD who has turned to good. For example, svartalves (p. 00) are on average vicious and unpleasant, but one with a gentler nature could exist, and would make an interesting Bureau agent.

Next, the player should determine the character's appearance. Most aspects of a being's looks are covered by the Unnatural Feature disadvantage (p. 00), possibly combined with a positive or negative Appearance (p. 00). If the character has a feature which may affect combat, the player should consult Chapter 6, *Beasts and Monsters*, for the appropriate advantage, such as Strikers (p. 00).

The next step is to buy any other unusual abilities the being might have. Chapter 6 is again the place to go. Many players will be tempted to buy one of everything, but it's recommended that the character have at most two or three of the exotic advantages. The rest of the character's points should go to mundane advantages and skills. A Bureau agent that is *just* a combat monster will probably be useless during the investigative parts of an adventure. Even Hellboy doesn't spend his entire time hitting things.

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## CHARACTER TEMPLATES

The following templates will serve as guidelines for making BPRD characters, and aid in creating them quickly. Attributes, advantages, disadvantages, and skills are specified as appropriate. For a few types, psychic powers are also suggested. Skills are divided into two categories: primary skills, which are necessary, and secondary skills, which are useful but need not be fully mastered.

Templates are a convenience, not a requirement. GMs may choose not to use templates in their campaigns; if they do, characters created both with and without templates should be allowed. Using a template does not give any discount on point cost or have any in-play affects that might unbalance the game. A template is simply a list of choices that work well together, designed to save work in coming up with well-balanced characters, while leaving room for customization. GMs are free to add new templates as dictated by the needs of their campaign.

### ***Point Man***

### ***165 points***

The point man is the member of the team responsible for the physical safety of the rest of the team. This usually means they are the ones who find trouble and beat it up. Hellboy is the best point man the Bureau has ever



had, though Roger, Abe Sapien, and Mr. Johnson are also quite good at it. This template assumes the character is a normal human; if more points are available, the character might instead be a psychic or non-human.

**Attributes:** ST 12 [20]; DX 13 [30]; IQ 11 [10]; HT 11 [10].

**Advantages:** High Pain Threshold [10]; Patron (BPRD) [75]; and 15 additional points chosen from Alertness [5/level], Ambidexterity [10], Combat Reflexes [15], Daredevil [15], Rapid Healing [5 or 15], Strong Will [4/level], or Toughness DR 1 [10].

**Disadvantages:** Duty (BPRD) [-10]; and one of Bad Temper [-10], Bully [-10], Impulsiveness [-10], Overconfidence [-10], or Sense of Duty (Those endangered by the paranormal) [-10].

**Primary Skills:** Guns (Pistol)/TL7 (P/E) DX+1 [2]-14; and an additional 6 points in Combat/Weapon skills like Brawling, Guns/TL7 (Other), Thrown Weapon (all P/E), Boxing (P/A), Karate (P/H), or other Missile Weapon or Hand Weapon skills.

**Secondary Skills:** First Aid/TL7 (M/E) IQ-1 [1/2]-10; Occultism (M/A) IQ-2 [1/2]-9; and an additional 6 points in skills chosen from Computer Operation/TL7 (M/E), Armoury/TL7, Intimidation, Leadership (all M/A), Animal Handling, History, Tactics (all M/H), Jumping (P/E), Climbing, Driving/TL7 (Automobile), Stealth (all P/A), or Acrobatics (P/H).

### ***Field Investigator***

### ***150 points***

Investigators go on field operations to determine what is going on through first-hand observation. While they need to be able to take care of themselves, combat is not their strength. Instead, they are generally experts in one or more academic fields. Professor Corrigan is an investigator, and so were Professor Brutenholm and Bud Waller. Investigators may end up being called 'Professor' even if they've never actually earned it.

**Attributes:** ST 10 [0]; DX 11 [10]; IQ 14 [45]; HT 11 [10].

**Advantages:** Patron (BPRD) [75]; and 15 additional points chosen from Acute Senses [2/level], Alertness [5/level], Language Talent [2/level], Reputation (As expert in field) [varies], Single-Minded [5], or Strong Will [4/level].

**Disadvantages:** Curious [-5]; Duty (BPRD) [-10]; and -15 additional points chosen from Bad Sight [-10], Impulsiveness [-10], Odious Personal Habit (Lectures) [-5], Pacifism (Self-defense only) [-15], Sense of Duty [varies], or Truthfulness [-5]. A higher level of Curious is also an option.

**Primary Skills:** Research (M/A) IQ+1 [4]-15; and one of Anthropology (M/H) IQ+1 [8]-15, Archaeology (M/H) IQ+1 [8]-15, Criminology/TL7 (M/A) IQ+2 [8]-16, History (M/H) IQ+1 [8]-15, or Occultism (M/A) IQ+2 [8]-16.

**Secondary Skills:** Computer Operation/TL7 (M/E) IQ-1 [1/2]-13; First Aid/TL7 (M/E) IQ-1 [1/2]-13; and an additional 12 points in skills chosen from Area Knowledge (Any) (M/E), Criminology/TL7, Occultism, Teaching, Writing (all M/A), Law, Naturalist (both M/H), Alchemy/TL7, Paraphysics/TL7, Ritual Magic, Thaumatology (all M/VH), Guns (Pistol)/TL7 (P/E), Driving/TL7 (Automobile) (P/A), Running (P/H), or any Humanities, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences (all M/H), or Language Skills (M/varies).

**Notes:** If the investigator does not have History or Occultism as a primary skill, he must put at least 1/2 point in it (or them) as a secondary skill. Language Talent and some Language skills are strongly recommended, but not required. It is rare for a Bureau investigator to have more than 1 point in Alchemy, Ritual Magic, or Thaumatology, or more than 2 points in Paraphysics.

### ***Psychic Investigator***

### ***145 points***

These psychics are part of the field team, willing and able to be among the first to a site. They have at least one psychic skill (often *only* one), useful for gathering information, not combat. Sidney Leach and Johann Kraus are two examples (though Johann's situation is more complicated than this template allows).

**Attributes:** ST 10 [0]; DX 12 [20]; IQ 13 [30]; HT 11 [10].

**Advantages:** Patron (BPRD) [75]; one of the psychic single-skill powers Awareness 3 [6], Channeling 3 [6], Detect Aura 3 [6], Energy Sense 6 [6], Metal Sense 6 [6], or Psychometry 6 [6]; and 10 additional points

chosen from Absolute Direction [5], Acute Senses [2/level], Autotrance [5], Charisma [5/level], or Strong Will [4/level].

**Disadvantages:** Duty (BPRD) [-10]; and -15 additional points chosen from Bad Sight [-10], Curious [-5/level], Hard of Hearing [-10], Odious Personal Habit (Distant and spacey) [-5], Overconfidence [-10], Pacifism (Self-defense only) [-15], Sense of Duty (Psychics) [-5], or other Sense of Duty [varies].

**Primary Skills:** The appropriate psychic skill to match the chosen advantage, at (M/H) IQ+1 [6]-14; Occultism (M/A) IQ-1 [1]-12; and Paraphysics/TL7 (M/VH) IQ-3 [1]-10.

**Secondary Skills:** First Aid/TL7 (M/E) IQ-1 [1/2]-12; History (M/H) IQ-3 [1/2]-10; and an additional 10 points in skills chosen from Computer Operation/TL7 (M/E), Acting, Criminology/TL7, Fast-Talk, Research (all M/A), Philosophy (M/H), Alchemy/TL7, Ritual Magic, Thaumatology (all M/VH), Guns (Pistol)/TL7 (P/E), Driving/TL7 (Automobile) (P/A), or Running (P/H).

**Notes:** It is rare for a Bureau investigator to have more than 1 point in Alchemy, Ritual Magic, or Thaumatology.

### ***Psychokinetic Agent*** **160 points**

Like the psychic investigators, psychokinetics have a unique wild talent. They are, on average, more orientated to the physical aspects of operations, and often assist (or are) the point men. Liz Sherman is an example (though her mundane skills are more social than physical).

**Attributes:** ST 11 [10]; DX 12 [20]; IQ 12 [20]; HT 11 [10].

**Advantages:** Patron (BPRD) [75]; one of the psychic single-skill powers Surge 12 [24], Cryokinesis 12 [24], Pyrokinesis 8 [24], or Telekinesis 6 [24]; and 10 additional points chosen from Acute Senses [2/level], Alertness [5/level], Double-Jointed [5], Disease-Resistant [5], Night Vision [10], Rapid Healing [5], or Strong Will [4/level].

**Disadvantages:** Duty (BPRD) [-10]; and -15 additional points chosen from Bad Temper [-10], Curious [-5/level], Impulsiveness [-10], Pyromania [-5], Sense of Duty [varies], or Stubbornness [-5].

**Primary Skills:** The appropriate psychic skill to match the chosen advantage, at (M/H) IQ+1 [6]-13; and Paraphysics/TL7 (M/VH) IQ-3 [1]-9.

**Secondary Skills:** First Aid/TL7 (M/E) IQ [1]-12; History (M/H) IQ-3 [1/2]-9; Occultism (M/A) IQ-2 [1/2]-10; and an additional 7 points in skills chosen from Computer Operation/TL7, Cooking (both M/E), Criminology/TL7, Electronics Operation/TL7, Fast-Talk, Research (all M/A), Chemistry, Electronics/TL7, Physics (all M/H), Alchemy/TL7, Ritual Magic, Thaumatology (all M/VH), Brawling, Guns (Pistol)/TL7 (both P/E), Driving/TL7 (Automobile) (P/A), Karate, or Running (both P/H).

**Notes:** It is rare for a Bureau investigator to have more than 1 point in Alchemy, Ritual Magic, or Thaumatology.

## **MODIFYING THE TEMPLATES**

With minor changes, the above templates can be used to simulate other kinds of investigators.

### ***Consultants***

The Bureau often hires consultants when it needs expertise it can't find in-house. Professor Corrigan started out as a consultant. Most consultants will be based on the Field Investigator template. To turn field investigators into consultants, begin by removing the Patron advantage and the Duty disadvantage. Increase the level of their primary skills by 1 or more. The remaining skills can stay the same, but consultants are less likely to have the First Aid, Guns, or Running skills, and quite unlikely to have Alchemy, Paraphysics, Ritual Magic, or Thaumatology skill. If they *do* have one of those four skills, it will most likely be their area of expertise, and the reason the Bureau hired them.

### ***Staff Psychics***

Dr. Hoffman's psychics are often called in as the follow-up team, once a site has been cleared of danger by a field operation. They are based on the Psychic Investigator template. They are less likely to have the Strong Will

advantage, or the First Aid, Guns, or Running skills. They will probably have one or more of these disadvantages: Bad Sight [-10], Cowardice [-10], Dependents [varies], Fat [-10/-20], Hard of Hearing [-10], Lameness [-15/-25/-35], Laziness [-10], One Arm [-20], One Eye [-15], Phobias [varies], Skinny [-5], Weak Will [-8/level], Youth [-2/-4/-6], or some other disadvantage that makes the psychic unsuitable for dangerous field work.

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## Magic-Users At The BPRD

While the Bureau has many psychics and wild talents on its staff, there's no record that any of its employees know more than the most basic fundamentals of using magic. Magicians and mages are far more likely to show up as enemies than allies. The general attitude at the Bureau is that magic is dangerous and fickle.

That said, good Bureau agents *do* know the basics, at least well enough to recognize rituals in progress, and the effects of spells. Many of them probably *could* perform a ritual if absolutely necessary, though they wouldn't have a very good chance of success. Some allies of the Bureau (such as Father Kelly) can perform Exorcism (p. 00) and related rituals, which are available to mainstream ordained priests as well as magicians.

If the GM likes, a player *can* have a character who is both a Bureau agent and a competent magician. Other agents will probably regard him with caution, and only ask him to use the whitest of magic, and only when absolutely necessary. GMs should charge a 10-point Unusual Background (p. 00) to Bureau magic-users.

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## Allies and Others

Other people around the world are involved in the investigation of the paranormal. Here are a few.

### LADY CYNTHIA EDEN-JONES

In the 1940s, she was England's top medium, and an important member of the British Paranormal Society. She was present at the Hellboy incident, and gathered almost all of what little information was found through her mystical awareness. She did not join the BPRD when it was founded, choosing instead to stay with the BPS.

Over the next 18 years, she was one of the most visible members of the Society, often going on its field missions. She met with Professor Bruttonholm and Hellboy often, and frequently encouraged them to continue research into the East Bromwich site. (Hellboy refused to do so.) She continued investigating the paranormal up until her untimely death in 1962.

Eden-Jones would be of immense aid to any BPRD investigations taking place in the United Kingdom prior to 1962. Her knowledge of the paranormal was second only to Professor Bruttonholm, and her psychic talents were immense. Always a lady, she had dark hair and pale brown eyes.

### PROFESSOR MALCOLM FROST

Professor Frost was the third member of the BPS present at the Hellboy Incident. An American, he was a professor of history at Blackfriars College. When Hellboy manifested, he was one of the few people who advocated killing him. He continued to do so for the next eight years, until Hellboy was declared human by the United Nations. His anger and depression at the fatal mistake sent him into a decline, and he died shortly thereafter.

In his life, Frost was a tireless foe of hostile supernatural forces. While his aim was sometimes misguided, his motives were always honest. He occasionally crossed paths with BPRD agents in the late 1940s, and while he would always try to talk them into destroying Hellboy, he was often of invaluable aid on their investigations.

## SERGEANT GEORGE WHITMAN

Sergeant Whitman was the leader of the U.S. Army Ranger team present at the Hellboy incident. While initially skeptical, Hellboy's manifestation convinced him that there was more to the world than he'd known. He restrained his men from killing the demon-child, on Lady Eden-Jones's recommendation, and was pleased it turned out to be the right choice.

Whitman was plain-spoken, and hard to surprise. He remained with the Army, and his unit was often assigned to assist the BPRD in the years that followed.

## DOCTOR ANASTASIA BRANSFIELD

Dr. Anastasia Bransfield (known as Stacie to her close friends, and Stasia only to Hellboy) is one of England's leading archaeologists. She was also Hellboy's first and last girlfriend. They met in 1979, and quickly fell in love. Hellboy spent more than a year assisting her on digs. Inevitably, they also encountered the paranormal. They saved each other's life several times over. In 1981, they decided to break it off, as the controversy surrounding their relationship made Hellboy feel much less human. They remain close friends.

Bransfield is an attractive blond woman, currently about 50. She is both a brilliant archaeologist and a good leader. She's also quite capable of taking care of herself, through quick thinking (and occasional judo). In her time with Hellboy she was exposed to some of the worst the paranormal has to offer, and she rarely flinches in the face of new dangers.

## FATHER MIKE NOLAN

An Irish priest, Michael Nolan was a friend of Hellboy's in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Hellboy spent much of this period in Ireland taking care of threats from the Daoine Sidh and other paranormal entities. An elderly gentleman with white mutton-chop sideburns, Nolan was kind, unflappable, and always willing to offer aid to Hellboy and his allies.

## FATHER EDWARD KELLY

Father Edward (sometimes Ed) Kelly of the Catholic Church was a friend and occasional partner to Hellboy for over 30 years. They were already good friends in the early 1960s, and Hellboy once described him as the toughest guy I ever worked with. He combined a rock-solid faith with great skill in exorcising spirits. It is possible that he was part of a division of the Catholic Church dedicated to ridding the world of paranormal evil. However, the Church is not forthcoming on the question. Kelly died in 1994, killed by the werewolf William Grenier, and was avenged by Hellboy.

## LOBSTER JOHNSON

The Lobster was a crime fighter in the 1930s. His distinctive outfit included large goggles and a double-breasted leather jacket with a lobster's claw on the front. He was a merciless dispenser of justice, killing gangsters with his signature .45 pistol, and then burning his symbol into their foreheads with a device in his glove. His foes included more than a few paranormal menaces. The official position was (and is) that Lobster Johnson was a myth, and a few movie serials (of dubious quality) based on his alleged exploits support that explanation.

During the war, Lobster Johnson assisted American troops on several secret missions, including his last. Johnson died during a mission into Hunte Castle in Austria in 1939. Something of him remained, however, as described under *The Restless Dead*, p. 00.

## THE OSIRIS CLUB

A mysterious association, the Osiris Club is apparently dedicated to observing and destroying paranormal menaces. Its precise size and powers are unknown, but it keeps a very low profile. As of the 1950s, its membership consisted of mostly upper-class citizens of the United Kingdom, mostly male. At least one member had psychic powers at that time. Professor Bruttonholm knew of them and trusted them, and sent Hellboy to them to help with St. Leonard's Worm. Probably unknown to Bruttonholm, the Club was also testing Hellboy to see if he needed to be destroyed.

If the Osiris Club still exists today, it is clearly still secretive, and probably still has in its membership people with power both psychic and political. If Bureau agents cross paths with representatives of the Club, the agents may never know it.

[[[Hellboy, revised (2) first draft, by Phil Masters <phil@philm.demon.co.uk> and Jonathan Woodward <woodward@io.com>]]]

## 3. NAZIS AND OTHER HUMAN FOES

The Bureau came into being as a result of a Nazi plot, and Nazis have continued to appear standing beside supernatural menaces over the following decades. Today, perhaps, the last survivors of that original plot have died off, but this is far from certain.

### The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich

In the second quarter of the 20th century a surprisingly small group of people brought the world to its darkest hour.

#### THE THULE SOCIETY

Founded during World War I, the Thule Society was ostensibly dedicated to preserving German literature. Most of its members thought it was a revolutionary political party dedicated to racial purity, anti-Semitism, and the overthrow of the Bavarian Communist government. Its innermost circle knew they were acting to preserve the true German bloodline, which they believed could be traced to the mystical island of Thule, far to the north, and then back even further, to the first race of men, who came from inside the Earth. That pre-human super race may well have existed; Rasputin believed in them, and called them the Hyperboreans. However, even if they existed, the Aryan people are no more closely related to them than any other modern race. Regardless, the fundamental delusion of superiority at the heart of the Thule Society did not prevent it from birthing the Nazi Party.

#### THE NAZI PARTY AND ADOLPH HITLER

Originally nothing more than an organization dedicated to fighting the injustices of the World War I peace settlement, the National Socialist German Worker's Party (abbreviated NSDAP) became a tool for evil under the leadership of Adolph Hitler. Many members of the Thule Society joined the Nazis, and guided their interest in the occult. Over the course of the 1920s and early 1930s, Hitler went from political prisoner and thug to Chancellor of

Germany. In only a few more years, he and the Nazis had abolished any power within Germany that might threaten them, and had begun conquering Europe. The leaders of the Nazi party were directly responsible for millions of deaths, and for igniting the worst war the world has ever seen.

## HIMMLER'S SPECIAL GROUP

Heinrich Himmler joined the Nazi party in 1925, and during World War Two was chief of the Gestapo, and one of Hitler's right-hand men. He was also responsible for assembling and leading the Special Group. This team of mystics, astrologers, astronomers, scientists, and pseudo-scientists had the responsibility of exploring the frontiers of human knowledge, looking for weapons to serve the Reich. The Group included Ilsa Hauptstein, Professor Doctor Karl Ruprecht Kroenen, Leopold Kurtz, Professor Doctor Herman von Klempt, General Klaus Werner von Krupt, and several others. Professor Ernst Oeming was the pride of the team, often compared to Einstein. He was responsible both for the secret Nazi space program, and for the unique psychic technology that allowed the Nazis to make contact with the cold intelligences that live beyond the atmosphere. When he was assassinated in early 1939, his body was rushed to the Group's facility at Hunte Castle, in Austria. This castle was a site for research into artificial soldiers, and also had a functional rocket, able to put one man in orbit. Oeming's body was specially prepared, and loaded into the rocket, with the intent that it should be shot into space, and possessed by one of the transatmospheric entities. The castle was attacked by American soldiers, led by Lobster Johnson, and the rocket was launched before the roof could be opened, destroying the castle. The only survivor was von Klempt (who had been unaware of the rocket's true purpose). However, he was gravely injured, and was only able to survive by transferring his head into a life-support jar of his own design.

At some point in the early 1940s, Himmler heard of a powerful magician, living in Italy. He went there to recruit him, and the magician agreed. It is unknown if Himmler knew that he had hired Rasputin, but regardless the mad monk kept his identity secret from the rest of the Special Group, who he mostly regarded as fools. Rasputin chose Hauptstein, Kroenen, and Kurtz as the sanest and most useful members of the Group, and guided them in the creation of the Ragna Rok Engine. This device could provide immense power, and aid Rasputin in his work of freeing the Ogdru Jahad.

By late 1944, it was clear that the war was turning against the Nazis. The various members of the Group began setting up hiding places all over the world, in case Germany fell. Simultaneously, Hitler and Himmler began demanding that the various Doomsday Projects the Group had been working on bear fruit. Rasputin, Kroenen, and Kurtz, under the supervision of General von Krupt, put the finishing touches on the Ragna Rok Engine; Rasputin promised Hitler that it would deliver a miracle. While this was going on, Hauptstein traveled with a delegation to Romania, and met the vampire Giurescu. While there, she fell in love with him. She returned to Germany, and told Hitler that Giurescu could provide a Vampir Sturm, an army of the undead. She then rejoined the Ragna Rok Team.

On December 3<sup>rd</sup>, Hitler met with Giurescu. What happened is unknown, but the next day Hitler ordered that the vampire be arrested. Giurescu and his six vampire brides were delivered to Dachau, and beheaded and staked, within a fortnight. Unaware of this, the Ragna Rok Team covertly went to Tarmagant Island, and on December 23<sup>rd</sup> performed the ritual that summoned Hellboy (p. 00). The lack of apparent results displeased von Krupt, and he and Rasputin argued. The magician took Hauptstein, Kroenen, and Kurtz aside. By this point they were all loyal to him, rather than the Reich, and had deduced his true identity. Rasputin told Hauptstein how she and Giurescu had been betrayed by Hitler, and that Germany would fall within months. The three of them went to their prepared hiding place in Norway, while Rasputin made other arrangements.

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# What Really Happened On Tarmagant Island?

To date, no one is absolutely certain. What we do know is this: Rasputin intended to channel the power of the Ragna Rok Engine, and use it to free the Dragon, Ogdrú Jahad, using the Empower ritual (p. 00). What he didn't know then (at least not consciously), was that it was *impossible* to free the Ogdrú Jahad without the Right Hand of Doom, the tool that imprisoned them. He also lacked an adequate connection to the Ogdrú Jahad; his ritual was certain to fail.

However, Rasputin was a very powerful sorcerer, and was manipulating vast amounts of energy. He attracted the attention of *something*; possibly a manifestation of the Ogdrú Jahad, possibly Sadu-Hem, possibly the Lords of Hell. Whatever force noticed him, it arranged for the tool Rasputin needed to be sent to Earth. The Hand was at that time attached to Hellboy (why, we don't know), so Hellboy materialized on Earth, in East Bromwich. Rasputin sensed this partial success, but the details escaped him.

((END BOX))

Germany was defeated by the Allies, and Hitler, Himmler, and most of the other top Nazis either committed suicide, were killed, or were imprisoned. Some of the surviving members of the Special Group successfully hid, including von Klempt, who journeyed to South America. The Nazi party appeared to be broken.

## AFTER THE WAR

The Ragna Rok Team entered suspended hibernation, and didn't emerge until the mid-1990s. Rasputin, likewise, hid until the 1990s. Giurescu remained dead. Professor Doctor von Klempt's post-war career lasted over a decade, but Hellboy found and defeated him in 1959, leaving his head buried under rubble outside Macap, Brazil. What happened to the other members of the Special Group is not recorded. It is possible that a few survive today, and are pursuing evil plans.

## The Nazis Today

There have been several different kinds of Nazis active in the world over the past decade. The first are simply political parties and individuals which espouse Nazi ideals, either openly or in private. While contemptible, they are relatively harmless unless recruited by someone with power and a plan.

The second kind are directly working for the conquest of the world, and the restoration of the Reich. They include surviving members of the original Nazi party, and possibly scientists from the Special Group. They are a great danger, but their powers are usually *merely* political and scientific, and rarely include access to the supernatural.

The last group are those members of the Special Group who fell under Rasputin's sway. While they still claim to be Nazis, and to be working for the glory of the Reich, this is largely a lie, intended to convince members of the first two groups to aid them. They are nihilists, planning for the destruction of humanity, and the greater glory of Rasputin. This group originally included Hauptstein, Kroenen, and Kurtz. While von Klempt at first did not agree with Rasputin's goals or methods, he was contacted and convinced by Rasputin's ghost in 1997. All four of these maniacs are believed to be dead; it is possible there is no longer any threat from them. However, von Klempt, at least, has been thought dead before, and Hauptstein's bones are currently part of Hecate's living iron body. The Ragna Rok Team may make its voice heard again.

# Nazis, Agents, and Allies

Here are character descriptions and biographies for some of Hellboy's greatest foes.

## RASPUTIN

775 POINTS

Age Unknown; 5'11"; 160 lbs.; A spectral figure, with a bald head, full beard, and piercing eyes. He will be dressed as a monk, bearing a pentagram on his chest, with a gout of blue flame coming from it.

This description represents Rasputin between his second death and his third (1993-2001), and gives his *minimum* abilities; he should be assumed to have many powers beyond what is listed here.

**ST** 12 [20]; **DX** 13 [30]; **IQ** 16 [80]; **HT** 16/20 [80].

Speed 7.25; Move 7.

Dodge 7.

**Advantages:** Autotrance [5]; Charisma +10 [50] (Reaction: +10); Magery 3 [35]; Patron (Baba Yaga) (6 or less) [13] (Special Qualities: Very Unusual, +10); Patron (The Serpent) (6 or less) [13] (Special Qualities: Very Unusual, +10); Regeneration [100]; Ritual Adept 3 [30]; Ritual Aptitude 5 [5]; Spirit Form [130] (Unlimited Lifespan: +30%); Strong Will +5 [20] (Will: 21).

**Disadvantages:** Bad Temper [10]; Obsession (Free the Ogdru Jahad) [15]; Overconfidence [10]; Reputation 14 (As a lunatic trying to destroy the world: Recognized by BPRD agents: Small class) [16]; Reputation 12 (As the mad monk: Recognized Occasionally) [13]; Stubbornness [15].

**Quirks:** Always manifests in the same form; Dreams of Baba Yaga's chickenleg house; Likes to explain his history and plans. [13]

**Skills:** Acting-15 [1]; Alchemy/TL6-16 [8]; Banish-15 [2]; Bard-24 [1/2]; Bind-16 [2]; Botany/TL6-14 [1]; Climbing-13 [2]; Criminology/TL6-14 [1/2]; Diagnosis/TL6-14 [1]; Diplomacy-15 [2]; Embody-16 [2]; Empower-18 [8]; Endure Elements-16 [0]; Escape-11 [1]; FastTalk-16 [2]; First Aid/TL6-15 [1/2]; Forgery/TL6-13 [1/2]; History-15 [2]; Interrogation-14 [1/2]; Intimidation-16 [2]; Law-13 [1/2]; Leadership-24 [1/2]; Literature-13 [1/2]; Locate-14 [6]; Malediction-14 [12]; Meteorology/TL6-14 [1/2]; Naturalist-14 [1]; Navigation/TL6-14 [1]; Occultism-20 [10]; Path of Knowledge-16 [8]; Path of Luck-16 [8]; Path of Protection-16 [8]; Path of Spirit-18 [16]; Philosophy-15 [2]; Physician/TL6-15 [2]; Psychology-14 [1]; Read Memories-14 [10]; Read Thoughts-14 [10]; Research-16 [2]; Riding-11 [1/2]; Ritual Magic-20 [24]; SavoirFaire-15 [1/2]; Scry-14 [8]; Sex Appeal-14 [1/2]; Spirit Slave-15 [6]; Spirit Trap-15 [2]; Stealth-13 [2]; Streetwise-14 [1/2]; Summon-18 [0]; Survival (Arctic)-14 [1/2]; Survival (Woodlands)-14 [1/2]; Teaching-14 [1/2]; Thaumatology-18 [4]; Theology-16 [4]; Writing-14 [1/2]; Zoology-13 [1/2].

**Languages:** Russian (native)-16 [0]; English-14 [1/2]; German-14 [1/2].

**Known Spells:** Breathe Fire-16; Concussion-17; Strike Blind-17.

((START QUOTE))

ÍHellboy! IÍm still your master, boy! I will see you crawl before me!Í

((END QUOTE))

Born Grigori Efimovich Novykh, Rasputin was originally from Siberia. He spent his youth wandering through Russia, Europe, and the Middle East. He followed the teachings of the Khlysty Monks, who held that to please God, one should first commit sins, and then punish oneself for the sins. Grigori, like many of that order, emphasized the sinning, and became known as Rasputin, the Debauched One. By then he had already discovered his strange magical abilities, including an ability to heal by laying on hands. He also, despite his poor hygiene and arrogant personality, had an uncanny personal charisma. These abilities frightened and frustrated him, and he found no answers until Baba Yaga came to him. She told him that he was to be the father of a new era. He gave her half his soul, to hide in the roots of the World Tree, so that his spirit would always be safe.

In 1905, the Romanovs, rulers of Russia, summoned him to the palace, where he was able to ease the pain of Prince Alexis's hemophilia. He quickly became a fixture at the court, helping Alexis and sleeping with Empress Alexandra. He continued to be smelly, arrogant, and debauched, but since he had the Empress's favor, no one could touch him for many years. Finally, in 1916, Prince Yusupov and some other nobles invited Rasputin to a



meal. The wine and cakes they fed him were poisoned, but he did not even notice. Yusupov was finally driven to shoot him, but that only caused Rasputin to flee. They finally caught him, bound him, and threw him in the river.

This was Rasputin's first death. In the river, a manifestation of the Ogdru Jahad contacted him. It told him that he would live, and explained the destiny Baba Yaga had only hinted at. It was his mission to bring about the destruction of humanity through holocaust and fire. Rasputin accepted this destiny, and the Serpent empowered him with vast health and resiliency, and magical abilities unmatched on Earth.

After crawling from the river, he went to Italy to rest, recuperate, and explore his new powers. He stayed there for more than 20 years. He preached occasionally, and word traveled to Germany, where Himmler heard of him. He recruited Rasputin into the Special Group, and gave Rasputin his first chance to try and free the Ogdru Jahad. Rasputin did not know exactly what the result of the Ragna Rok ritual would be, but when it was complete, he knew something had been brought to Earth from Hell. His uncertainty, and the fall of Germany, once again left him unsure of himself. He listened to the voices within, and went north, to the Temple of Ogdru Jahad, where the monster Sadu-hem stood, apparently dead and fossilized. Rasputin sat in front of it, and entered a decades-long trance, communing with the Seven.

Nearly 50 years passed, until Professor Bruttonholm touched Rasputin's cheek. Rasputin instantly knew the contents of Bruttonholm's mind, and that his adopted son, Hellboy, was the thing he had summoned in 1944. He took control of Bruttonholm and his companions, and, along with Sadu-Hem, they traveled back to civilization. He released Bruttonholm as bait for Hellboy, then set himself up in the Cavendish Hall, to prepare for Hellboy's arrival.

Hellboy did come, but refused to help Rasputin destroy the world, and the confrontation ended with Rasputin's body destroyed. This was his second death. Because part of his soul was safe at the World Tree, his spirit did not go on to the afterlife. Instead, he searched the world for a new agent. He noticed that the Ragna Rok Team were thawing in Norway, and decided they would need help to adapt to the 1990s. He manifested to Roderick Zinco, and made him his servant. He then watched over the Ragna Rok Team and Zinco as they gathered materials and tracked down Giurescu's body. He eventually appeared to Hauptstein, and convinced her to become like him, an empowered servant of the Ogdru Jahad. He did not stay to see the end of the embody ritual he performed on her, instead returning to Norway. There he found his agents squabbling and murdering each other. His rage was fierce, and the incident ended with the Norway base destroyed, and most of his minions dead. Rasputin retreated to the World Tree to ponder his mistakes, and talk with Baba Yaga.

He decided to try again. Locating von Klempt, he told him the true purpose of the rocket launched from Hunte Castle in 1939, and convinced him to finish the project, and destroy humanity. As the capsule landed, Rasputin appeared to Inger von Klempt (Herman von Klempt's granddaughter), and told her of her destiny, to be the mother of the new race of man, after the Ogdru Jahad had cleansed the world. She accepted this gratefully. However, Hellboy and his teammates interfered, Ragna Rok was again forestalled, and the von Klempts were killed. Rasputin had failed again.

As he walked through the ruins of Hunte Castle, Hecate appeared to him in her iron maiden form. He assumed she was Ilsa Hauptstein, until she corrected him. She told him that all his efforts to end the world were pointless, unless he could harness the power in Hellboy's hand. She laughed at his impotence to alter events even she could not shift. Enraged, he attacked Hecate, and she reduced him to fragments. One fell into Baba Yaga's hand, and she swore to keep it next to her heart. This was Rasputin's third death. Whether he can rise again is not known.

Rasputin was possibly the most powerful human sorcerer the world has seen. In his first life his powers were limited, but after being empowered by the Ogdru Jahad, his abilities were vast, extending to dozens, if not hundreds, of rituals and spells. His personal magnetism was inexplicable but immense, and his followers were loyal to the death. His one weakness was pride; he was unable to believe that events would not go as he desired, and thus never had effective backup plans in place.

If encountered as a spirit between 1993 and 2001, Rasputin will be more than a match for almost any foe, especially if he has had time to prepare. He is a megalomaniac, given to long speeches explaining his history and destiny. Any Bureau agent who meets him should count surviving as a victory.

((START BOX))

# High Technology vs. Invention

The High Technology advantage (p. 00) represents access to equipment that is above the general tech level of the world. The Invention advantage, on the other hand, indicates that the character himself can create an extraordinary device, or has the knowledge to use an advanced scientific technique. The distinction is that a character with High Technology need not be a scientist; he can *get* the devices, but not necessarily *create* them.

As an example, all members of the Ragna Rok Team have both advantages. For them, High Technology represents the devices that were created by other members of the Special Group, or which they can only create when working in collaboration. They all have access to this equipment, but individually could not recreate it. Each team member also has a signature Invention. If one of them were to have to start from scratch, without the aid of his teammates or access to stockpiled equipment, he would effectively lose the High Technology advantage, but would retain his ability to recreate his Invention.

((END BOX))

## LEOPOLD KURTZ

120 POINTS

Age 80; 3'7"; 120 lbs.; An abnormally short, black-haired man. Apparently in his 30s, he is technically 80. His face is marked by a heavy brow and jaw line.

This represents Kurtz just after he was thawed, in 1995.

**ST** 12 [20]; **DX** 10 [0]; **IQ** 14 [45]; **HT** 9 [10].

Speed 3.75; Move 3.

Dodge 3; Parry 7 (Brawling).

**Advantages:** High Technology (Effective TL8) [20]; Invention (Kmpfer) [15].

**Disadvantages:** Appearance (Unattractive) [15]; Bad Temper [10]; Dwarfism [15]; Fanaticism (To Rasputin) [15]; Reputation 14 (Nazi scientist: Recognized by Nazi hunters and some BPRD agents: Small class, Occasionally) [12].

**Quirks:** Loves destruction and death; Vicious. [12]

**Skills:** Armoury/TL8-18 [10]; Brawling-11 [2]; Camouflage-13 [1/2]; Chemistry/TL8-12 [1]; Criminology/TL8-12 [1/2]; Demolition/TL8-14 [2]; Driving (Kmpfer)/TL8-12 [8]; Electronics/TL8-18 [12]; Electronics Operation/TL8-15 [4]; Engineer/TL8-20 [16]; First Aid/TL8-13 [1/2]; Guns (Pistol)/TL8-11 [1/2]; History-11 [1/2]; Interrogation-13 [1]; Intimidation-14 [2]; Law-11 [1/2]; Mechanic/TL8-16 [6]; Metallurgy/TL8-12 [1]; Occultism-12 [1/2]; Philosophy-11 [1/2]; Physics/TL8-12 [1]; Shortsword-8 [1/2]; Stealth-11 [4]; Survival (Arctic)-12 [1/2]; Theology-11 [1/2]; Traps/TL8-14 [2].

**Languages:** German (native)-14 [0]; English-12 [1/2]; French-12 [1/2]; Norwegian-12 [1/2].

((START QUOTE))

¡Speak quickly! I am aching to destroy you!¡

((END QUOTE))

A diminutive mechanical genius, Kurtz was a member of the Special Group, and a devoted servant to Rasputin. Much of the physical construction of the Ragna Rok Engine was his work, and during the ritual, he was the one monitoring the controls. Like the rest of the team, he went to the Norway sanctuary, to be frozen. When he woke in 1995, his first task was to set up their defenses. He was the first to confront Zinco, in a mechanical walking weapon of his own design, his *Kmpfer*.

As the Ragna Rok Team began its plots, Kurtz stayed in Norway with Kroenen, to assist in the construction of the mechanical zombies of the Apocalypse Army. When von Klempt's head was found and revived, Kurtz disapproved. When von Klempt began trying to convince Kroenen to abandon Rasputin's plan, Kurtz went berserk. In the fight, he was apparently killed by Kroenen, and his body was buried when the Norway facility blew up.

Kurtz may have left Norway briefly during 1995 and 1996, but no Bureau agent knowingly encountered him. If his body is somehow recovered and revived, Kurtz will continue to pursue Rasputin's goals with fanatical devotion. He is vicious, impulsive, and loves destruction for its own sake. His plots will usually involve hulking machinery of death.

### ***The Kmpfer Walking Weapon***

Kurtz's pride and joy, this mechanical device allowed someone physically unsuited to be a soldier (such as Kurtz himself) to still fight on the battlefield, with the strength of many men. Approximately humanoid, with an open-frame construction, in its prototype form it left the controller exposed in a seat roughly where the head would be. Its right arm ended in a monstrous flamethrower; its left arm could be used to punch, grab, or crush. It requires a special Driving (Kmpfer) skill to operate, which is P/A, like other Driving skills.

In use, the Kmpfer effectively gives the controller ST 50, with a DX equal to his Driving (Kmpfer) skill. It has PD 4, DR 7, but this armor only protects the Kmpfer itself. It can take 20 points of damage before ceasing to function. The controller has no special protection, but is out of reach of anyone standing on the ground. To attack him with melee weapons requires climbing onto the Kmpfer. The flamethrower is fired using Driving (Kmpfer) skill, and has the same statistics as the Remington shotgun (p. 00), except it will light anything it hits on fire. At TL7, the Kmpfer is a 15-point invention.

## **ILSA HAUPSTEIN**

190 POINTS

Age 76; 5'8"; 135 lbs.; A blond woman, coldly attractive. Apparently in her late 20s, she is technically 76. The nicest expression anyone is likely to see on her face is bare tolerance.

This represents Haupstein just after she was thawed, in 1995.

**ST** 11 [10]; **DX** 13 [30]; **IQ** 15 [60]; **HT** 12 [20].

Speed 6.25; Move 6.

Dodge 6; Parry 7 (Knife).

**Advantages:** Appearance (Attractive) [5]; High Technology (Effective TL8) [20]; Invention (Cybernetic limbs) [15]; Strong Will +1 [4].

**Disadvantages:** Bad Temper [10]; Bloodlust [10]; Fanaticism (To Rasputin) [15]; Reputation 14 (Nazi scientist: Recognized by Nazi hunters and some BPRD agents: Small class, Occasionally) [12]; Stubbornness [15]; Vow (To restore Giurescu) [15].

**Quirks:** Loves Giurescu; Nihilist. [12]

**Skills:** Armoury/TL8-13 [1/2]; Chemistry/TL8-12 [1/2]; Criminology/TL8-14 [1]; Diagnosis/TL8-12 [1/2]; Diplomacy-12 [1/2]; Electronics/TL8-16 [6]; Electronics Operation/TL8-15 [2]; Engineer/TL8-20 [14]; First Aid/TL8-14 [1/2]; Guns (Pistol)/TL8-15 [1]; History-13 [1]; Interrogation-13 [1/2]; Intimidation-13 [1/2]; Knife-16 [8]; Law-12 [1/2]; Leadership-13 [1/2]; Literature-12 [1/2]; Mechanic/TL8-15 [2]; Metallurgy/TL8-12 [1/2]; Occultism-15 [2]; Physician/TL8-20 [14]; Physics/TL8-12 [1/2]; Research-13 [1/2]; Ritual Magic-11 [1/2]; Stealth-13 [2]; Surgery/TL8-16 [12]; Survival (Arctic)-13 [1/2].

**Languages:** German (native)-15 [0]; English-13 [1/2]; French-13 [1/2]; Italian-13 [1/2]; Polish-13 [1/2]; Romanian-13 [1/2].

((START QUOTE))

¡Oh, I would cut open the world to see it *bleed*.!

((END QUOTE))

A self-taught cybernetic genius, Haupstein was Rasputin's most devoted servant. Though a member of the Ragna Rok Team, she also was part of the delegation that attempted to recruit Giurescu to the Nazi cause. During those negotiations, she fell in love with Giurescu, and the vampire probably intended to add her to his undead harem. When she learned that Hitler had executed Giurescu, her faith in the Reich collapsed, and she became utterly devoted to Rasputin's nihilistic goals.

When she, Kurtz, and Kroenen awoke in Norway in 1995, she immediately set out to recover Giurescu's body and revive him. As the least stable member of the team, she had trouble adapting to the modern world, and often

lashed out at her underlings. Nevertheless, she managed to bring Giurescu back to his ancestral home, and she set in motion his resurrection.

Then Rasputin contacted her. He told her that she would see her lover again, and promised her power, if she would die a little for him. Obedient to the end, she entered the iron maiden he showed to her, and died. Rasputin's intent was that her spirit inhabit the iron maiden, but instead Hecate took the body, and Hauptstein's spirit apparently passed beyond this world.

During the year that Hauptstein spent tracking down Giurescu's body, no Bureau agent had any contact with her, but she could easily have crossed paths with other investigators of the paranormal. If encountered, she will be cold, rude, and unfamiliar with the details of 1990s life. If she has any reason to believe someone is her enemy, she will try to have them killed on the spot. She typically had at least one cybernetically-enhanced thug on hand as muscle.

Today, it is *just* possible that she could somehow usurp Hecate's control of the iron maiden, and become what Rasputin wanted her to be. In empowered form, she would be extremely dangerous, and completely dedicated to destroying humanity.

## ***Unmensch***

*110 points*

Age 27; 6'1"; 170 lbs.; A bald, hulking Caucasian man with a metal arm, and a bolt in his forehead. He speaks only in guttural German, and usually does not wear a shirt.

**ST** 14 [45]; **DX** 13 [30]; **IQ** 9 [10]; **HT** 13 [30].

Speed 6.50; Move 6.

Dodge 6; Parry 10 (Brawling).

**Advantages:** Combat Hand [10]; DR 5 (Everything) [4] (Percent (Combat Hand Only): 175%); Patron (Hauptstein) (9 or less) [15] (Special Qualities: Significant, +5); Spring-Loaded Fist [12].

**Disadvantages:** Appearance (Unattractive) [15] (Reaction: 11); Duty (To Hauptstein) (15 or less) [15]; Overconfidence [10]; Unluckiness [10]; Unnatural Feature (Cybernetic parts) [15].

**Quirks:** Taunts his opponents. [11]

**Skills:** Armoury/TL7-7 [1/2]; Brawling-16 [8]; Climbing-11 [1/2]; Disguise-8 [1]; Flail-12 [2]; Guns/TL7-12 [1/2]; History-6 [1/2]; Interrogation-8 [1]; Intimidation-11 [6].

**Languages:** German (native)-9 [0].

The Un-Man, Unmensch was Hauptstein's cybernetically-enhanced goon. Possessed of limited intelligence, a cruel streak, and very little common sense, he eagerly attacked Hellboy at Hauptstein's command, and got in two good hits before Hellboy ripped off his mechanical hand and beat him with it.

It is unknown if Unmensch was unique or part of a series of similarly-modified thugs. Presumably, Hauptstein could have created a number of soldiers with a variety of enhancements. This Unmensch's specific modification was a mechanical right arm with spring-loaded fist. Hauptstein could also have created arms with built-in guns, extensible legs, and other abilities. Her cybernetic skills represent a 15-point Invention.

((START BOX))

## Spring-Loaded Fist 12 points

Unmensch's unique arm can in part be represented by the advantages of Damage Resistance (p. 00) and Combat Hand (p. 00), but its ability to launch its hand at a foe is unusual. The fist had a range of about 2 yards (representing the length of the chain). As a weapon, it does thr+1d crushing damage, requiring a DX roll to hit a target. While extended, it can be used as a flail. It takes a minute or so to retract, via a hidden crank. (For those planning to integrate this game with standard *GURPS*, the spring-loaded fist is represented by Stretching 2, with the limitations Right arm only, -75%; Does extra 1d damage, +25%; and Loose-link chain, -25%. For most players, these details don't matter.)

((END BOX))

# PROFESSOR DOCTOR KARL RUPRECT KROENEN

140 POINTS

Age Unknown; 5'11"; 107 lbs.; A man in an all-covering protective suit.  
This represents Kroenen just after he was thawed, in 1995.

**ST** 12 [20]; **DX** 12 [20]; **IQ** 15 [60]; **HT** 9 [110].

Speed 5.25; Move 5.

Dodge 5; Parry 4 (Knife).

**Advantages:** Charisma +1 [5] (Reaction: +1); High Technology (Effective TL8) [20]; Invention (Mechanical zombies) [15]; Voice [10].

**Disadvantages:** Compulsive Behavior (Wears protective suit) [15]; Curious [15] (Roll: IQ); Fanaticism (To Rasputin) [15]; Odious Personal Habit (Experiments on humans) [15] (Reaction: 13); Reputation 14 [13] (Reaction (Nazi scientist): 14; Recognized by: Small class, □; Frequency of Recognition: Sometimes (101), □); Skinny [15] (Weight: 107); Weak Will 11 [18] (Will: 14).

**Quirks:** Polite and pleasant; Likes intellectual arguments. [12]

**Skills:** Acting-13 [1/2]; Administration-13 [1/2]; Alchemy/TL8-11 [1/2]; Armoury/TL8-13 [1/2]; Criminology/TL8-13 [1/2]; Demolition/TL8-13 [1/2]; Diagnosis/TL8-13 [1]; Diplomacy-14 [1/2]; Disguise-11 [1/2]; Electronics/TL8-16 [6]; Electronics Operation/TL8-14 [1]; Engineer/TL8-20 [14]; First Aid/TL8-14 [1/2]; Forensics/TL8-12 [1/2]; Guns/TL8-13 [1/2]; History-12 [1/2]; Interrogation-14 [1]; Knife-11 [1/2]; Law-12 [1/2]; Mechanic/TL8-13 [1/2]; Metallurgy/TL8-12 [1/2]; Occultism-13 [1/2]; Philosophy-12 [1/2]; Physician/TL8-18 [10]; Physics/TL8-12 [1/2]; Psychology-12 [1/2]; Research-14 [1]; SavoirFaire-16 [1/2]; Surgery/TL8-16 [12]; Survival (Arctic)-13 [1/2].

**Languages:** German (native)-15 [0]; English-13 [1/2]; French-13 [1/2].

((START QUOTE))

ÍI have more faith in an army of our own manufacture.Í

((END QUOTE))

The last of the Ragna Rok trio, Kroenen was the least predictable. A brilliant (if callous) experimental surgeon, he was never seen without his skintight, all-covering protective suit. Its exact purpose was unknown, but it is believed he was pathologically afraid of germs and infection.

Kroenen contributed his valuable expertise in biology to the heart of the Ragna Rok Engine, and afterwards went with his companions to Norway. When he woke in the 1990s, he immediately began work on his mechanical zombies. Unlike Kurtz and Hauptstein, he had no faith in Giurescu and the ÍVampir Sturm,Í but he allowed Hauptstein to pursue her plans. He also had ZincoÍs men track down the head of his old friend from school and the Special Group, von Klempt, and revived him. When Kurtz attacked von Klempt, Kroenen defended his old friend, killing Kurtz. After the fight, Kroenen sank into apathy, and was reduced to sniveling and excuses when Rasputin returned. Kroenen apparently died in the collapse of the Norway facility.

Unlike the other members of the Ragna Rok Team, Kroenen was always polite, calm, and even congenial. He was a dedicated scientist, always willing to listen to a proposal, and he never tried to stop his colleagues from following their own paths, even when he found them foolish. His true madness manifested in his utter disregard for medical ethics and the sanctity of human life. He regarded most of humanity as experimental subjects, and behind his goggles his eyes were always looking for the perfect place to insert a scalpel.

Kroenen stayed in the Norway facility from 1945 until his apparent death. With his protective suit, he certainly was the least able to move about in public. However, that very suit may have protected him during the destruction of the sanctuary. If he survived, he will first do his best to revive his colleagues, and then resume construction of RasputinÍs army.

*The Apocalypse Army*

As part of Rasputin's plan for the destruction of humanity, Kroenen, with the assistance of Kurtz, constructed 666 mechanical zombies. This Apocalypse Army was intended to spread plague across the Earth, until enough people had died to cause the Ogdru Jahad to stir. At that point, Rasputin believed, he would be able to free them.

### Apocalypse Soldier

**ST:** 20    **Move/Dodge:** 7/6    **Size:** 1  
**DX:** 10    **PD/DR:** 1/5    **Wt.:** 200 lbs.  
**IQ:** 6    **Damage:** 2d+1  
**HT:** 20    **Reach:** C, 1

An apocalypse soldier resembles a zombie with mechanical parts. The truth is more complex. They are not in fact reanimated dead, but more properly robots built using preserved parts from corpses. They have little intelligence and no will, and are only capable of following simple orders, such as "Go that way, and kill everyone who tries to stop you." In combat, they swing with their heavy fists. In a group, some will attempt to grapple and hold while others continue to hit.

More fearsome than their punches are the plagues they spread. This is a mystical effect produced by the ritual inherent in having exactly 666 soldiers of death. The plagues use the rules for disease on p. 00. They are virulent (-4 to the HT roll to resist), contagious after only 4 hours, and cause the loss of 1 hit point per day, unless the victim makes a HT roll at 14.

Fortunately, the first Apocalypse Army was destroyed when the Norway sanctuary collapsed. Similar creatures were found by Roger and Lobster Johnson under Hunte Castle in 2001, presumably left over from the 1930s. Since they predate Rasputin's involvement in the Special Group, they are likely just prototype mechanical zombies, with no plague-spreading ability, and possibly lower statistics. They were deactivated when Roger sucked the electricity out of them, and presumably were destroyed when the castle collapsed.

## PROFESSOR DOCTOR HERMAN VON KLEMPPT 245 POINTS

Age 80+; 6'3"; 190 lbs.; A bald Caucasian man with a swastika on his forehead. Apparently in his 40s or so, he is at least 80. He will normally be encountered wearing his robot body, which is tall, with pupilless green eyes.

This represents von Klempt between 1995 and 2001, in his robot body. As a floating head in a tank, von Klempt looks far stranger, but can still move about and manipulate objects to at least some extent.

**ST** 16 [70]; **DX** 13 [30]; **IQ** 14 [45]; **HT** 12 [20].  
Speed 6.25; Move 6.  
Dodge 6; Parry 8.

**Advantages:** Animal Empathy [5]; High Pain Threshold [10]; High Technology (Effective TL8) [20]; Immunity to Poison [15]; Invention (Advanced cybernetics) [15].

**Disadvantages:** Appearance (Ugly) [10] (Reaction: 12); Bad Temper [10]; Bloodlust [10]; Fanaticism (To Nazi Party, or Rasputin) [15]; Overconfidence [10]; Reputation 14 [13] (Reaction (Nazi scientist): 14; Recognized by: Small class, □; Frequency of Recognition: Sometimes (10f), □□); Stubbornness [15]; Unluckiness [10]; Unnatural Feature (Head in tank) [15].

**Quirks:** Fond of apes; Wears a swastika on his forehead. [12]

**Skills:** Acrobatics-10 [1/2]; Acting-12 [1/2]; Animal Handling-16 [1]; Armoury/TL8-16 [6]; Brawling-13 [1] (Parry: 8); Climbing-12 [1]; Criminology/TL8-12 [1/2]; Demolition/TL8-14 [2]; Diagnosis/TL8-14 [4]; Disguise-12 [1/2]; Electronics/TL8-16 [8]; Electronics Operation/TL8-15 [4]; Engineer/TL8-18 [12]; English-12 [1/2]; FastTalk-12 [1/2]; First Aid/TL8-14 [1]; German (native)-14 [0]; Guns/TL8-14 [1/2]; History-13 [2]; Interrogation-12 [1/2]; Intimidation-13 [1]; Italian-12 [1/2]; Jumping-12 [1/2]; Law-11 [1/2]; Leadership-12 [1/2]; Mechanic/TL8-13 [1]; Metallurgy/TL8-12 [1]; Occultism-13 [1]; Physician/TL8-16 [8]; Physics/TL8-12 [1]; Portuguese-12 [1/2]; Research-12 [1/2]; Surgery/TL8-20 [32]; Traps/TL8-13 [1].

((START QUOTE))

¡A head only, but greater than you. I'll see you die!£

((END QUOTE))

A doctor and cyberneticist, von Klempt was none too sane even before the explosion at Hunte Castle in 1939. Afterwards, reduced to a brain in a tank, he was too insane even for Rasputin. During the war he pursued his work on simian augmentation, creating the first of his *Kriegsaffes*, or war-apes. When Germany fell, he fled to South America. His continued survival required spinal fluid, and the reports of missing girls in Macap, Brazil, eventually attracted Hellboy. In 1959, Hellboy attacked von Klempt's lab, freeing his latest prisoner, killing *Kriegsaffe #9*, *ÍBrutus*, and burying von Klempt in the ruins of the building.

He stayed there, inert, for over 35 years, until Zinco's agents found him and brought him to Norway. Once revived by Kroenen, von Klempt immediately tried to convince him to abandon Rasputin's plans for world destruction, in favor of conquest. Kurtz attacked him, and was killed by Kroenen. After the fight, as von Klempt watched Kroenen moan and whine, he had nothing but contempt left for his former friend. Rasputin's sudden appearance shocked him speechless, and he was buried with the rest when the facility collapsed.

Unlike the others, he survived. He somehow made his way back to South America, there to discover that in 35 years the jungle had reduced all his work to rust. He then went to Ingolstadt, where one of his smaller labs was still intact. Half-heartedly, he built himself a body, and began work on *Kriegsaffe #10*. He was about to succumb to despair, when Rasputin spoke to him, telling him that the rocket from Hunte Castle was ready to return, and that he could use what it contained to destroy the world.

With renewed purpose, von Klempt contacted his granddaughter, Inger von Klempt, who was living under the alias Laura Karnstein as a member of the Austrian Secret Police. She sent men and equipment to Hunte Castle, where Herman von Klempt had already established himself. With her aid, he guided the rocket capsule to a safe landing. He was then interrupted by Hellboy and Roger, who disrupted his plans, and killed him.

At every point, von Klempt was a man obsessed. He always had a plan for world conquest, usually involving cybernetically-enhanced apes and robot tanks. He was everything an insane Nazi mad scientist reduced to a head in a tank should be. He respected no one as an equal, and anyone who couldn't see the rightness of his plans was, by definition, an idiot. He was also unlucky, as was particularly evident in his tendency to have laboratories burn and collapse around him (four instances are on record), and in losing his body (twice).

From the end of the war to 1959 von Klempt was working in South America, and could very well have had several encounters with the BPRD, though the 1959 confrontation between him and Hellboy was their first and last until 2001. Also, between 1996 and 2001, von Klempt was active and at large. He may have had run-ins with Bureau agents as he traveled the world checking out his old laboratories. His tank was shattered in 2001, and he is presumed dead, but he has been thought dead before . . .

### *Kriegsaffes*

**ST:** 30    **Move/Dodge:** 7/6    **Size:** 1  
**DX:** 12    **PD/DR:** 1/5    **Wt.:** 300 lbs.  
**IQ:** 8    **Damage:** 3d  
**HT:** 14/25    **Reach:** C, 1

Herman von Klempt's favorite creation, the *Kriegsaffes* were cybernetically-augmented apes. Typically built from gorillas, *Kriegsaffes* had robotic arms and hands, and brain enhancements that gave them a limited vocabulary. The brain alterations also made them utterly loyal to von Klempt, and far crueler than natural gorillas.

Hellboy has fought two *Kriegsaffes*, #9 (*ÍBrutus*) in 1959, and #10 in 2001. Both are presumed dead. What happened to the first eight is unknown. They may still exist in an abandoned lab, or the depths of the wilderness, in Germany or South America.

## INGER VON KLEMPT 155 POINTS

Age 32; 5'9"; 140 lbs.; An attractive blond woman.

This represents Inger von Klempt in early 2001, before the Conqueror Worm affair.

**ST** 12 [20]; **DX** 13 [30]; **IQ** 13 [30]; **HT** 12 [20].  
Speed 6.25; Move 7.

Dodge 6; Parry 8 (Judo).

*Advantages:* Alertness +2 [10]; Appearance (Attractive) [5]; Legal Enforcement Powers [10].

*Disadvantages:* Fanaticism (To Nazi Party and her grandfather) [15]; Weak Will [18].

*Quirks:* Feels protective towards her men; Interested in folklore. [12]

*Skills:* Acrobatics-10 [1/2]; Acting-14 [4]; Administration-12 [1]; Area Knowledge (Austria)-12 [1/2]; Bard-11 [1/2]; Camouflage-12 [1/2]; Climbing-16 [16]; Computer Operation/TL7-12 [1/2]; Criminology/TL7-14 [4]; Diplomacy-10 [1/2]; Disguise-11 [1/2]; Driving (Automobile)/TL7-12 [1]; Electronics Operation/TL7-12 [1]; FastTalk-12 [1]; First Aid/TL7-12 [1/2]; Forgery/TL7-10 [1/2]; Guns/TL7-16 [2]; History-13 [4]; Interrogation-12 [1]; Intimidation-12 [1]; Judo-12 [2]; Jumping-12 [1/2]; Law-12 [2]; Leadership-12 [1]; Occultism-12 [1]; Research-11 [1/2]; Running-10 [1]; Shortsword-14 [4]; Stealth-12 [1]; Streetwise-12 [1].

*Languages:* German (native)-13 [0]; English-11 [1/2].

((START QUOTE))

ÍMerciful death. Consider that a reward . . . for good service in days gone by.Í

((END QUOTE))

Inger von Klempt was born in the late 1960s to Herman von Klempt's son, Hans. Her family had to move several times when people discovered her grandfather had been a Nazi scientist, and the family name was eventually changed to Karnstein. She took the name Laura. She was secretly raised to be proud of her grandfather, and to believe in Nazi ideals. While training to be a member of the Austrian Secret Police, she was also becoming an assassin, working for the Nazi cause.

In the late 1990s her grandfather contacted her, and asked for her aid. She was delighted to help. She sent equipment, and many of the local Nazi-wannabes, to Hunte Castle. She also kept her ears open for any sign of outside interest in the castle. When the BPRD contacted the Austrian government about possible paranormal Nazi activity at the site, she heard. She claimed to have grown up near the castle, and to be able to act as a guide for Bureau agents. After meeting Hellboy and Roger, she led them into an ambush, and then met her grandfather in person for the first time.

Separated by decades, generations, and insanity, their meeting was strained. Nevertheless, she cooperated until she learned the truth of his plans. Faced with the Conqueror Worm, she fled into the depths of the castle. Eventually, her grandfather found her. He told her that the world would be burned to a cinder. She asked if he had perhaps tried to spare her through love. He said no, and abandoned her to the transformation caused by his plans. In her despair, she saw Rasputin's ghost. He told her that she carried within her the seed of the new world to follow the Apocalypse. This brought her some brief comfort, until she met the ghost of Lobster Johnson, who shot and apparently killed her.

Inger von Klempt spent decades hiding her true allegiances, and was skilled at deception and pretense. Her fatal blind spot was her hero-worship toward her famous grandfather. When playing the part of Laura Karnstein, she was friendly, inquisitive, and helpful. When she was able to drop the mask, she was a heartless killer who enjoyed her work. The Bureau had no reason to suspect her when she offered her services as guide in 2001, so any BPRD agent who encountered her earlier than that either never saw her true self, or died. If she survived being shot by Lobster Johnson, her transformation, combined with the lobster claw burned into her forehead, will prevent her returning to a normal life. She may try to reconstruct her grandfather's work from the materials in the dungeons of Hunte Castle, or simply roam the mountains, killing anyone she finds.

GENERAL KLAUS WERNER VON KRUPP

((START QUOTE))

ÍMy sarcasm is the very least of your worries, sorcerer.Í

((END QUOTE))



A high-ranking member of the Special Group, von Kruppt was the military overseer of Project Ragna Rok, and was on Tarmagant island when the ritual occurred. He was enraged by its apparent failure, and argued with Rasputin. In turn, Rasputin cast a slow and vicious curse on him. When the key members of the Ragna Rok Team fled Germany, his power base collapsed, and he began losing his hold on reality. At the end of the war, he was captured by the Allies, and placed in an asylum. When he died six months later, his body was filled with beetles of unknown type.

## PROFESSOR DOCTOR ERNST OEMING

Possibly the greatest genius of the Special Group, Oeming was often placed on the same level as Einstein and Oppenheimer. Given time, he might easily have provided the Reich with nuclear bombs and a fully-developed space program. He was also the brains behind the Nazi's cruel experiments in psychic technology, often using the artificially-sustained heads of known psychics as amplifiers. Given a few more years, he could have ensured a Nazi victory. Fortunately, he was assassinated on January 1st, 1939. Himmler ordered that his body be used to complete his own experiments in contacting the transatmospheric intelligences, and returning one to Earth. His body was given a sort of pseudo-life through his own psychic devices, and launched into space. When it returned over 60 years later, there was nothing of Oeming inside.

If encountered prior to 1939, Oeming will paint the perfect picture of an absent-minded scientist. His dark side will not be obvious in most conversations, but he is a scientific racist, firmly believing that the Aryan race is the only one fit to rule the world. He also has no compunctions about decapitating people and artificially stimulating their brains to pursue his research.

## HANS UBLER

An opportunist with no ethics, during the war Ubler ran a nightclub in Berlin, which combined the worst aspects of a chamber of horrors and a freak show. Deformed humans, and the occasional monstrous non-human, were forced to perform for the entertainment of the jaded club-goers. The club was popular with the Special Group, and particularly the Ragna Rok Team and Rasputin.

Through circumstances unknown, after Giurescu was betrayed and executed by Hitler, Ubler came into possession of his body. Ubler fled Germany in early 1945, and toured with carnivals across Europe. He eventually changed his name to Howard Steinman, and settled in New York, where he established a wax museum. Rumor suggests that some of his statues were freaks from his nightclub, murdered and encased in wax. However, though he had a Giurescu figure on display, he kept Giurescu's actual body in his storage room. His museum attained some popularity, reaching its peak with the underground art scene in the 1960s. By the 1990s, it was open only by appointment. In 1996, Hauptstein tracked down Ubler, murdered him, and took Giurescu's body.

In life, Ubler was a fawning coward with his patrons, and a manipulative tyrant to his employees. He clearly knew a great deal about the occult, but the only thing he did with that knowledge was exploit it for money in the most obvious and tawdry way. He had many connections throughout the Nazi power structure, both during and after the war, and quite likely provided aid to surviving Nazis traveling through New York. The Bureau knew his dual identity in 1996, but it's unclear when they acquired this knowledge. It's possible Ubler served as a snitch for the Bureau, providing information on the occult and Nazi underground.

## RODERICK ZINCO

180 POINTS

Age 45; 5'9"; 150 lbs.; A dark-haired Caucasian man with brown eyes and a mustache.  
This represents Zinco shortly after he met the Ragna Rok Team.

**ST** 10 [0]; **DX** 10 [0]; **IQ** 14 [45]; **HT** 12 [20].  
Speed 5.50; Move 6.  
Dodge 5.

**Advantages:** Appearance (Attractive) [5] (Reaction: +1); Reputation +2 [3] (Reaction (Successful businessman): +2; Frequency of Recognition: Occasionally (7), □); Status 4 [5]; Wealth (Multimillionaire) [100] (Starting Wealth: \$150,000,000).

**Disadvantages:** Fanaticism (To Rasputin) [15]; Greed [15]; Weak Will [18] (Will: 13).

**Quirks:** A bit of a coward. [1]

**Skills:** Acting-12 [1/2]; Administration-18 [10]; Climbing-10 [2]; Computer Operation/TL7-13 [1/2]; Diplomacy-14 [4]; Driving (Automobile)/TL7-9 [1]; Electronics Operation/TL7-12 [1/2]; Engineer/TL7-12 [1]; FastTalk-12 [1/2]; Gambling-12 [1/2]; History-13 [2]; Law-14 [4]; Leadership-14 [2]; Merchant-16 [6]; Occultism-12 [1/2]; Psychology-11 [1/2]; Research-12 [1/2]; Running-10 [1]; SavoirFaire-17 [2]; Swimming-9 [1/2]; Writing-12 [1/2].

**Languages:** English (native)-14 [0]; German-12 [1/2]; Spanish-12 [1/2].

((START QUOTE))

¡A man sent me. *The man. I saw him . . . it was the master.*¡

((END QUOTE))

A millionaire businessman, Roderick Zinco was the president of ZinCo, Incorporated (p. 00), and heir to one of its founders. Influential both in his own right and through his company, he owned property throughout the United States and Europe, had access to the cutting edge of communications, weapons, and aerospace technology, knew and socialized with powerful leaders, and owned his own island in the Caribbean. All this changed when Rasputin visited him on that island in 1995. Rasputin made Zinco his slave, and Zinco promptly traveled to Norway, to offer everything he owned to the Ragna Rok Team.

Over the next year, at the orders of the three Nazis, Zinco arranged for enormous shipments of equipment to Norway, and provided the Ragna Rok Team with assistants and dozens of experimental subjects. He also determined that the BPRD posed the greatest potential threat to his master, and arranged for his company to provide the Bureau with sabotaged gear. With his free will destroyed by Rasputin, his administrative skills suffered, and his company began to disintegrate. He himself was nothing but a cowering servant for Rasputin and the Ragna Rok Team. When the Team began to fall apart, Rasputin blamed him for finding von Klempt's head, and bringing it to Norway. Rasputin struck Zinco blind, and in Zinco's panicked flailing, he accidentally triggered the destruction of the Norway sanctuary.

Prior to 1995, Zinco was nothing more than a successful businessman. Possibly a bit less scrupulous than most, but not truly evil. His encounter with Rasputin destroyed anything of free will in his head. During the next year he would literally do anything Rasputin or his proxies requested. If encountered during this time, he will still have the confident mannerisms he had before Rasputin came, but underneath will be nothing but a furtive, scared slave.

## TYPICAL NAZI STOOGES 45 POINTS

Age 30; 5'11"; 160 lbs.

**ST** 12 [20]; **DX** 11 [10]; **IQ** 9 [10]; **HT** 12 [20].

Speed 5.75; Move 7.

Dodge 5; Parry 8 (Brawling).

**Disadvantages:** Fanaticism (To Nazi Party) [15]; Duty (To a Nazi leader) (12 or less) [10].

**Skills:** Brawling-13 [4]; Computer Operation/TL7-10 [2]; Demolition/TL7-10 [4]; Driving (Automobile)/TL7-10 [1]; Electronics Operation/TL7-11 [6]; First Aid/TL7-9 [1]; Guns/TL7-12 [2]; History-7 [1]; Running-10 [1]; Shortsword-12 [4]; Streetwise-10 [4].

((START QUOTE))

¡Jawohl!¡

((END QUOTE))

Whenever a survivor of the original Nazi party sets up operations, they go out and hire modern neo-Nazis to do the grunt work. Few of them are anything more than deluded racists with some military background.

# Others

Though Rasputin and his Nazi allies are perhaps Hellboy's most dangerous foes, there are other dangerous men and women out there.

## IGOR WELDON BROMHEAD 110 POINTS

Age 49; 5'8"; 189 lbs.; A short, overweight, balding Caucasian man, with a round head and a silly mustache. This represents Bromhead just after he escaped from prison in 1996.

**ST** 9 [110]; **DX** 11 [10]; **IQ** 15 [60]; **HT** 10 [0].

Speed 5.25; Move 4.

Dodge 5.

*Advantages:* Ritual Aptitude 5 [5].

*Disadvantages:* Appearance (Unattractive) [15] (Reaction: 11); Cowardice [10] (Roll: Will, Death: Will+5); Greed [15]; Overconfidence [10]; Overweight [15] (Extra body weight: 44).

*Quirks:* Smug in victory; Wears a silly mustache. [12]

*Skills:* Acting-14 [1]; Archaeology-12 [1/2]; Bard-13 [1/2]; Chaperone-12 [8]; Cloud Memory-11 [8]; Criminology/TL7-13 [1/2]; Curse Sanctum-13 [0]; Diplomacy-12 [1/2]; Disguise-13 [1/2]; Escape-12 [8]; FastTalk-16 [4]; Forgery/TL7-12 [1/2]; Gambling-13 [1/2]; Hand of Glory-12 [10]; History-16 [6]; Holdout-13 [1/2]; Interrogation-13 [1/2]; Law-12 [1/2]; Locate-13 [10]; Lockpicking/TL7-14 [1]; Merchant-16 [4]; Mist-11 [2]; Occultism-16 [4]; Path of Cunning-14 [4]; Path of Knowledge-13 [2]; Path of Protection-13 [2]; Pickpocket-9 [1]; Research-14 [1]; Ritual Magic-14 [4]; Running-8 [1]; SavoirFaire-14 [1/2]; Shadowing-13 [1/2]; Stealth-10 [1]; Theology-12 [1/2]; Traps/TL7-13 [1/2]; Veil-11 [2].

*Languages:* English (native)-15 [0]; French-13 [1/2]; Latin-13 [1/2].

((START QUOTE))

Grant me wealth and power. I know that's not very original, but in this world . . .

((END QUOTE))

A small-time con-man, Bromhead knew just enough about the occult and ritual magic to put it to criminal use. He first came to the Bureau's attention in the late 1970s, as a black market procurer of occult relics. The items he acquired were as often fakes as not. Further, he had no qualms about locating items better left lost, so long as he was protected from their effects. "Let the buyer beware" was his motto.

Hellboy caught Bromhead in 1981, and sent him to jail. He was there for 15 years, until he managed to escape. He promptly resumed his old profession, and in 1999 obtained St. Dunstan's box (containing the demon Ualac) for Count and Countess Guarino. Not surprisingly, the transaction came out badly for all involved, particularly once Hellboy arrived. Bromhead was transformed into a lizard by the demon Astaroth, and trapped in an exitless room. It is unlikely he survived, and even less likely he found a way to become human again, but he was never one to give up easily.

Bromhead was always polite (to the point of obsequiousness) with customers, but smug to those under his power, and a coward in the face of physical threats. He knew enough about magic to not use it too much, and always first arranged to be protected from any side-effects. He was always on the lookout for his next con.

## COUNT AND COUNTESS GUARINO

An unfortunate pair of Satanists, the Guarinos were perpetually looking for wealth and power with which to better serve the Devil. However, they were repeatedly taken in by hustlers and thieves. The Bureau knew of them thanks to the string of bad decisions they'd made with regard to obtaining occult power, and the constant messes that resulted. In 1999, they made a deal with Igor Bromhead to obtain St. Dunstan's box, which they believed

contained Satan himself. Instead, the demon Ualac inside the box possessed the Countess, and turned the Count into a monkey. The Countess's soul was presumably destroyed by the possession, and, in any case, her body was killed by Hellboy. The Count, in monkey-form, attacked Abe Sapien, but was killed by a fall from a height.

## PROFESSOR EDMOND AICKMAN

While of occasional aid to the Bureau, Professor Aickman was more of a dangerous nuisance. A good friend of Professor Bruttonholm's in college, he was a brilliant folklorist. They remained in touch over the next few decades, and in 1956 Bruttonholm loaned him Hellboy for an investigation. The investigation turned out to be a scheme to get gold from King Vold (p. 00), and the incident ended with Hellboy badly beaten. Aickman had a hole burned through his hand, and became a beggar.

((START QUOTE))

It'll be in all the journals, that's for certain.

((END QUOTE))

Over the next 40 years, Aickman recovered some of his standing, married, fathered a daughter, and then lost his wife to old age. His next meeting with Hellboy wasn't until 2000, when Hellboy brought Thor's hammer to his house for analysis. In that affair, Aickman conspired with the frost giants of Germanic myth, was betrayed by one of them, and died.

Venial and untrustworthy, Aickman served as an occasional resource for BPRD agents, so long as there was no opportunity for him to get wealth or power. Despite his undeniably keen mind and skills, he never managed to overcome his baser instincts.

[[[Hellboy, revised (2) first draft, by Phil Masters <phil@philm.demon.co.uk> and Jonathan Woodward <woodward@io.com>]]]

[[[Just in case the conversion doesn't go smoothly: Symbols used in this file include less-than-or-equal-to, multiplication (as yen), the five-pointed star, and degrees.]]]

# 4. PARANORMAL ABILITIES

This chapter describes three different forms of paranormal power which humans and supernatural beings can possess: ritual magic, spell-based magic, and psychic powers.

## Overview

All three kinds of power described in this chapter tap the same types of "energy" or "forces," but in different ways. A ritual magician manipulates symbols, spirits, and the universe, using established techniques, combined with trained willpower, and perhaps special tools. Rituals are slow, but can accumulate a lot of power. Further, they can be attempted by anyone who is prepared to put the work in, although some are inherently better at it than others. Hence, they are by far the most common form of magic among normal humans who want access to supernatural power.

In contrast, spell-based magic (which includes some innate powers of supernatural creatures) involves using ambient and personal energies in specific ways. This is achieved by following "compressed rituals," which may be learned or known instinctively. Spells are usually quite fast, but are very much a brute force technique. If ritual magic is akin to carefully using lockpicks on a sealed door, spell-based magic is more like breaking it down with a swift kick.

Finally, psychic powers draw on purely personal energies. Most people can't do it at all, while a few are born with vast psychic talents. Theorists speculate that the same symbols manipulated by magic-users are encoded in psychic people on a genetic level. If you aren't one of the lucky, you can't get these abilities by any amount of study. Individual psychics rarely have more than one field of ability (e.g., fire), and the entire range of known psychic powers is much smaller than the field covered by magic in both its forms.

((START BOX))

## A Paranormal Powers Glossary

**Adept:** Anyone with the Ritual Adept advantage (p. 00).

**Caster:** Person performing or casting a ritual or spell.

**Charm:** Item empowered through a ritual. Protective charms are often called amulets, while charms that draw things to the wearer are called talismans.

**Client:** The person for whom a ritual is being performed (who may be the magician himself).

**Empowered Being:** A magician, mage, wizard, psychic, or other entity capable of manipulating paranormal forces.

**Energy:** Many paranormal abilities require energy. Most often, the user or caster takes fatigue (p. 00) equal to the needed energy.

**ESP:** Extra-Sensory Perception. The power to see, hear, or know things that cannot be detected with the ordinary five senses.

**Guard:** A paranormal defense that may resist the attacker's skill in a Quick Contest.

**Mage:** Someone with the Magical Aptitude advantage.

**Magical Aptitude (Magery):** An innate talent for spell-based magic, and an attunement to mana.

**Magician:** Any character with the Ritual Magic skill.

**Magic-User:** A mage, magician, wizard, or other user of magic.

**Mana:** The power source for spell-based magic. Different places may have different levels of mana. See p. 00.

**Path:** A branch of ritual magic focused on a particular type of effect. The five paths described here are Cunning, Knowledge, Luck, Protection, and Spirit.

**Psychic:** In these rules, a person possessing unusual mental powers. Members of the BPRD use the word to specifically mean someone with Precognition (p. 00).

**Ritual:** A ceremony intended to have a magical effect. More broadly, any use of the Ritual Magic skill or one of its associated paths.

**Screen:** A paranormal defense that subtracts its Power from the attacker's skill.

**Spell:** A formula or procedure intended to have a magical affect.

**Subject:** Person, place, or thing a ritual, spell, or psychic power is intended to affect.

**Target:** Synonym for *subject*, usually used for hostile spells.

**User:** A person using a psychic skill.

**Wizard:** Anyone who knows spells.

((END BOX))

## DEFENDING AGAINST PARANORMAL POWERS

For both normal humans, and empowered beings who must do battle with their own kind, the best defense is a strong Will (see p. 00). Many rituals, spells, and psychic abilities are marked as *Resisted*. When they are invoked, the paranormal skill (with all modifiers) must win a Quick Contest (p. 00) with the subject's Will, or it fails. A few abilities are resisted by something other than Will, such as HT or ST; they are clearly labeled. (The rest of this section assumes it's always Will, however.)

Many paranormal abilities can themselves be used as defenses. They come in two kinds, *Guards* and *Screens*. Guards resist attacks; if they are better than the target's Will, they replace it in the Quick Contest against a resisted attack. Some can also force a Quick Contest for paranormal skills that are usually not resisted! An example of a Guard is the Veil ritual, p. 00. Screens, on the other hand, are more passive. They have a Power level, which is *subtracted* from the attacker's skill. An example of a Screen is the Magic and Psychic Resistance advantage, p. 00.

Guards and Screens often provide limited coverage. For example, the Mind Shield psychic skill (p. 00) is a Screen that only protects the psychic's mind; a telekinetic attack would completely ignore it. Also note that in some cases an attack may be blunted by both a Screen and a Guard. In this case the attacking skill first takes a penalty from the Screen, and at that lower level must then win a Quick Contest with the Guard.

((START BOX))

## New Advantage: Magic and Psychic Resistance 3 points/level

This advantage makes you less susceptible to paranormal powers. You can buy as many levels as you like. It can never be turned off.

You cannot have the Magery, Ritual Adept, or Ritual Aptitude advantages. This advantage is a Screen; it subtracts from the skill of any ritual or spell cast on you, from any use of psychic abilities where you are the subject (even Psychokinetic powers), from any ritual you perform, and from your own psychic skills. You can't cast spells at all.

((END BOX))

## Ritual Magic

Ritual magic involves performing ceremonies intended to manipulate symbols, probabilities, spirits, and the universe. It requires the Ritual Magic skill (p. 00), and anyone with that skill can perform ritual magic, but advantages like Ritual Aptitude (p. 00) and Ritual Adept (p. 00) make it easier. A practitioner of ritual magic is a *magician*, though different cultures use different titles.

Ritual magic is divided into *Paths*, or areas of interest. These Paths represent the knowledge of how to produce particular effects. Since the Paths all default from Ritual Magic, all magicians have some ability in all Paths, although most specialize in one or two areas and have only rudimentary skill in the rest.

## LEARNING THE PATHS

The prerequisite for all the Path skills is the Ritual Magic skill, which the magician must have at level 12 or higher. Further, no Path skill can be higher than Ritual Magic skill. A student must spend at least 1 full point in Ritual Magic in order to perform rituals with it; with a point, he can only identify rituals.

Each Path is a Mental/Very Hard skill. All Paths default to Ritual Magic minus 6, but if the magician has put no points into the Path, the maximum default level is 14. They can be improved from the default.

*Example:* Eliana Aleixo (p. 00) has an IQ of 14, and Ritual Magic-16 (IQ+2, 16 points). Her default in the Path of Spirit is 16 minus 6, or Path of Spirit-10. This is IQ-4, the same level she would have had if she'd spent 1/2 point to learn the Path. When she improved her Path of Spirit, she got that first 1/2 point for free. The 3 1/2 points she has spent on it give her Path of Spirit-13 (IQ-1, normally 4 points). (Note that a magician only gets points for free if Ritual Magic is at IQ+2 or better. GMs who find this use of defaults confusing may ignore it, or limit Ritual Magic to IQ+1 or lower.)

Every Path has several rituals, each of which produces a specific effect. These rituals default to the appropriate Path at a level of -0 to -8 (see the specific rituals). Any default penalty may be bought off for 2 character points per -1. A magician cannot have more skill with a ritual than he has with its Path.

### ***Ritual Aptitude***

While anyone can learn and use ritual magic, only the gifted can use it to full effect. Those without the Ritual Aptitude advantage (p. 00) roll at -5 if they actually try to perform ritual magic. Also, the maximum skill they can have in any Path is 12. Ritual Aptitude removes the penalty and the limit.

((START BOX))

# New Ritual Magic Advantages And Skill

### ***Advantage: Autotrance***

***5 points***

You find it very easy to enter a trance. You may do so, with a successful IQ roll, in one minute. However, you must also make a successful IQ roll to *leave* a trance. You may only attempt either roll once every five minutes, and each additional attempt per hour is at a cumulative -1. Being in a trance gives a +2 to all ritual magic rolls, and also to the skills associated with the Ectoplasmic Projection psychic power (p. 00).

### ***Advantage: Ritual Adept 10, 20, or 30 points***

You can ignore the need for some or all of the elements of ritual magic (see p. 00). For each level in this advantage (up to three), you can ignore one of the standard elements of time, sacred space, and material components. When ignoring sacred space or material components, they may be dispensed with altogether. When ignoring time, it may normally only be reduced to 1d seconds of concentration, just enough time to visualize the effect. Even an adept must take penalties to reduce it further, taking a -1 penalty per -1 second (so, reducing time to 1d-3 seconds would be at -3 to skill). Minimum time is always 1 second.

*Special Limitations:* Can't vary ritual element eliminated (must be chosen when the advantage is purchased), -50%. (This limitation obviously cannot be taken by third-level adepts.)

*Example:* Eliana Alexio has the Ritual Adept advantage at the first level (normally 10 points), but the only element she can ignore is time. She takes full penalties if she tries to work without sacred space or material components. Since she can't vary the element eliminated, she only pays 5 points.

### ***Advantage: Ritual Aptitude***

***5 points***

You're particularly gifted in performing ritual magic. Most people have a -5 penalty to skill when performing rituals, and cannot learn Paths at better than 12. This advantage eliminates the penalty and the limit.

### ***Skill: Ritual Magic (Mental/Very Hard) No default***

This skill reflects an understanding of the intellectual and mystical processes involved in conducting rituals. In addition to *performing* rituals, on a successful roll, you can understand the purpose of a ritual being conducted in your presence.

((END BOX))

## RITUAL ELEMENTS

All rituals have three basic elements: time to conduct the ritual, sacred space attuned to the spirits, and material components. These elements act as a focus for the magician's will, making it easier to concentrate and achieve results. In the right quantity or quality, ritual elements grant bonuses to ritual rolls. The combined bonus from ritual elements cannot exceed +15.

It is possible, in an emergency, to omit ritual elements. This runs the risk of having the ritual fail or backfire. Doing without elements imposes a penalty to ritual rolls; cumulative penalties have no lower limit. As described above, adepts can dispense with one or more of the three elements; third-level adepts can simply visualize the ritual in a few seconds, and it works as if they had physically performed it.

### *Time*

Rituals are meant to be conducted over a period of minutes, hours, or even days. Even after the ritual is over, the effects may not take place immediately. The delay between a ritual and its effects is usually out of the magician's hands, but the time to perform the ritual isn't.

Most of the time goes into repetitive actions like chanting and dancing. Eliminating these elements makes the ritual more difficult (-2 to all ritual rolls), but reduces the time to 1d+2 minutes. Reducing the time to 1d seconds (just enough time to visualize the intended result and concentrate on it) imposes a -5 penalty. (Only adepts can reduce it further, as described under the Ritual Adept advantage, p. 00.)

On the other hand, putting extra time into a ritual improves its chance of success. Repeating the same ritual once a day gives a +1 bonus for every two days. The caster must dedicate at least half an hour each day to the ritual. Extended rituals (more than three times the minimum time) add +2 to all rolls.

When a magician conducts a ritual may also be a factor in its success. Some magical traditions believe in auspicious times for working magic, such as sunrise or sunset, the phases of the moon, astrological influences, and holy days. These factors can apply a -3 to +3 modifier. A successful Astronomy, Occultism-1, Ritual Magic+1, or Theology roll reveals the modifier for performing a ritual at a given time, and can help to pick the best time.

### *Sacred Space*

Temples, hidden groves, medicine lodges, magic circles, and the like are considered sacred space. An improvised sacred space can be created with a Ritual Magic roll and a ceremony lasting 1d minutes, including placing candles, mystic symbols, sacred items, and the like in the area. The improvised space will work for only one ritual, and at -1 to skill. Properly consecrating an area for routine ritual use requires an hour's ceremony, performed every day for a week. A magician conducting a ritual without a sacred space has a -5 penalty.

A place used constantly for rituals over years has a mystical "charge" that aids any ritual. Consult the table on p. 00 for specific bonuses. Powerful sacred spaces are likely to be claimed by a sorcerer or group of sorcerers who may not want to share.

### *Material Components*

Material components include representations of the target and the spirits involved in the ritual, sacrificial offerings, and occult symbols of power. Simple ritual components allow the magician to conduct the ritual at no penalty, while elaborate preparations provide bonuses (see table, p. 00).

*Symbolic representations* are necessary when the subject is the unwilling target of the ritual effect; willing recipients do not require special symbols for the ritual to work. The table on p. 00 gives the penalty or bonus for representations of varying quality. Note that, if the subject is not present (which would give a +4), range is irrelevant. All else being equal, it's just as easy to perform a Read Thoughts ritual on someone upstairs or on another continent.



*Sacrifices* are never necessary (there is no penalty for not having them) but can make the spirits more inclined to help the magician. Food offerings (including liquor) provide bonuses of +1 to +2, while animal sacrifices may grant +2 to +4 (if both are offered, only the higher bonus applies). Human sacrifices only attract spirits associated with evil. Unfortunately, such spirits are common. The bonus for a human sacrifice is +1 to +5, unless the spirit disapproves, in which case it's a -5 penalty. In some cases, a *willing* human sacrifice may be accepted where an unwilling one would not.

It is possible for magicians to make a sacrifice *of themselves* as well. This is only done in emergencies, because it is likely to have permanent effects on the caster's health. For every 2 hit points spent during a ritual, the caster gets +1 to any ritual roll. These lost hit points manifest at the end of the ritual as bruises, tears of blood, and stigmata. These bonuses do not count against the +15 maximum bonus; the magician can add a bonus equal to his HT (meaning he will be reduced to -HT hit points by doing this).

*Spiritual symbols* are also important in rituals. Consult the table on p. 00 for the modifiers.

## ***Defenses***

Hostile rituals are always resisted as described on p. 00. Beneficial rituals will be resisted if the subject is unaware of the ceremony, at Will-4. *Any* targeted ritual may be resisted with full Will if the subject is aware of it and chooses to do so (e.g., someone who does not wish to have a Guise (p. 00) placed on him).

### **Hostile Rituals**

Hostile rituals are subject to a special rule. These rituals require two ritual skill rolls; the normal Quick Contest to determine success, and a *second* roll to protect the magician or his client from the hostile forces raised in the ritual. If the second roll fails, the client suffers the effects of the ritual! The magician and client do *not* get a resistance roll against this; it represents the inherent risks of practicing malevolent magic.

### **Sensing Ritual Effects**

Most people, even magicians, do not know when a hostile ritual is used against them unless they have paranormal defenses, such as Chaperone (p. 00). Those able to sense spirits (e.g., with the psychic skill Awareness, p. 00) know when they have been cursed, feeling it as pain, nausea, or a crushing sense of foreboding. This knowledge can save their lives -- or fill their final days with despair.

## ***Conditional Rituals***

The effects of a ritual normally happen after the ritual is completed (often with a short delay) and last as long as the magician intended. However, magicians can alter this, by specifying beginning and ending conditions, such as "when an intruder enters my sanctum," "if he breaks his oath," or "until he agrees to place himself in my service." Conditional rituals do not apply any modifiers to the ritual skill roll, except where they change the components of the ritual (see p. 00). For example, a representation of the target is usually not available when the target is unknown (as for the protected sanctum above).

## ***Multiple Target Modifiers***

Some rituals can affect a group of people, a town, a nation, or the whole world. When casting a ritual for or against a group, the caster can define the targets, from "everyone in the city" to "all my enemies" or "all the bullets on the table in front of me." Base the penalty to the roll on the total number of qualifying targets, using the table on p. 00.

Groups of people resist with a single roll of 12 if there are few or no empowered beings among them, at 14 if at least 10% of the group are empowered, and at 16 if at least 20% of the group are empowered. Groups made up entirely of empowered beings use the best resistance roll from their number. (This system is for quickly determining the resistance of generic groups. For specific, known groups the GM should take their specific protections into account.)

Even if the ritual overcomes resistance, it may not affect everyone in the group. Groups of 10 or less are affected completely. For groups between 10 and 100, the total number affected is equal to 10, or half the total number (three-quarters on a critical success), whichever is greater, plus one person per point the roll is made by.

For groups bigger than 100, 20% of the group is affected (40% on a critical success), plus 2% per point the roll was made by.

## AREA AND DURATION MODIFIERS

Some rituals can be cast to affect a given area for a given period of time. During the ceremony, the magician must specify the triggering event, as under *Conditional Rituals*, p. 00. The size of the area imposes a penalty, and the duration determines how long the ritual effects last. See the tables on p. 00. The default is an area no more than 10 yards across, for no more than 12 hours.

Area-effect ceremonies require one roll to determine if the ritual works. When the effect is triggered, roll again against the same ritual roll to see if the effect works. A critical failure on a trigger roll causes the ritual to stop working for 1d weeks (or altogether, if the duration expires first).

## COMBINED EFFORTS

If magicians combine their efforts, they can attempt more powerful rituals. When they do, the total skill penalty is divided evenly among them (rounded up). Further, the number of points by which their rolls are made are added together to determine the total effect. Only penalties related to the ritual effect (such as penalties for multiple targets) can be shared. Default penalties and penalties for not using ritual elements apply fully to each caster. However, bonuses granted by ritual elements also apply individually and fully.

The casters must conduct the ritual at the same time. They can be in different places, but if they are out of each other's sight they are all at -1. At the end of the ritual, everyone rolls against their modified ritual skill. If anyone fails, the whole ritual fails. Any critical failure also affects everyone. Effects that require a resistance roll use the average of all modified skill levels involved (rounded down), with a +1 for each magician after the first, in the Quick Contest.

Lastly, the magicians are vulnerable to treachery. If one of the magicians casts a harmful ritual at another, his target gets no resistance roll, and the original ritual fails automatically!

## MAGIC ITEMS

Most magical items produced by ritual magic are charms, empowered to grant the benefit of a ritual to their owner. Only one charm for each ritual can be used at any time. Charms usually only work for a specific person, though some are "general purpose." Many charms break when their magic is defeated or exhausted, to alert the wearer. Some rituals require charms, while for others, charms are optional, serving as a means of preparing a ritual in advance, and setting the condition "when the charm is put on."

## RITUALS

Described below are the ritual paths, along with some sample rituals. Although they cover most of the common ground, the list is not exhaustive. GMs are encouraged to invent new rituals using these as guidelines, or consult other *GURPS* books like *GURPS Spirits*.

Every ritual description includes its name, and its best default. (For example, Guise (p. 00) defaults to the Path of Cunning-1.) GMs may change the names at will for flavor. A few rituals default to more than one Path; the other defaults are listed at the end of the description. If the time required for a ritual is not listed, the standard is half an hour. Many ritual descriptions refer to the ritual's *degree of success*. This is the amount the magician made the ritual roll by, or (in the case of resisted rituals) how much he won the Quick Contest by.

### *The Path of Cunning*

The rituals of this path focus on trickery and deception. They fool the senses and influence the mind. Another ritual that defaults to this Path is Veil (p. 00).

### **Guise (Path of Cunning-1)**

The subject looks and sounds like someone else for the duration. This includes clothing, so Guise can clean and dress a hobo to look like a businessman, without otherwise changing his appearance. The GM can require an IQ roll at substantial penalties for matching details or creating a pleasing effect. Guise does not change the subject's abilities in any way.

### **Mist (Path of Cunning-4)**

The caster performs a 10-minute ritual, summoning fog that fills the affected area. The fog blocks vision beyond one yard.

### **Hallucination (Path of Cunning-6)                      Resisted**

This ritual causes the target to hallucinate. On a success, the caster can convince him of the presence or absence of a single thing. The hallucination appears completely real to the subject, affecting all five senses, but it is completely in his mind. The hallucination must be a single entity, such as a person, a torch-wielding mob, a building, or a flock of birds. Particularly scary hallucinations may merit a Fright Check, at a penalty equal to the degree of success.

### **Suggestion (Path of Cunning-6)                      Resisted**

The caster can use this 10-minute ritual to plant a single command in the target's mind, like a posthypnotic suggestion. When the suggestion activates, the subject makes a Will roll, minus the degree of success. If successful, he ignores the command. Otherwise, he carries it out to the best of his ability.

### **Cloud Memory (Path of Cunning-7)                      Resisted**

This one-hour ritual can alter or erase one of the target's memories. If successful, the caster can erase a selected memory, or replace it with a false memory. The affected memory can be recovered using hypnosis, the Read Memories ritual, or similar techniques, at a penalty equal to the degree of success.

### **Hand of Glory (Path of Cunning-7)                      Resisted**

This ritual creates a charm which aids greatly in the performance of burglaries. The charm must be in the form of a candle or candles. If the candle is made from the hand of a hanged thief, the ritual skill roll is at +5.

Once created, the client takes the candle to the front of the target building, and lights it. At that moment, everyone in the building (including watchdogs and the like) makes their resistance rolls. If they fail, they are paralyzed but conscious and aware. Further, every physical lock in the building is disabled. This *will* (for example) raise bars and disable electromagnetic seals, but won't affect a door that's nailed shut, or blocked by rubble. The client must immediately carry the candle inside the building. The effects of the ritual last until the candle leaves the building, burns out, is extinguished, or for the specified duration (normally 12 hours), whichever is shortest.

## ***The Path of Knowledge***

The rituals of this path provide knowledge and insight. Rolls for Path of Knowledge rituals should be made secretly by the GM, since the magician does not necessarily know if the information is accurate.

### **Aura Reading (Path of Knowledge)**

The magician performs a 10-minute ritual that permits him to see the subject's aura, a glowing halo. This gives the caster insight into the subject's personality. In particular, the aura shows whether the subject has paranormal abilities (and their rough power), whether the subject is possessed or controlled, whether any paranormal abilities are affecting the subject, and whether the subject is experiencing violent emotions. All living beings have auras; inanimate objects do not. Most undead have faint, death-haunted auras. A vampire retains the aura he had in life, though a critical success will detect vampirism, as well as other secret magical traits like lycanthropy.

### **Veil (Path of Knowledge-3)**

This Guard resists all information-gathering paranormal abilities used on the subject or anything in the affected area, including Path of Knowledge rituals and ESP skills.

This ritual also defaults to Path of Cunning-4 and Path of Protection-4.

**Locate (Path of Knowledge-5)      May Be Resisted**

This ritual helps locate a person or object. The ritual takes 10 minutes. If successful, the caster senses the location of the target. The caster is at an additional -2 if he does not have a symbolic representation of the subject, even if the magician is normally able to disregard material elements. If the subject is well-hidden, there is a penalty of -1 to -5. A magic-user or psychic being sought without his consent may resist.

**Scry (Path of Knowledge-6)**

The caster performs a 10-minute ritual, then sees a brief vision of the subject, as if the magician were physically present. The vision lasts for a number of minutes equal to the degree of success (minimum 1), and may allow the caster to learn about the subject's activities and whereabouts. On a critical failure, the caster sees a false vision.

**Read Thoughts (Path of Knowledge-7)      Resisted**

By performing a 10-minute ritual, the magician can read the subject's mind. If successful, the magician may read the subject's surface thoughts for a number of minutes equal to the degree of success (minimum 1). Language is no barrier, but alien minds may impose a penalty of -2 or more. On a critical failure, the subject is aware of the intrusion.

**Read Memories (Path of Knowledge-7)      Resisted**

This hour-long ritual empowers the caster to reach into the target's mind and retrieve a particular piece of information, in the form of a vision. This can be everything relevant the target knows about a particular person, place, or thing, or an answer to a specific question. Two rolls are required; the initial Quick Contest, and an unresisted roll to remain undetected. If the second roll fails, the subject is aware of the intrusion. A critical failure on the first roll gives misleading information.

## ***The Path of Luck***

These ceremonies directly affect probability.

**Chaperone (Path of Luck-3)**

This charm protects the wearer against one threat. Empowering it requires an hour-long ritual, after which the wearer is automatically protected against the next danger that occurs. The wearer may be the only survivor of a train wreck, or remain untouched in a collapsing building. Also, any minor curse that does not directly threaten his life or soul automatically fails. The caster may specify a category of dangers when the ritual is cast, such as "car accidents." When the charm has acted once, it breaks and becomes useless. Chaperones cannot be saved or hoarded, and only one can be made for an individual at a time.

Against a major curse like Malediction, the charm only delays the attack for 1d days. During that period, the wearer of the charm is plagued by nightmares. The charm itself will gradually corrode, wither, cloud up, or otherwise age, until it finally breaks. Chaperone is neither a Guard nor a Screen.

This ritual also defaults to Path of Protection-5.

**Gremlins (Path of Luck-4)**

This ritual causes a machine to break down -- a car might develop engine trouble, a computer a fatal hard disk error, and so forth. If successful, the machine breaks down within 1d hours. Only on a critical success is the machine damaged beyond repair.

**Loyal Item (Path of Luck-4)**

This ritual enchants an item to always return to its owner through the fastest means possible. The item must be in the client's possession and present when the one-hour ritual is performed. Thereafter, if the client loses the item, the forces of chance conspire to return it. For example, a passerby will pick up the item without really noticing it, take it in the direction of the owner, and then lose it when heading in a different direction. As a rule of thumb, small items return faster than large ones, and items in densely populated cities move faster than in more rural areas.

This ritual ends if the owner willingly gives the item to someone else. If, while lost, the item is brought into a Warded area (p. 00), the Loyal Item ritual must win a Quick Contest against the Ward. Otherwise, the Loyal Item ritual ceases to function until the owner finds the item normally.

### **Weapon Blessing (Path of Luck-6)**

Weapon Blessing makes a weapon more effective in combat. The ritual takes an hour and has a penalty of -1 per pound of the weapon's weight. The weapon's wielder may ignore skill penalties equal to half the degree of success (round down, minimum 1). This does not increase the wielder's skill, but does allow him to make more difficult attacks with the weapon. The ritual also changes the next critical failure rolled with the weapon to a normal failure, although this ends the blessing.

### **Malediction (Path of Luck-8)                      Resisted**

This powerful curse involves great risk for the caster and client. It brings harm to the target, targeting his mind, soul, and body, and leading to his ruin, injury, and probable death. The roll to protect the caster and client from the ritual (see p. 00) is made at -2.

The ritual takes an hour. Starting the night it is completed, nightmares plague the target for several days. These nightmares contain elements of the ritual, and may give clues to the identity of the people responsible. Within a week of the ritual's completion, misfortune begins to hound the target. The first consequence is catastrophe at work, leading to the victim being fired or gravely injured on the job. After 1d further days, he will offend or otherwise drive away most relatives and friends; make a new reaction roll for every person or group the victim associates with, at -2 times the degree of success.

Finally, 1d days after that, the victim suffers a horrible accident or act of random violence. As a result, the victim takes 3d damage times the degree of success (minimum 3d).

At any point, the subject may realize he is the victim of a curse and seek help. Malediction is very strong, however, and protective ceremonies (including Guards) are at -4 against it. If the victim finds the caster and persuades him to lift it, the ritual switches to the client instead. The most drastic solution is to kill the caster; this also lifts the curse.

## ***The Path of Protection***

Protection ceremonies keep spiritual or physical threats away from the subject. Other rituals that default to this path are Chaperone (p. 00), Exorcise (p. 00), and Veil (p. 00).

### **Curse Sanctum (Path of Protection)**

This is a simple ritual of protection against curses. Most magicians cast it on themselves as a matter of course, as a first line of defense against paranormal attack. It is also often cast on charms.

The ritual takes an hour to conduct. On a successful roll, the first hostile paranormal ability with long-term effects (such as Malediction or Shapeshift Other) that tries to affect the subject must win a normal Contest of Skills with Curse Sanctum, rolling every hour. (Though the mechanics are slightly different, this counts as a Guard.) If the Curse Sanctum fails, it still delays the hostile effect for 1d-1 days, giving the subject time to seek other protection. If the hostile ability has short-term effects (such as Fireball or Read Thoughts), it must simply win a Quick Contest of Skills, and fails completely if it loses.

### **Endure Elements (Path of Protection)**

This 10-minute ritual grants the subject 10 levels of Temperature Tolerance (p. 00) times the degree of success (minimum 10 levels). Duration is figured normally.

### **Cleansing (Path of Protection-4)**

This two-hour ritual eliminates any ongoing curse (such as Malediction or Shapeshift Other) currently affecting the subject or area if it wins a Quick Contest with the hostile effect. The sooner it is conducted, the better. If done when the symptoms first appear, the Cleansing is at +3. If the curse is already in its final stages, Cleansing is at -3. Even if the Cleansing fails, the caster may (on a successful Occultism or Theology roll) find out something about the source of the curse. This ritual is equivalent in effect to the Remove Curse spell (p. 00).

### **Ward (Path of Protection-4)**

This Screen ritual prevents hostile paranormal effects or beings from entering an area. Magicians use Ward as a matter of course, often casting it before performing other rituals (to block out interference) or casting it on their homes or workshops. The ritual takes an hour.

The caster determines the desired Power of the Ward. Subtract this Power from the skill roll of any paranormal ability directed across the Ward's boundaries, or from the Will of any supernatural being attempting to enter or leave the area. Corporeal beings roll against Will-Power or ST-Power, whichever is greater, to enter or leave. The caster may exclude certain rituals or beings from the Ward's effects.

In addition to normal duration and area penalties, the ritual is at -1 per 2 Power levels the caster assigns. Powers of 30 or greater are common among areas important to a large group of magicians.

Hostile spirits can wear wards down. For every (Power level) energy a spirit spends, the spell's Power drops by 1, for that spirit only. If (Power level) spirits all manage to reduce a ward's Power by 1, then the overall level is reduced by 1. Corporeal supernatural beings can inflict Thrust damage on the barrier once per second, reducing its Power by 1 for every (Power level) points of damage they inflict on it, for that being only. Hostile magicians can weaken a ward with Dispel (p. 00). Dispel cast on a ward reduces the Power by the degree of success (minimum -1).

Once a Ward is erected, a new one cannot replace it unless the first is removed by another ritual (which takes 10 minutes and requires no roll). This means a caster besieged by spirits cannot keep recasting Ward to keep them out. The caster can check on the current Power of the Ward by making a Path of Protection roll.

#### **Charm Against Demonic Animals (Path of Protection-6) Resisted by Will-5**

This ritual empowers a charm which helps the bearer combat beings that are both paranormal and animalistic. (Two examples are the pig-man Grom (p. 00) and the Giant Vampire Cat of Kyoto (p. 00); as a rule, it will not work against beings that can speak.) The charm must be in contact with the client's skin to work. When it is active, a demonic animal must win a Quick Contest between its Will-5 and the ritual, or it must flee. If the animal wins, and fights the wearer, the wearer gets a bonus to his damage rolls equal to half the degree of success (round down, minimum +1).

#### **Dispel (Path of Protection-6)**

This ritual counters the effects of other paranormal abilities. It takes an hour, and the caster must know exactly what he is trying to counter. At the end of the ritual, roll a Quick Contest of Skills between the Dispel ritual and the better of the target ability's skill, or the target's Will. If the caster wins, the targeted ability is dispelled. On a critical failure the target is alerted.

#### **Ghost Shirt (Path of Protection-7)**

This blessing turns away bullets, arrows, and other ranged attacks. The ritual empowers a charm the subject must wear next to his skin. The charm works only for that person. The ritual protects from random attacks *completely*. No ranged attack that wasn't specifically intended to hit the subject will ever hurt him. Even deliberate ranged attacks are at -3. The ghost shirt provides no defense against hand-to-hand or melee weapon attacks, however.

### ***The Path of Spirit***

This Path covers rituals dealing with spirits of all sorts, as well as souls, both living and dead. Guards and Screens must protect the subject's soul or spirit to work against these rituals. This includes universal defenses like Magic and Psychic Resistance (p. 00), but excludes things like Mind Shield (p. 00).

#### **Lay to Rest (Path of Spirit) May Be Resisted**

This ritual, cast on a deceased person's remains, guides that person's spirit to the afterlife. A spirit may resist this ritual, if it wishes to remain on the physical plane. If successful, the ritual resists the next attempt to summon the spirit of the deceased.

#### **Summon (Path of Spirit) Resisted by Will-3**

This ritual summons spirits. The caster must know the name of the spirit being summoned, or its type to summon a generic spirit. Willing spirits appear on a successful roll, but reluctant ones (and most are) resist with

their Will-3. The spirit appears in the area and may or may not be communicative and helpful. The GM may apply a Reaction Roll modifier of -1 to -5 depending on the spirit and the conditions. A spirit can be summoned to appear within a Warded area (p. 00), provided one or more of the magicians involved in the Summoning also helped create the Ward. This is a common precaution to prevent the spirit from attacking.

**Exorcise (Path of Spirit-2)      Resisted by Will-5**

This ritual makes it painful for spirits to approach an area or person. The spirit must win a Quick Contest between its Will-5 and the ritual, or it finds it too painful to face the person or enter the area. Even if the spirit wins it is at -1 to DX and IQ as long as it remains within the area. If cast on an area, the normal rules apply. If cast on an individual, the spirit can't come closer than (subject's Will/3) yards. When cast on a person *possessed* by a spirit, this ritual expels the spirit.

This ritual also defaults to Path of Protection-5.

**Bind (Path of Spirit-3)      Resisted**

This ritual is usually combined with a Summoning to ensure the spirit follows the caster's orders. The caster can command the spirit to perform a number of tasks equal to the degree of success (minimum 1). A task can be any short action in a combat situation, or one long action otherwise. If the spirit is unable to comply, the ritual fails automatically.

**Embody (Path of Spirit-3)**

This ritual creates a physical body for a spirit (which may be a human soul). The body is made from the material components of the ritual, which may include the bodies (living or dead) of animals or humans, or other items (such as a marble statue), possibly in combination. The abilities of the body depend on the spirit, and on the degree of success. As a rule, being embodied can raise a spirit's character point total to no more than twice its pre-body value, and cannot grant more than 10 character points times the degree of success. The spirit is not obliged to enter the body. If more than one spirit wishes to possess the body, the winner of a Quick Contest of Wills gets it.

**Banish (Path of Spirit-4)      Resisted**

This ritual can damage and destroy spirits. The ritual has a penalty equal to the total ST and HT of the spirit. This means only a group can destroy a powerful spirit. The spirit must be present for the ritual; unless it is done quickly, the spirit must be restrained. The spirit takes 1d of damage times the degree of success (minimum 1d). If this roll exceeds HT (even if it doesn't reduce hit points to 0), the spirit is destroyed.

**Ghost Sword (Path of Spirit-4)**

Ghost Sword empowers a weapon to injure and kill incorporeal spirits. Despite the name, it does affect ranged weapons, but must be cast on the ammunition, not the weapon itself. The ritual takes half an hour, and is at -1 per pound of the weapon's weight. If successful, the weapon inflicts its normal damage on spirits. It also ignores the effects of protective paranormal effects like Ghost Shirt, if the Ghost Sword ritual wins a Quick Contest against the protective ability.

The weapon functions only for its intended wielder, and does not grant any increased ability to see spirits; he is at -10 to attack if the spirit is invisible.

**Spirit Trap (Path of Spirit-4)      Special Resistance**

This ritual entraps a spirit inside a container. It can be combined with a Summoning ritual. The spirit resists with the better of Will or ST. If the magician succeeds, the spirit is imprisoned for the duration. If the container is broken, the spirit is freed and will likely seek vengeance.

**Empower (Path of Spirit-4)**

This ritual transfers energy from the caster or other source to a spirit. It is commonly used to help spirits confined inside Wards or Spirit Traps, and is resisted by such effects. If the spirit is not physically present, the spell is *impossible* without an object or entity strongly connected to it, to act as a conduit. (This applies even if the magician could normally do without material components.) One Empower ritual can transfer 5 energy times the degree of success. To transfer more, the ritual must be performed again. The energy may come from the caster,

from certain complex techno-magical devices (like the Ragna Rok Engine), or from any being present, if they are willing, under compulsion, or completely helpless.

### **Spirit Slave (Path of Spirit-6) Resisted**

This ritual captures the soul of a living target, making him vulnerable to the magician's influence. Magicians often prepare their targets using other rituals like Hallucination to wear down their resistance. Such preparations impose a penalty of -1 to -5 to the victim's Will roll.

If the ritual succeeds, the magician imprisons the victim's soul in a bottle, jar, gemstone, or other container. Breaking the bottle releases the soul and ends the ritual. The victim gains High Pain Threshold, along with 10 levels of Weak Will with regard to the magician or anyone in possession of the bottle. Indeed, paranormal abilities intended to affect the victim's soul or spirit *fail* unless the caster has the bottle. If the victim is killed, his ghost remains in the physical world, under the magician's control, until the jar is broken.

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## Religious Rituals

A priest of a mainstream religion (such as the Catholic Church) may be able to use a few of the Path of Spirit rituals, notably Lay to Rest, Exorcise, and Banish. In these cases, the priest does not need Ritual Aptitude or the Ritual Magic skill. Instead, for these purposes only, the Clerical Investment advantage removes the 15 penalty, though the maximum Path skill limit of 12 still applies. The priest then learns the Path of Spirit and any rituals normally. See p. 00 for more on exorcism.

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## RITUAL MODIFIERS TABLE

### **Ritual Elements**

#### **Element Modifier**

##### *Time*

Reducing time to 1d+2 minutes	-2
Reducing time to 1d seconds	-5
Taking normal amount of time	0
Three times required time	+2
Repeating ritual daily for several days	+1 per 2 days
Auspicious time	+1 to +3
Inauspicious time	-1 to -3

##### *Sacred Space*

No sacred space	-5
Makeshift consecration (1d-minute ceremony)	-1
Sacred space	0
Old mystic area (20 years+)	+1
Traditional worship area (50 years+)	+2
Historical ritual place (100 years+)	+3
Timeworn religious center (500 years+)	+4
Truly ancient ritual space (1,000 years+)	+5

##### *Material Components*

#### **Symbolic Representations**

None	-6
Minimal (drawing)	-2
Small belonging/piece of clothing	0



Hair or fingernail clippings +1  
 Photographs or blood sample +2  
 DNA sample or videotape +3  
 For demons, their true name +3  
 Target is present at ritual +4

**Sacrifices**

No sacrifice 0  
 Food and drink +1 to +2  
 Animal sacrifices +2 to +4  
 Human sacrifices, to evil spirits +1 to +5  
 Human sacrifices, to other spirits -5  
 Self-sacrifice +1/2 hit points lost

**Spiritual Symbols**

No symbols -3  
 Amulet, talisman, or drawing 0  
 Detailed symbols (engraved drawings, sculptures, paintings) +1 to +3  
 Powerful, coveted mystic artifact +1 to +5 (or more)

**Multiple Target Modifiers**

Size of Group	Penalty
2-5	-4
6-10	-8
11-20	-12
21-50	-14
51-100	-18
101-200	-22
201-500	-26
501-1,000	-30
1,001-5,000	-34
5,001-20,000	-38
20,001-50,000	-42
50,001-100,000	-44
+ every doubling	an additional -4

**Area Effect Modifiers**

Radius	Penalty
Under 5 yards	0
5-10 yards	-1
11-100 yards	-1 per 10-yard increase (-10 for 100 yards)
101-200 yards	-1 per 25 yard increase (-14 for 200 yards)
Over 200 yards	-4 per 100-yard increase

**Duration Effect Modifiers**

Duration	Penalty
12 hours	0
1 day	-2
1 week	-4
1 month	-8
Additional weeks (to 1 year)	-1 per week (-56 for full year)
Additional years	-4 per year

## SAMPLE MAGICIAN: ELIANA ALEIXO 150 POINTS

Female; Age 32; 6'0"; 155 lbs.; A tall woman with slightly-crazed eyes. Her long, straight, black hair is a wig; under it, her natural hair is short, patchy, and interrupted by scar tissue.

**ST** 10 [0]; **DX** 11 [10]; **IQ** 14 [45]; **HT** 11 [10].

Speed 5.50; Move 5.

Dodge 5; Parry 4.

**Advantages:** Acute Hearing +2 [4] (Hearing: 16); Charisma +1 [5] (Reaction: +1); Double-Jointed [5]; Ritual Adept 1 [5] (Cannot vary element (Time only): 150%); Ritual Aptitude 5 [5]; Strong Will +2 [8] (Will: 16).

**Disadvantages:** Fear of Darkness (Mild) [15]; Jealousy [10]; Pyromania [15]; Stubbornness [15]; Unnatural Feature (Scarred head) [15].

**Quirks:** Always laughs at own jokes; Bites fingernails; Collects souvenirs from opponents. [13]

**Skills:** Acting-12 []; Area Knowledge-15 [2]; Banish-10 [2]; Bind-13 [6]; Chemistry/TL7-11 []; Cleansing-11 [8]; Cooking-13 []; Curse Sanctum-11 [0]; Dancing-13 [8]; Driving (Automobile)/TL7-9 []; English-12 []; Escape-11 []; Fast-Talk-13 [1]; First Aid/TL7-13 []; Guise-12 [2]; Hallucination-10 [8]; History-12 [1]; Intimidation-14 [2]; Knife-10 [] (Parry: 4); Lay to Rest-13 [0]; Occultism-15 [4]; Path of Cunning-12 [1]; Path of Protection-11 [1]; Path of Spirit-13 [3]; Physiology/TL7-10 []; Poisons-13 [2]; Portuguese (native)-14 [0]; Psychology-14 [4]; Research-12 []; Ritual Magic-16 [16]; Spanish-12 []; Spirit Trap-11 [4]; Stealth-13 [8]; Streetwise-13 [1]; Summon-13 [0]; Swimming-10 []; Tattooing-13 [1]; Theology-13 [2]; Weaving-12 [2].

Ms. Alexio is a native of Teresopolis, near Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. From a very young age, she was a strange child, often talking to candles and other flames. She claimed to see ghosts in the fire. Her parents tried to raise her as a good Catholic, but the local practitioners of *Brujera* (a spiritual tradition combining Catholicism and Aztec beliefs) heard of her, and secretly taught her their beliefs. She loved the comparative freedom they encouraged in her, and the magical secrets they had to share.

Unfortunately, one day her fascination with fire led to an accident. Her hair caught fire, and burned down to her scalp before she could reach water. The incident left her with patches of hair and zig-zagging scar tissue on her head. Healing was long and painful, and left her a much darker person. She soon discovered a wig would hide her burns, but the scars within have not healed.

Today, Alexio is a powerful ritual magician, who specializes in bending spirits to her will. She originally used them to help people who came to her asking for aid. Lately, she has more and more been sending them to attack those who cross her, or who she dislikes, or those who merely look at her strangely. She's also realized that she can have her spirits bring people to her, who she can then sacrifice to bind even more powerful spirits. It's only a matter of time before the disappearances start.

## Spell-Based Magic

All spells (which some supernatural beings have as innate powers) are standard procedures that produce specified magical effects. As a rule, spell-based magic is *not* available to members of the BPRD or other starting characters! Learning spells requires a very rare combination of genetic luck, access to information on spells, and favorable local mana conditions (see p. 00). The few people in the *Hellboy* universe who know spells are all powerful sorcerers or supernatural entities. For the former, spells tend to be used defensively and as a last resort; their biggest advantage over rituals is their *speed*, so a wizard is likeliest to risk a chancy spell when his back is to the wall.

In game terms, each spell is a Mental skill, Hard in most cases, Very Hard in a few. Wizards must spend at least 1 point on each spell.

### *Properties of Spells*

Each spell has some basic statistics:

*Time to Cast:* The time required to activate the spell. The default is 1 second.

*Duration:* The length of time the spell will last. Until it ends, the spell is "on" and gives the caster a -1 penalty when casting other spells.

*Cost:* The amount of energy needed to fuel the spell.

*Prerequisites:* Some spells have IQ or Magery requirements that must be met. Most require that the wizard know other, simpler spells. For this book, those other spells are not listed in detail. GMs should assume NPC wizards have them as necessary. A GM who wishes to employ a wizard's lesser powers is encouraged to be creative, or to consult *GURPS Magic* and *GURPS Grimoire*.

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## New Advantage: Magical Aptitude (Magery) 15, 25, or 35 points

You are a natural user of spell-based magic. This advantage is normally *required* to cast spells. You learn any spell as though your IQ was equal to IQ plus your level of Magery. When you first see any magical object, and again when you first touch it, the GM rolls against your (IQ + Magery) to see if you notice that it is magic.

Level 1: 15 points; Level 2: 25 points; Level 3: 35 points.

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### CASTING A SPELL

To cast a spell, the character must concentrate for the entire time to cast. At the start of his next turn, he rolls against his skill with the spell. He's at -5 if he can't see or touch the subject. If the roll succeeds, the caster pays the energy and the spell activates; on a critical success, there's no cost! If the spell fails, the caster pays 1 energy and nothing happens; on a critical failure, he pays the full cost and suffers a minor disaster (a bad smell, blinding flash, slight damage, etc.). Regardless, the caster may act normally after he rolls; the spell isn't his action for the turn. Once cast, a spell lasts for the duration. If a wizard wishes to end his spell early, he pays 1 energy.

*Distraction:* A caster who is grabbed, shoved, or forced to make an active defense roll (p. 00) while concentrating must make a Will-3 roll or lose his spell. A caster who's *injured* while concentrating casts his spell at a penalty equal to his wounds.

### *Magic Rites*

The higher one's skill with a spell, the easier it is to cast. This applies both to the energy cost, the time required, and to the rites required to cast it. If the wizard cannot perform the rites, he cannot cast the spell. For instance, if the rites require speech, and he is gagged, he can't cast the spell. These skill levels are the level at which the spell is *known*, at -5 in a low-mana zone (p. 00).

For skill levels below 15, the wizard must speak a few words and make some gestures. At 15, the spell's energy cost is reduced by 1. At 18, either the words or the gestures may be omitted. At 20, cost is reduced again by 1. At 21, no rites are needed and casting time is halved. Round up, unless the time is less than one second, in which case the spell can be cast without a turn of concentration. Mages may never cast two spells in the same turn, though. At level 25, and every 5 levels thereafter, casting time is halved again, and energy cost is reduced by another 1 point.

### *Maintaining Spells*

Some spells can be maintained: When the duration expires, more energy can be spent to keep the spell going for another period equal to the duration. This can be repeated until the wizard collapses due to fatigue. If it's possible to maintain a spell, a "cost to maintain" will be listed.

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# Mana Levels

Mana is the source of spell-based magic -- a place's local magical energy. Its strength (the "mana level") varies in different places. In a zone with no mana, magic doesn't work. In a low-mana zone, only mages can cast spells, and then only at -5 to skill. In "normal" mana conditions, only mages can cast spells, but they do so at full skill. In high mana, anyone can cast spells at full skill. Most of Hellboy's world is low mana. This is why most magic is done by ritual, not through mana-dependent spells, and why the few magic-users good at spell-based magic save it for emergencies (such as when Hellboy has them on the ropes).

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## *Classes of Spells*

Some spells are missile spells. A missile spell appears in the caster's hand when the spell roll is made. On the next round, the caster hurls it like a thrown weapon (p. 00). The attack is rolled against Spell Throwing skill (Physical/Easy). If it hits, the missile injures the target as per the spell description. The time to cast missile spells is never reduced by skill.

Other spells may be resisted. This is handled as described on p. 00, with the note that most spells are resisted by something other than Will. Whatever the defending attribute is, the subject adds any Strong Will to it, or subtracts any Weak Will from it.

## SAMPLE SPELLS

Here is a short list of spells. Very Hard spells are labeled VH.

### **Breathe Fire (VH)**

Lets the caster shoot a jet of flame from his mouth. Each 1 energy buys 1d+1 damage, and the flame cannot be maintained. Caster rolls to hit against DX-2. This counts as an action, and the caster must be facing the target. No *hand* gestures are required; certain lip and tongue motions are made instead, so this spell may be cast "no hands" at any skill level. This attack may not be parried.

*Duration:* 1 second.

*Cost:* 1 to 4. Cannot be maintained. Range is equal to energy spent.

*Time to Cast:* 2 seconds.

*Prerequisites:* Magery and 8 Fire spells.

### **Concussion**

This missile spell allows the caster to create a ball of highly-pressurized air. When the ball is thrown and strikes the target, it explodes, doing concussion (crushing) damage. Armor protects normally. The exploding missile creates a ringing noise, but there is no risk of being deafened.

*Cost:* 2, 4, or 6. For every 2 points put into the spell, the missile does 1d of damage in the target hex and adjacent hexes. Damage is quartered in the next 2 hexes (roll normally, then divide by 4, rounding down), and quartered again in the next 2 (divide by 16).

*Time to Cast:* 1 to 3 seconds.

*Prerequisites:* 5 spells relating to Air and Sound.

### **Fireball**

This missile spell lets the caster throw a ball of fire. When it strikes, it does damage and vanishes in a puff of flame that may ignite flammables.

*Duration:* Until thrown.

*Cost:* 1 to 3; the fireball does 1d damage per 1 energy spent (maximum 3).

*Time to Cast:* 1 second per 1d damage (maximum 3).

*Prerequisites:* Magery and 3 Fire spells.

**Great Hallucination (VH)****Resisted by IQ**

The subject's perceptions are addled; his entire environment can be falsified. Instead of being on a city street, he can see himself trapped on a cliffside. The hallucination affects all the senses, but is entirely in the mind. Impossible or obviously false hallucinations are resisted at +1 to +5. For any significant changes to occur in the hallucination, the caster must concentrate. If the hallucination changes *dramatically*, the subject gets another resistance roll. Hellboy refers to this spell as "the whammy."

*Duration:* 1 minute.

*Cost:* 6 to cast, 3 to maintain.

*Time to Cast:* 4 seconds.

*Prerequisites:* Magery 2, IQ 12+, and 11 spells relating to Mind Control, Communication, and Empathy.

**Remove Curse      Resisted by subject spell or ritual**

Nullifies a variety of powerful spells and rituals, including Shapeshifting and Shapeshift Other.

*Cost:* 20.

*Time to Cast:* 1 hour.

*Prerequisites:* Magery 2 and 15 diverse spells.

**Shapeshifting (VH)**

Lets the caster change to the form of an animal. Each animal form is a different spell, learned separately. Clothing, jewelry, and armor vanish when shapeshifted, and reappear when human form is reassumed. Backpacks, carried items, and such fall to the ground.

The caster retains his intelligence, but gains all the physical attributes of the animal. Spells may not be cast unless the caster can perform them without gestures. Fatigue Points are *not* increased.

After each hour, the caster must make an IQ roll, or lose a point of IQ. This continues until he reaches the normal IQ of that beast (typically 7 or lower; see p. 00). Should IQ drop to 7, the caster is trapped in beast form forever unless the spell is countered by Remove Curse or a Cleansing ritual. Lost IQ comes back when human form is reassumed.

*Duration:* 1 hour.

*Cost:* 6 to cast, 2 to maintain.

*Time to Cast:* 3 seconds.

*Prerequisites:* Magery and 6 spells of any type.

**Shapeshift Other (VH)****Resisted by IQ**

As above, but works on others. The subject can *not* end the spell; only the caster, a Remove Curse, or a Cleansing ritual can. If the spell continues until IQ drops to 7, the caster can no longer end it.

*Duration:* 1 hour.

*Cost:* 6 to cast, 2 to maintain.

*Time to Cast:* 30 seconds.

*Prerequisites:* Magery 2 and Shapeshifting for that form.

**Strike Blind****Resisted by HT**

The subject is temporarily blinded. (This spell affects the body, not the mind.) He is at -10 to attack anyone physically, and cannot see targets to use paranormal abilities on them.

*Duration:* 10 seconds.

*Cost:* 4 to cast; 2 to maintain.

*Prerequisites:* 4 spells relating to Light and Body Control.

# Psychic Powers

Psychic powers, also called psionic powers and wild talents, are powers of the mind. Psychics can achieve the same effects as magic-users, but they control the power *directly*, with no need for ritual or the appeasement of

spirits. Psychic abilities are learned like skills except, for each skill, there is an underlying psychic *power* -- an inborn advantage, which is a prerequisite. A character who starts with a psychic power can improve his power and psychic skills, or acquire new psychic skills related to that power. However, totally new powers normally can't be acquired.

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## Psychic Powers As Energy

Some spells and rituals (such as Empower, p. 00) can drain energy from victims, causing them fatigue (p. 00). If they are psychic, as an alternative the magic-user can drain their *psychic power*, at a rate of 2 energy per power level. Psychics who are drained in this manner recover levels as if they were lost hit points (p. 00), rolling against their best skill under that power for their healing rolls. This option is only for magic-users; Steal Energy and Steal Power are two separate skills for psychics, and are not interchangeable.

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## POWER AND SKILL

Each psychic ability is described by two things: *power* and *skill*.

*Power* is the raw strength of a psychic ability. It controls range, damage done, weight affected, etc. Power is bought in levels. A psychic's Power is usually the same for all skills within each Power. However, if a psychic has only *one* skill under a Power, and can't learn more, that Power can be bought more cheaply. See p. 00.

*Skill* is bought as for normal Mental/Hard skills. Skill determines how well the psychic controls his ability.

## USING PSYCHIC ABILITIES

### ***Active and Passive Skills***

An *active* psychic skill is one the psychic uses deliberately. Telesend and Pyrokinesis are examples of active skills. They usually require skill rolls, usually made by the player (but see *ESP*, p. 00). A *passive* skill works automatically, when appropriate. Mind Shield and most uses of Precognition are two examples. Some passive skills require rolls, made by the GM.

### ***Energy Cost***

Most uses of psychic abilities have no energy cost, but there are exceptions. Psychic abilities cost energy under these circumstances:

(a) For "extra effort." For every 3 energy spent on an attempt, effective Power increases by 1, but effective *skill* drops by 2. If the use of a psychic ability continues for more than a minute, each minute costs another 3 energy. Extra effort can't be used with passive skills.

(b) For each *repeated* attempt, when the first attempt failed. See p. 00.

(c) For any use requiring a Contest of Skills, *unless* the psychic wins by 5 or more.

(d) For any skill specifically requiring energy.

(e) On a critical failure, the psychic loses 1d of energy, in addition to any other costs. Also, after a critical failure, a psychic may not attempt the same feat until all energy is recovered.

On a critical success, no energy is lost, and there may be other bonuses (such as extra information on an ESP roll).

### ***Concentration and Time Required***

Each use of an active psychic skill requires one turn of concentration. At the beginning of the next turn, the psychic makes his roll. If the roll is a success, and the effect is instantaneous, the psychic may then perform a

normal action (or start concentrating again). The distraction rules for spell-based magic (p. 00) also apply to the use of psychic abilities.

For an effect that isn't instantaneous (e.g., reading someone's mind), more time must be spent concentrating after the initial contact. Doing anything else while continuing use of the psychic ability is at a penalty of -2 or worse.

### ***Repeated Attempts***

When a psychic tries to use a power and fails, he may wait five minutes and try again without penalty. If he tries sooner, this is a *repeated attempt*, and costs a point of energy. Also, this second effort is at -1 to skill. A third attempt will cost a point of energy, and will be at -2 to skill, and so on.

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## Limitations

Limitations reduce the cost of powers by making them less trustworthy or harder to use. In the world of *Hellboy*, limitations on psychic abilities are common.

Limitations each subtract a percentage from the cost of the Power, such as -30%. Multiple limitations add together, but the largest possible reduction is -75%. Always round point costs up. See p. 00 for more on limitations.

It is possible for a limitation to apply to *part* of a Power. For example, Liz Sherman (p. 00) can light her cigarettes reliably and controllably; her first 5 levels of Pyrokinesis have no limitation, and cost  $3 \times 5 = 15$  points. However, the uppermost limits of her power remain out of her control. Her other 95 levels have the limitations Uncontrollable (-30%) and Unconscious Only (-20%). The base cost for these levels is  $3 \times 95 = 285$  points. The -50% in limitations reduce the cost of these levels to 143 points, so the total cost of her Pyrokinesis is  $143 + 15 = 158$  points.

Some common limitations are below. The GM is free to invent more, using these as a guide.

### ***Emergencies Only*** **-30%**

The power is triggered by fear or excitement, and cannot be used under "routine" conditions. This limitation cannot be taken in combination with Unconscious Only (below).

### ***Eye Contact Only*** **-20%**

The power will only work if the psychic makes eye contact with the subject. Range is limited to 3 yards. This limitation can only be taken on Telepathy, Psychic Vampirism, and their single-skill powers.

### ***Touch Only*** **-20%**

The psychic's power will only work if he touches the subject. If he can make the ability work with either touch or eye contact (above), the combined limitation is worth -15%.

### ***Unconscious Only*** **-20%**

This can only be taken in combination with Uncontrollable (below). The power cannot be consciously activated *at all*; it can only come into play under GM control, as a result of failing a Will roll under stress. This limitation cannot be taken in combination with Emergencies Only (above).

### ***Uncontrollable*** **-30%**

This limitation is only available for Electrokinetic and Psychokinetic powers. The psychic's power tends to manifest by itself -- even against his will -- when he is angry or excited. In such situations (including exposure to a phobia), the psychic must make a Will roll. A Will higher than 13 is treated as 13 for this roll. On a failure, the

GM takes over and plays the power as if it were a separate entity of hostile or prankish nature, or as an expression of the character's subconscious. The power will go after obvious foes first, and may then turn on friends, but it will never affect the psychic himself. After each uncontrolled act, and *before* an attack on a loved one, the psychic may make another Will roll to get the power under control.

When a psychic's power is out of control, he cannot even choose what skills he uses. The psychic obviously doesn't need to concentrate, but suffers energy costs normally. The chaos continues until the psychic makes a Will roll, runs out of energy and falls unconscious, or there is nothing left to destroy.

### ***Unreliable***

An unreliable power sometimes works and sometimes doesn't. The psychic must roll the power's activation number or below on 3d. On a failure, the power simply doesn't work. The psychic may try again on subsequent turns, at no penalty to the activation number, but a cost of 1 energy.

For an activation number of 5 or less, this limitation is worth -70%; for 8 or less, -30%; for 11 or less, -20%; for 14 or less, -10%.

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### ***varies***

## **POWERS AND SKILLS**

This section describes six psychic powers and their associated skills. A star refers to the power's cost if it is bought with that skill alone. A "n/a" means the skill can't be bought alone. Many psychic skills are marked as resisted; see p. 00. Some skills have *prerequisites*. In order to learn them, a psychic must know their prerequisites at the specified levels. The skill's maximum range will be given, if applicable. Many skills base their effects on a fraction of Power (such as Power/5). Always round down.

### ***Electrokinesis (5 points per level)***

This is the ability to control electrical systems. An electrokinetic must be able to see or touch the subject (or sense it with Energy Sense). Roll at -3 if the target is only seen on live video (or telepathically through another's eyes); roll at -5 if the target is unseen but can be clearly visualized. Any EK skill roll is at +2 if the user is touching the subject.

#### **Energy Sense 1**

This passive ability allows the psychic to sense electric fields, including any operating electrical device. It is useful for locating concealed surveillance devices, power cables hidden in walls, etc.

*Range:* Power yards.

#### **Metal Sense 1**

This is a passive ability, allowing the psychic to sense metal. The skill works best for detecting conductive metals, such as gold and steel. Nonconductive metals like aluminum impose up to a -5 penalty.

*Range:* Power yards.

#### **Surge 2**

This skill causes a power surge in an electrical device. On a successful roll, the target takes 1d damage per 3 levels of Power. If its HT is exceeded, the item will short-circuit or otherwise burn out. HT for equipment ranges from 3 for the data on an unprotected computer to 20 or better for military gear.

*Range:* Power squared yards.

### ***Ectoplasmic Projection (3 points per level)***

This power covers the projection of ectoplasm. Psychics with this power are often called physical mediums. The Autotrance advantage (p. 00) gives a +2 to these skills. A spirit, human or not, living or not, which is occupying ectoplasm uses all the rules of the Ectoplasmic Form advantage, p. 00.

#### **Channeling 2**



A psychic with this skill may become a conduit for the spirit world. The psychic enters a trance, and projects ectoplasm. This ectoplasm can be inhabited by any spirit in the immediate area. The spirit will typically shape the ectoplasm (into its mortal form, if it is a ghost, or something stranger otherwise), and can use it to speak. The spirit is tethered to the psychic by the ectoplasm, and cannot travel away. The psychic may evict a spirit automatically, unless it is unwilling, in which case it must win a Quick Contest of Wills with the psychic, who gets a bonus equal to Power. Trying again uses the *Repeated Attempts* rules, p. 00. The channeling normally lasts for at most Power<sup>2</sup> minutes. If the psychic does not or cannot evict the spirit by this time, every further 10 minutes costs the psychic 1 energy. If fatigue due to energy loss reduces ST to 0, the psychic's body falls into a coma and loses 1 hit point every 5 minutes. The spirit can give its energy to the psychic to prevent this. If the psychic *dies*, the spirit may as well; see *Ectoplasm*.

#### **Projection n/a**

With this skill, a psychic's spirit can leave its body, manifesting as ectoplasm. The psychic's physical body is left unconscious and helpless. The range is the maximum safe distance the psychic can travel. Within the range, the psychic can return instantly to his body. Returning from further away requires a Will roll, at -1 for every multiple of the base range he is outside the safe limit. (E.g., a psychic with Power 5 can return automatically within 125 yards (5 cubed), with a Will roll out to 250 yards (2125), with a Will-1 roll out to 375 yards, etc.) A failure means the psychic must proceed back at normal speed, or wait an hour and try again.

The psychic can safely leave his body for Power<sup>2</sup> minutes. Beyond that time, the body suffers fatigue and hit point loss as for Channeling. This loss does not affect the psychic's ectoplasmic form, but he is aware of it.

If the ectoplasmic form is killed outside the body, the body loses hit points as described above until it dies. If the body dies, the ectoplasmic form becomes independent, and may die as well; see *Ectoplasm*.

*Range:* Power cubed yards.

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## Ectoplasm

Ectoplasm is a luminescent, semi-solid material, composed in part of water vapor. It can provide a visible body for spirits, or may simply manifest in ropes and strands. Ectoplasm most commonly is drawn from the fluids in a psychic's body; in such cases, the ectoplasmic body has 5 hit points, regardless of its other statistics. Any more hit points must come from the psychic's body, at one-to-one cost. The psychic can do this voluntarily, or the spirit can attempt to steal them, using a Quick Contest of Wills. The spirit is at a penalty equal to the hit points it's trying to steal, and the psychic is at a bonus equal to his Power. The ectoplasmic body has, by default, no energy (Fatigue Points). The psychic can give energy to it freely (and *must* give at least 1 energy, in the case of Projection). When being Channeled, a spirit normally provides its own energy, and *can't* steal any.

If the medium's body dies, the spirit is cast loose, and trapped in the ectoplasm. It must begin making monthly HT rolls as for the Ectoplasmic Form advantage. If its current hit points (5, plus any stolen) are less than its hit points before it entered the ectoplasm, the HT rolls are at a penalty equal to the difference! (A spirit planning on killing the medium and breaking free usually sucks out as many hit points as possible first.) It is possible to stabilize an ectoplasmic form (giving it the Unlimited Lifespan enhancement, p. 00) with a containment suit, but only organizations like the BPRD have the necessary knowledge to create one.

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#### **ESP (3 points per level)**

ESP is extra-sensory perception; the ability to perceive things in paranormal ways. Unlike most psychic abilities, there is no need to see or touch the target. ESP skill rolls should be made by the GM; on most failures, the psychic learns nothing, but on a failure by more than 5, the GM should give *false* information. Repeated attempts at ESP cost 2 energy each, at -2 skill for each attempt.

**Awareness 2**

This skill allows the user (sometimes called a *medium*) to detect paranormal events and objects, like spirits, magic, and the effects of psychic use. A successful roll allows the psychic to know the location and approximate strength of magic being performed within his range (ritualistic or spell-based), to sense magic items and spirits, or to detect the *effects* of psychic use (see p. 00). Very powerful effects give a bonus to the roll. Note that this skill does not allow *communication* with spirits; the psychic is seeing the eddies their presence causes, not the spirits themselves.

Range: Use the *Telepathy Range Table*, p. 00, reading the row for Power+5.

### **Clairvoyance 2**

This is the ability to see through walls and other solid objects. On a successful roll, the psychic can maintain his observation of that object or place with one maintenance roll each minute. Darkness has no effect.

Range: Power squared inches.

### **Clairaudience 2**

Similar to clairvoyance, except that it lets the user *hear* through walls, etc.

Range: Power squared yards.

### **Detect Aura 2**

This skill grants the ability to see the auras that surround people. It gives the same information as the Aura Reading ritual (p. 00).

Range: Use the *Telepathy Range Table*, p. 00.

### **Precognition 2**

This is the ability to see the future. When BPRD personnel call someone *psychic*, they are usually referring to a precog. Even at its best, precognition is erratic and chancy. An active attempt to use Precog takes 10 minutes of concentration, costs 2 energy, and is at -10 to skill. Passive precog rolls are made at the GM's discretion, and require no concentration, energy, or penalty to skill. Precognition is usually associated with a person or thing, giving the psychic a vision of its future.

Range: For distance, use the *Telepathy Range Table*, p. 00. For time, range is Power squared days.

### **Psychometry 1**

This talent allows the psychic to learn the history of an object or place. The length of history is Power squared in years, up through Power 15, after which it is Power *cubed*. Touching the object gives +1 to skill. Only on a very good roll does the user get more than general impressions or a feel for the owner's personality. Psychometry is normally an active skill, but strong vibes may be picked up passively.

Range: For distance, Power squared inches. For time, see description.

## ***Psychic Vampirism (3 points per level)***

Psychic vampires can drain emotions, life force, and even psychic powers from others. While most often sinister, this power *can* be used for good. A vampire could drain away someone's anger to forestall violence, for example.

Psychic vampires must be able to see or touch their subjects. Guards and Screens that protect the mind affect their skills normally. Unless the attack is a critical success, the target gets an IQ roll to realize something is happening.

### **Drain Emotion 2**

### **Resisted**

With this ability a psychic can cause a person to stop feeling emotions. If the psychic succeeds, the target feels *nothing* -- no anger, no fear, no joy. The subject will act entirely from logic. He regains his emotions after 10 seconds per level of Power (though any original emotions do not come back of themselves). The vampire experiences the emotion he drains for 1d minutes. This can be an addictive sensation.

Range: Power squared yards.

### **Steal Energy 2**

### **Resisted**

This is the ability to tap a subject for vital energy. On a success, the victim loses 1d-3+(Power/4) energy. If fatigue due to energy loss reduces ST to 0, the subject loses hit points instead. This ability can be used repeatedly, until it kills the victim. The psychic can use any energy (not hit points) drained to replace his own lost energy. The victim recovers energy and hit points normally.

*Range:* Power yards.

### **Steal Power 2**

### **Resisted**

This skill permits a psychic to drain another of psychic force. On a success, the victim loses levels in all psychic powers equal to user's Power/4. This ability costs 1 energy per use, and can be used repeatedly.

For every 2 levels the psychic successfully steals, he may increase one of his powers by 1. If the target is reduced to 0 Power, he may no longer be drained. Drained power is lost by the user and regained by the victim at 1 level per minute.

*Range:* Power yards.

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## Are Psychic Powers Alive?

According to Rasputin, [Liz Sherman's] power is a *living thing* . . . every bit as much *alive* as you or I. And as a living thing, it needs *room*, room to *breathe*, room to *grow*. Frankly, most BPRD parapsychologists regard this as metaphor at best, balderdash at worst. This chapter chooses something close to the metaphor option, and represents psychic abilities as genetic, and no more a separate thing than one's sense of smell.

As a variation, the GM can choose that Rasputin was absolutely correct. In this case, genetics only determine whether people are *susceptible* to having psychic powers be born and grow within them. The power itself comes from elsewhere, and is a separate being, possibly a spirit of some kind, over which the psychic has limited control. The game mechanics are the same, but under rare circumstances the power can exert its own will, or even leave for a new host. Like most symbiotic relationships, this can be dangerous for both parties.

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### ***Psychokinesis (5 points per level)***

Psychokinesis is the manipulation of matter and energy using mental power. It has the same restrictions as Electrokinetics (p. 00) with regards to sight and touch, range, etc.

### **Cryokinesis 2**

This is the ability to slow molecular motion, thereby decreasing the temperature of an object. A successful use allows the psychic to lower the temperature of 10 cubic inches of material by 50 Fahrenheit per second. Larger items cool more slowly, but smaller items do not cool any faster. Continued concentration continues to lower the temperature at the same rate, with a new skill roll every second. If the psychic only wants to *maintain* a temperature, concentration isn't necessary, and only one roll per *minute* is required.

For a rough approximation, GMs can assume that a pound of material is 20 cubic inches -- which means that every 6 levels of Power can lower an average person's temperature by 1 per turn. Items must be cooled as a unit; a psychic cannot freeze someone's heart while leaving their body untouched.

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## Changes in Body Temperature

Every turn a normal human's body temperature is 95 Fahrenheit or lower, or 105 or higher, he must make a HT+5 roll, at -1 per degree below 95, or above 105. For every point the roll is failed by, the victim loses 1 energy, or one hit point if all energy is gone. For *sudden* changes, if a human's body temperature is lowered (or raised) by at least 1 in a single turn, he must make a HT+3 roll, at -2 per additional 0.5. Failure means the victim loses 1 DX

and 1 hit point for every point he failed the roll by. A critical failure results in brain damage; the victim falls into a coma for 1d days and loses 1 point of IQ.

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### **Pyrokinesis 3**

This skill is the opposite of Cryokinesis, and largely works the same way, save that temperature is increased. Pyrokinesis is also harder to control. On a failed skill roll, *something* will experience the increase in temperature. A miss by 1 to 5 means the target is affected, but so are nearby objects. A worse miss means the target isn't affected, but other objects are. A critical failure affects everything in sight. Pyrokinetic heat is trapped inside the subject; a psychic could heat a person's clothes without the wearer noticing -- until they caught fire.

### **Telekinesis 4**

This is the ability to move objects by mental power. The maximum weight a psychic can move is determined by Power, as described in the table. To determine equivalent ST, divide weight by 25.

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## Telekinesis Weight Table

Power	Weight
1	1/4 oz.
2	1/2 oz.
3	1 oz.
4	2 oz.
5	4 oz.
6	8 oz.
7	1 lb.
8	2 lbs.
9	4 lbs.
10	8 lbs.
11	15 lbs.
12	30 lbs.
13	60 lbs.
14	125 lbs.
15	250 lbs.

Further increases in Power add 250 lbs. per level. When moving gases, TK affects one cubic foot per level.

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To determine the *speed* an object can be moved, subtract the Power needed to lift it, and look up the excess Power on the speed table.

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## Telekinesis Speed Table

Excess Power	Speed
0	Move 1
1	Move 1.4
2	Move 2
3	Move 3
4	Move 4
5	Move 6

- 6 Move 8
- 7 Move 12 (24 mph)
- 8 Move 15 (30 mph)
- 10 Move 30 (60 mph)
- 12 Move 60 (120 mph)
- 14 Move 120 (240 mph)
- 16 Move 250 (500 mph)

Further increases in Power add 250 mph per 2 levels.

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No concentration or skill roll is required for simple lifting or movement. For more complex actions, the GM should require a roll, at a penalty from -2 (for slow, precise movement) to -6 (for precise, bullet-fast movement) or worse. "Catching" a moving object also imposes a penalty, at -1 for every yard per second. (Note that psychics can't see bullets to catch them.)

With a Power of 16 or better, a psychic can throw small rocks, etc., as though they were bullets. Use the ranged weapon statistics for the .44 magnum (p. 00). Damage is 1d+1 at Power 16, 2d-1 at 17, 2d+2 at 18, 3d-1 at 19, and 3d at Power 20. Over Power 20, add 50 yards to maximum range and 1 point to damage for each level. Snap Shot is (25-skill) and Accuracy is 1.

### ***Telepathy (5 points per level)***

Telepathy is the power of mental communication and control. These skills use the *Telepathy Range Table*.

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## Telepathy Range Table

*Power*      *Distance*

- 1 Touch only, and time is multiplied by 10
- 2 Touch only
- 3 1 yard
- 4 2 yard
- 5 4 yard
- 6 8 yard
- 7 15 yard
- 8 30 yard
- 9 60 yard
- 10 100 yard
- 11 200 yard
- 12 400 yard
- 13 1/2 mile
- 14 1 mile
- 15 2 miles
- 16 4 miles
- 17 8 miles
- 18 15 miles
- 19 30 miles
- 20 60 miles
- 21 125 miles

Further increases in power continue to double range. These ranges are for contact with a single target. For powers involving a global use of a psychic ability, divide range by 100.

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### **Emotion Sense 2**

This is the ability to tell what someone is feeling. Its passive powers are an ability to detect lies and a general sense of someone's personality. Actively, it can be used to see through emotional masks (e.g., if someone is sad but pretending to be happy).

### **Mental Blow n/a**

This is a direct mental attack against the mind. It costs one energy. On a success, the victim must make a HT roll or be mentally stunned (p. 00). If Power is 10 or greater, the subject takes fatigue as well. Energy lost is equal to 1d times Power/10, with a +1 if the remainder is 5 or more. On a critical success, the victim takes *physical* damage, in the form of hit points, instead. On a critical failure, the user takes physical damage.

*Prerequisite:* Telesend-12+.

### **Mind Shield 2**

This Screen protects the user from mental attacks. The psychic may turn his shield on and off at any time. When the psychic falls unconscious or goes to sleep, it remains as it was set. A sleeping psychic with his shield down gets one Mind Shield roll to bring it up if it's needed; someone unconscious rolls at -2.

A mind shield's Power is equal to the psychic's Power; that number is subtracted from the skill of anyone using Mental Blow, Telereceive, all types of Psychic Vampirism, and other paranormal abilities that affect the mind. Repeated attempts against a mind shield are at -2 to skill per attempt, and cost two energy, rather than the normal penalties.

The effects vary by skill. At skill level 8 or less, it interferes with all Psychic Vampirism and the above-listed uses of Telepathy, friendly or hostile, against *or by* the user. At 9, it no longer interferes with the user's own powers. At 12, the user can designate an attack as friendly, in which case it suffers only half the penalty (round up). At 15, the shield automatically distinguishes friendly contacts, and they get no penalty. At 21 and up, any psychic contacting the shield with Telereceive must win a Quick Contest of Telereceive vs. Mind Shield to even perceive the user as psychic.

### **Psychic Sense 1**

This is the ability to detect use of psychic powers. The user gets a passive roll to detect any use of psychic abilities within his range. He may also use the skill actively, at +5. Telepathic powers are detected at +2. Range is normal for a Telepathy skill, not divided by 100. The degree of success on a Psychic Sense roll determines how much information the user gets, from merely "some psychic power was used," to things like approximate direction, distance, and what power and skill was used, on better rolls.

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# What's The Difference Between Psychic Sense And Awareness?

Psychic Sense is a telepathic power. It detects *the changes that go on in a psychic's brain* when he uses his ability. It is not triggered by the *effects* of psychic abilities, such as a pyrokinetic fire. Awareness (p. 00), on the other hand, detects the disturbances in the universe *caused* by magic, psychic powers, and other paranormal abilities.

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### **Sleep n/a**

### **Resisted**

This is an indirect mental attack. It can only be made after the telepath has made contact with Telereceive. On a success, the subject falls into a deep sleep, lasting 1d hours unless awakened. On a failure, the subject gets an IQ roll to realize he is under attack.

*Prerequisite:* Telesend-12+.

### **Telecontrol n/a**

### **Resisted**

This is the ability to take over a victim's mind and operate him like a puppet. Telecontrol requires the psychic to first make contact with Telereceive. On a success, the subject is under the psychic's control. If he loses, the subject is alerted.

A controlled victim is operated like a robot. The psychic can order him to do or say anything he wishes, including using his skills. The psychic can also use his own mental (not physical) skills through the victim's body. This ability requires great concentration. The psychic will be at -4 on any other rolls, including controlling other people (who, regardless, will have slurred speech and be at DX-4). A new Quick Contest of Telecontrol vs. Will is required every minute. Once over, the victim will remember nothing, including the Telecontrol attack itself.

*Prerequisites:* Telereceive-15+ and Telesend-15+.

### **Telereceive 3**

This is the skill of receiving thought. Received thought comes at the talking speed. It is affected normally by Guards and Screens that protect the mind, particularly Mind Shield. Also, subtract any levels of Strong Will the subject has from the skill roll, or add Weak Will. Remaining in contact requires no concentration or energy, but does require a skill roll every minute. A critical failure on any roll alerts the subject.

If successful, the degree of success determines what levels of thought are read, from subvocalizations and surface thoughts, to mental associations with those thoughts, the victim's current sense impressions, his subconscious mind, recent memories, etc. Several Telepathy skills require that the psychic first make contact via Telereceive. Once this is done, the psychic is *past their defenses*, and those skills are thus usually unaffected by Guards and Screens!

### **Telesend 3**

This is the skill of sending thought to a subject. Communication is at talking speed. The skill roll is at -4 if the psychic and subject have no language in common. If the roll is a success, communication can be maintained with no concentration or energy, and one skill roll per minute.

If the psychic has power 10 or greater, he can broadcast globally, sending thoughts to everyone within 1% of his normal range. This requires no roll, but does require concentration.

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## **New Skill: Alchemy/TL (Mental/Very Hard) No default**

This is the science of magical transformations and transmutations. It requires no inborn talent, as it depends on the magic inherent in certain things. Alchemists devote their time to the creation of magical potions and powders, and sometimes more esoteric work -- such as making homunculi (p. 00).

The creation of potions and similar concoctions -- collectively called *elixirs* -- takes weeks of full-time work, hundreds to thousands of dollars worth of supplies and equipment (many of which cannot be bought, and must be tracked down through other means), and a successful Alchemy roll, sometimes at a penalty. The result will be a single dose with a defined, magical effect. Some examples include:

*Heracles (Potion of Strength):* Subject's ST is increased by 1d for 1/2 hour; this affects everything except Fatigue Points. \$1,500 in materials and 4 weeks to prepare at -1 to Alchemy skill.

*Tithonus (Powder of Aging):* Often sprinkled into food, whoever consumes it will age one year over the next day. \$4,500 in materials and 6 weeks of work.

*Chiron (Unguent of Healing):* When this salve is spread over a wound, it heals up to 1d lost hit points. \$750 in materials and 2 weeks of work.

Many more elixirs are described in *GURPS Magic*. Bigger projects (like the above-mentioned homunculi) take months or years, thousands to millions of dollars worth of equipment and materials, and multiple Alchemy rolls.

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[[[Hellboy, revised (2) first draft, by Phil Masters <phil@philm.demon.co.uk> and Jonathan Woodward <woodward@io.com>]]]

# 5. WEIRD SCIENCE AND ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY

Although Hellboy's world resembles our own in many details, there are differences aside from the presence of supernatural beings. Among these is the existence of some weird and often wonderful science and technology. This chapter looks at this subject from a practical, game-oriented point of view.

## A HISTORY OF STRANGE DEVICES

The crucial period for this subject came with the rise of the Nazi Party in Germany. Some of the Nazi leadership were fascinated by weird and exotic ideas, scientific as well as mystical, and indeed were happy to merge the two. The Special Group was set up to explore these ideas. By 1939, they had an atomic bomb program well underway, though this was ultimately stopped by the death of its chief scientist, and interference from Allied intelligence and special forces operations. They were also investigating psychic technology and building a functional space rocket. Both the latter programs were crippled by the destruction of the major installation at Hunte Castle, in Austria, during the first rocket launch and a raid by American agents.

Towards the end of the war, the Nazi leadership grew desperate for secret weapons which could turn the flood tide of defeat, and investigated numerous weird possibilities. Along with outright supernatural projects, they sponsored some scientific and technological studies. Most of the more radical, eccentric, or maybe visionary scientists were eventually brought together in Project Ragna Rok (see pp. 00-00). In turn, Allied intelligence learned enough about this to trigger some corresponding studies on their own side, and when Germany did fall, some of the German research material fell into Allied hands.

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### *GURPS Tech Levels in Hellboy's World*

*Hellboy* stories, and hence this game, play fast and loose with technology at times. Hellboy and his colleagues sometimes fight mad scientists who employ gadgets which are impossible to ordinary engineers, and which may not become available for several *GURPS* Tech Levels to come. Even the BPRD have some such devices. Examples are discussed throughout this chapter.

Where such scientists have a wide range of such gadgets available, they may have the High Technology or Invention advantages (pp. 00-00) in *GURPS* terms. When devices appear as one-offs, and are not going to be



developed or much modified by PCs, the GM may choose to quietly disregard the question of exact Tech Levels, assuming that the gadget is a lucky fluke invention, which may be operated and maintained by characters at the normal local TL (albeit perhaps with some penalties for the sheer oddity).

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For the most part, this didn't lead to many developments ahead of our own world. But for decades afterwards, specialist government organizations and conspiracies descended from Nazi groups had access to exotic ideas and inventions, *some* of which worked. In fact, the heirs to the two sides' research programs would fight hidden wars for decades to come.

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## THREE SPECIAL SKILLS

In a world of weird technology and the practical scientific investigation of the supernatural, it's inevitable that some experts study some fairly strange topics. In *GURPS* terms, these are covered by three skills, previously mentioned briefly in chapter 1.

### *Occultism (p. 00)*

This is the study of supernatural practices and myths. Note that this essentially represents a branch of folklore or anthropology; it doesn't usually assume much about whether these things work, and occultists may not actually believe in magic (although in Hellboy's world, that can take some obstinacy). An occultist might roll to know that members of a certain tribe worshipped a particular deity, what form their rituals took, and *maybe* what actions would supposedly please or annoy that deity, but would not be able to perform an effective magical summoning ceremony or spell. See chapter 4 for the skills and advantages required to actually *work* magic.

### *Paraphysics (p. 00)*

This is the *scientific* study of psychic powers (as described in chapter 4), and of the paranormal in general, with a focus on measurable physical effects. In Hellboy's world, this can *only* be studied in specialist organizations such as the BPRD labs, Project Ragna Rok, and a few notoriously eccentric university departments. Characters with any other history would need a 10-point Unusual Background (p. 00) to spend points on it. It can sometimes be used to help new psychics control their powers, design containment devices for ectoplasmic creatures, and so on. (Actually building such devices will demand the assistance of characters with Engineer and Electronics.)

Because it is such a new, peculiar field, most characters who want to study Paraphysics will need to acquire skill 12+ in at least two other sciences first, to prove their abilities and give them a good general grounding in the physical sciences.

### *Thaumatology (p. 00)*

This is the science of magic—the formal study of magical forces. Occultism sees magic as a sometimes-useful consequence of traditional practices and ideas. Paraphysics treats such things as ill-comprehended aspects of the paranormal, and studies them as phenomena. Thaumatology, by contrast, takes the existence of magic as given, and attempts to systematize understanding of its practical workings. Hence, while magicians see Occultists as amateur outsiders, and Paraphysicists as ignorant dabblers, some of them actually study Thaumatology.

In fact, it is difficult, though not quite impossible, for anyone not actually skilled in magic to learn this skill. In Hellboy's world, it would require a 10-point Unusual Background for any non-magician outside the BPRD or Project Ragna Rok to spend points on it, and only a few scientists within those organizations have it above level 10. Conversely, the Magery advantage (p. 00) helps with the skill, by making the possessor more sensitive to magic; add Magery to IQ when learning it. Thaumatology does *not* grant much knowledge of magical or arcane beliefs (that's Occultism), or help in building ectoplasm containers or training psychic powers (that's

Paraphysics). What someone with Thaumatology can do is determine how (and something of the why) a spell or ceremony works, and maybe how to modify, enhance, or negate it.

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## BPRD TECHNOLOGY

Compared to the eccentric and sometimes deranged ideas pursued by Project Ragna Rok, the BPRD is scientifically downright conservative. However, it has spent decades studying the paranormal, with access to very important research material, and it can call on the scientific resources of the U.S. and British governments when necessary. As a result, its scientists probably have the most fully developed, refined grasp of paraphysics and related topics in the world.

In addition, the Bureau is perfectly willing to buy useful devices, and when budgets permit, it uses the most appropriate equipment it can find for any task. Hence, BPRD agents often use exceptionally advanced weapons, transport, or communications systems.

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## ZINCO

ZinCo is an international high technology manufacturing corporation, originally founded as Zinco-Davis Laboratories in or before the 1930s, and controlled in the 1990s by Roderick Zinco (p. 00), the heir of one of the original founders. Its products include aircraft components, firearms, and consumer goods. It has, on occasion, been contracted to supply both standard and special design items to the BPRD.

Unfortunately, at one point, Roderick Zinco fell under the influence of the ghost of Rasputin (p. 00), and offered his allegiance to the newly reawakened members of Project Ragna Rok. Zinco used his position to subtly sabotage large portions of the ZinCo equipment being used by the BPRD at the time. This caused Hellboy's new handgun to jam and explode while in use, and was very likely responsible for the spectacular failure of a rocket pack issued to Hellboy, the poor performance of BPRD communications equipment at that time, and the explosive destruction of a BPRD aircraft on the ground which killed its crew.

Roderick Zinco was presumably killed in the massive explosion which destroyed the Ragna Rok installation in the Arctic, and his company may well be running normally again. Regardless, the BPRD has changed its contract suppliers. However, Zinco had time to establish links between the company and Project Ragna Rok, which not only gave the Ragna Rok Team resources, contemporary technology, and influence, but may have enabled ZinCo technologists to acquire unconventional and radical information from Ragna Rok. The depth of the corruption engineered by Zinco and Rasputin within the company remains uncertain (and could be a topic for game scenarios).

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### *Hellboy's Guns*

While most BPRD agents carry standard contemporary weapons (usually automatic pistols) Hellboy carries firearms appropriate to his own strength and the scale of the opponents he often fights. He acquired the first of these around the time he first became a BPRD agent in the 1950s, and has occasionally been issued with updated designs since.

Game statistics for two of these guns are included in the table on p. 00. They are heavy, single shot pistols, with break-open designs like an old-fashioned shotgun or flare gun. They fire 20mm shells similar to those used in heavy vehicle-mounted cannons.

For a brief period, Hellboy carried a multi-shot automatic pistol, similar in size and hitting power to these single-shot guns. Unfortunately, this was designed and constructed by ZinCo (p. 00), and hence was subtly sabotaged. It jammed and then exploded while in use, and Hellboy has since reverted to older, more reliable guns. After all, he rarely gets more than one shot off in a fight anyway.

## ***Communications and Tracking Devices***

BPRD agents carry personal radios resembling cellular phones, but with greater range and flexibility (at least in theory). They have a range of around 5-25 miles between themselves (depending on local conditions), can be used as cellular phones when within the scope of a functioning network. They can also link up to widespread U.S. and NATO military networks, enabling them to contact BPRD HQ, by one means or another, from virtually anywhere in the world. (If agents are deployed to exceptionally remote areas, the team may be issued with a heavy satellite-link base unit that links their personal radios in with global networks.) They have built-in scrambling, which could be defeated with some effort by, say, an intelligence organization, but which is secure against casual eavesdropping or unprepared opponents. They weigh 2 lbs., and would cost \$500 if they could be purchased privately.

Agents in the field are also often issued with small radio signaling devices, usually worn on a belt. At least one agent per team will also carry a hand-held tracking device which can locate these signals, and which can be set to seek out one specific sender. The trackers can find the general direction of a signal source within 10-50 miles (depending on local conditions), and can be used to scan for a more precise direction as the user gets closer. (Military-grade static or vehicle-mounted equipment could probably pick up the signal, and locate it by triangulation, from up to 200 miles away, given time and optimum conditions.) The trackers are designed to be easy to use; after a few minutes of familiarization, they can be employed quite reliably with an IQ+2 roll. The signaling devices weigh 1/2 lb. and would cost \$50 if purchased privately; the trackers weigh 2 lbs. and would cost \$200.

## ***Vehicles***

The BPRD uses standard civilian automobiles for routine local journeys, but when it has to deploy agents across the world, it has use of a small number of light twin-engine jets. These are employed for transport, not combat, although their pilots are usually competent, and it's not inconceivable that they might be equipped with defensive measures such as chaff dispensers or stealth systems, if the technicians can acquire the budget. The one non-standard feature that *is* always fitted is an exit hatch to the rear of the passenger compartment, which enables agents wearing rocket packs (or parachutes) to deploy while the aircraft is in flight. They have crews of two, and can carry a full squad of half-a-dozen agents, another half-dozen scientists or technicians to provide backup, and adequate equipment and luggage.

These jets have PD 3, DR 8, 900 hit points in the fuselage and 350 in each wing, and a maximum speed of around 500 mph (250 yards/turn), although for long distance travel they are more likely to cruise at half that, giving them a range of 2-3,000 miles. Groups using the full system in ***GURPS Vehicles*** should assume they have HT 12, Accel 7, Decel 25, MR 6, and SR 4.

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## ***GURPS Vehicles and GURPS Robots***

These two ***GURPS*** supplements provide detailed rules for designing transport and robots at any tech level, and determining realistic levels of performance. ***Hellboy*** GMs who want to invest in copies and go into this much detail will find plenty to occupy them.

Civilian designs for ***Hellboy*** games should mostly be TL 7, with plenty of old TL 6 equipment in 1950s games and backwoods settings, and odd TL 8 prototypes available by 2000 to those able to afford them. Secret Nazi projects and the most exotic BPRD gadgets can be one tech level ahead, or even more, if the GM permits. Occasionally, incorporation of advanced [paraphysical] concepts and systems grants really exotic capabilities; it is up to the GM to determine what is possible, noting that there are a number of weird science options described in the ***GURPS*** books.

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## ***Rocket Packs***

These are one of the more ostentatious examples of advanced BPRD technology, used to give field agents high personal mobility. (In *GURPS* terms, practical rocket packs are really more of a TL 8+ development, but these can be regarded as late TL 7 prototypes or design flukes.) Operating one requires Piloting (Rocket Pack) skill (p. 00); most BPRD agents receive some training in this sooner or later. They are extremely noisy in use, and thus unsuitable for stealthy missions. They have a top speed of 80 mph (40 yards/turn), and enough fuel for about 2 hours operation at a cruising speed of 50 mph (25 yards/turn). They weigh 20 lbs.

They are designed to be as safe as possible, but rocket fuel *is* explosive. Treat them as having PD 2, DR 8 if targeted; if they are violently destroyed, they explode on a roll of 11 or less on 3d (14 or less if they are destroyed by heat or explosion). The explosion does from 1 to 6 dice of concussion damage, and the burning fuel causes the same number of dice of fire damage to the wearer and anyone immediately adjacent, both in proportion to how much fuel was left in the tank.

At one stage, the rocket pack issued to Hellboy failed catastrophically in use. This may have been partly a function of Hellboy's peculiar bad luck, or more likely a result of subtle sabotage by Roderick Zinco (see p. 00). However, the Bureau has long regarded the concept as extremely valuable, so newer designs (hopefully more reliable) remain in use.

## RAGNA ROK GADGETRY

While BPRD science and technology is mostly slightly advanced versions of contemporary developments, with some careful, rational study of parapsysics incorporated, Project Ragna Rok and its scientists generated real mad science. Some of it incorporated fringe theories or outright magical ideas, and all of it showed a complete disregard for safety factors or scientific ethics. The Project's own leaders were mostly more or less insane, and some of their inventions were designed as much to accord with their personal obsessions as to achieve efficient results. They certainly had a taste for grandiose projects rather than useful small-scale tools; their normal guards and lesser agents were usually equipped with conventional contemporary weapons and equipment.

All of which said, they achieved spectacular breakthroughs in cybernetics, power systems, psychic science, and even robotics. Ragna Rok technology appearing in games should tend to be big, heavy, dangerous and effective. Mindless automated troops or cyborg animals, giant robots, outsize battle tanks, rockets, and incendiary weapons fit the style. Senior members of the project who suffer serious injuries will usually end up wearing steel prostheses, which will be fairly efficient but also grotesque (and intimidating). Fortunately for PCs investigating and opposing them, their lack of safety margins and obsession with raw power often makes them unreliable or vulnerable; their failures should be as explosive as their successes. If the worst comes to the worst, pushing large red buttons will often blow up a Ragna Rok installation with everyone inside.

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## GURPS BIO-TECH

Although most of the weird science seen in *Hellboy* stories involves mechanical engineering, some radical scientists pursue advanced biological sciences. In particular, Professor Herman von Klempt of Project Ragna Rok was closely concerned with such matters. *GURPS Bio-Tech* provides extensive treatment of using such things in games, and could be useful to a GM planning a major *Hellboy* campaign involving weird advanced medicine or biology.

One achievement to note from published *Hellboy* stories was von Klempt's spectacular ability to keep severed human heads alive and active. The support systems he developed for his own head even kept him recoverable (if unconscious) for decades when he should by rights have died. Eventually, possibly with help from other Ragna Rok survivors, he turned his head life support unit into a sophisticated self-powered system with good protection, and flight and combat capability. (He also developed a realistic human-shaped robot with built-in weapons and internal space for his tank.)

Von Klempt's other noted biological accomplishment was his series of *Kriegsaffe* war apes (p. 00). These outsize constructed creatures had cybernetic implants and modifications granting them enhanced strength and

intelligence and limited powers of speech, while making them slavishly loyal to von Klempt. (They also had relatively crude metal hands, which had the advantage of being useful in combat.) Such modifications place the work at TL 8 by the standards of *GURPS Bio-Tech*. Overall, von Klempt must be assumed to have made a number of radical breakthroughs in narrow fields.

Project Ragna Rok also developed automated cryonic technology which enabled a handful of its members to sleep for fifty years and then return to action. This too would usually require at least TL 8 inventions, although theirs may have been a risky, experimental system; they may have been lucky to survive.

The one example of possible *genetic* engineering (as opposed to alchemical creations, or medical modification of a complete organism) in Hellboy's world is Abe Sapien (p. 00). The modifications included in his form would apparently require TL 9-10 genetic engineering, assuming that he has basically human genes. However, there is reason to think that his origins are a little stranger and more mystical than this.

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[[[Hellboy, revised (2) first draft, by Phil Masters <phil@philm.demon.co.uk> and Jonathan Woodward <woodward@io.com>]]]

# 6. BEASTS AND MONSTERS

Formidable though the various Nazis, mad scientists, and sorcerers which they sometimes face may be, the real reason for the BPRD's existence and the thing which makes Hellboy such a valuable agent is the existence of menaces far stronger and weirder than any individual human foe. Hellboy shares his world with numerous demons, ghosts, and creatures out of legend, and his enemies are often able and willing to summons such creatures, however dangerous that may be. Hence, this chapter.

The points value of animals, and monsters whose only role is to appear once and be fought, is usually largely irrelevant if the GM simply assigns reasonable abilities. However, a few notes apply:

*Attributes:* These have the same meaning for beasts and monsters as for humans, with one exception: hit points can be very different from HT. HT determines how hardy a creature is, but hit points are largely dependent on size, and very large or small creatures may have more or fewer hit points than HT.

*Abilities and Skills:* Most animals and many supernatural beings have keen senses. The generic roll for a natural animal or an animal-like monster to sense something (sight, hearing, smell, taste) is 14, regardless of its IQ, although this may vary. Some animals also have the equivalent of skills; e.g., a bloodhound might have the Tracking skill at level 18.

*PD and DR:* Many creatures have a hide, shell, scales, or thick fat that protects like armor.

*Attacking:* To hit, an animal rolls against its DX; use the same modifiers as if a human were attacking. An intelligent monster may wield a weapon for which it has an appropriate skill. Note that most (though not all) animals fight at Close Range; large ones will often Slam a human opponent first.

*Damage:* For animals and animal-like monsters, use the chart on the right; the creature's bite (or claw) damage depends on its ST. When a carnivore bites, this is usually treated as a *cutting* attack, figured at full ST. The bite of a herbivorous creature is usually a *crushing* attack, figured at *half* its actual ST. An animal bite even from a carnivore can do zero damage. Gigantic fanged demons and the like may do *impaling* damage as deadly as any weapon.

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### ST Damage

1-2	1d-5
3-5	1d-4
6-8	1d-3
9-11	1d-2
12-15	1d-1
16-20	1d
21-35	2d-1
36-40	2d
41-45	2d+1
46-50	2d+2
51-55	3d-1

and so on . . .

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*Basic Speed:* For most natural animals, except in the case of loaded riding and draft animals, this will also be the creature's Move.

*Dodge:* This is the only active defense of most normal animals. It is equal to half DX or half Move, whichever is better, up to a maximum of 10.

*Encumbrance and Movement:* Encumbrance works for creatures much as it does for humans, except that the encumbrance table for four-footed creatures is different:

*No encumbrance (up to 2 ST):* Move is unaffected.

*Light encumbrance (up to 6 ST):* Move is reduced by 2.

*Medium encumbrance (up to 10 ST):* Move is reduced by 4. Few animals will carry greater than 10 ST on their backs!

*Heavy encumbrance (up to 15 ST):* Move is reduced by 6.

*Extra-heavy encumbrance (up to 20 ST):* Move is reduced by 8, but never to less than 2.

*Maximum encumbrance (up to 30 ST):* Move is reduced to 1. Only a very willing beast will attempt to move a load this heavy.

## Creatures as Characters

When depicting more subtle supernatural beings, to act as adversaries or mysterious encounters, it's sometimes a good idea to define such beings fairly precisely, even to the point of giving them character sheets with points totals. For one thing, points provide a loose but somewhat objective measure of the being's power; for a second, it may be necessary to evaluate such creatures as Allies or Enemies for human characters; and for a third, it's perfectly possible to run high starting points games in which PCs themselves possess weird attributes, and perhaps even look like monsters themselves. This is, after all, a game set in the world of Hellboy and Abe Sapien.

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## ENHANCEMENTS AND LIMITATIONS

Because supernatural and alien beings can be *so* varied, even their advantages and disadvantages can diverge from the standard pattern. To help model this, they can use *Enhancements* and *Limitations*.

An *enhancement* makes an advantage more powerful than usual, and has a positive percentage value in proportion. For example, a power which has no visible effect associated with it (whereas the normal version of the power would produce a visible trail or special effects) has a +20% enhancement. Conversely, a *limitation*

makes an advantage or disadvantage less intense than usual, and has a negative percentage value; for example, a power which requires an hour's concentration to activate every time it used has a -50% limitation. Other enhancements and limitations are mentioned throughout this chapter, and more are in *GURPS Compendium I* and other *GURPS* books. GMs are free to invent new enhancements and limitations, assigning them whatever values seem appropriate.

When an advantage or disadvantage is modified in this way, add up all the percentage values, positive and negative, and apply the total as a modifier to its cost. Treat any total less than -75% as -75%.

*Example: Crazy Charlie can commune with a dragon spirit, and when she panics or gets really angry, it can possess her. This then enables her to breathe blasts of flame, which can even burn intangible beings such as certain ghosts. Her 'Breathe Fire' power would normally cost 20 points, but it's bought with the enhancement 'Affects Insubstantial' (+20%) and the limitation 'Emergencies Only' (-30%), for a total of -10%; this reduces the cost to 18 points.*

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This chapter therefore begins with a number of special Advantages and Disadvantages. These should only usually be available to radically non-human beings, although GMs *might* permit human characters to minor peculiarities with an Unusual Background (p. 00). Many others, suitable for more exotic monsters and characters, are detailed in other *GURPS* books, especially *GURPS Compendium I*.

Note that the GM has the right to veto any combination of advantages and disadvantages which is clearly abusive, such as Vulnerability to something to which the character is Invulnerable!

## ADVANTAGES

### ***Aquatic/Amphibious***

### ***Varies***

You can live in water. The points cost depends how versatile you are.

For no cost, you are *Aquatic*. You breathe *only* water, you suffer no skill penalties for working underwater, and you don't need to buy Swimming skill; you automatically swim at your normal Move rate. However, you're not much use in most situations with normal humans, as in air, without the physical support of water, you move at a painful crawl at best while you suffocate.

For 10 points, you can *Breathe Water* as well as air. However, like a normal human, you have to buy Swimming skill, and you suffer many penalties when working underwater; you can't drown, but you're not really adapted for life below the surface.

For 20 points, you're *Fully Amphibious*, equally at home above and below the surface. You probably have gills or enhanced lungs and adaptable limbs and fins. You suffer no skill penalties for working underwater *or* in air, and you don't need to buy Swimming skill; you automatically swim at your normal Move rate.

### ***Breathe Fire***

### ***Varies***

You can breathe a jet of flame as an attack. For 20 points, you can breathe up to 3 yards, rolling vs. DX to hit with the jet, and do 1d damage. Adding additional dice of damage costs 6 points per die; this also increases the range of the jet by 1 yard per added die. You may also purchase added accuracy with the jet at a cost of 4 points per +1 to the DX roll.

### ***Damage Resistance***

### ***3 points/level***

You have tough skin, natural armor, etc., giving you protection against both physical and energy damage (but not against purely mental attacks such as telepathic assault). Each +1 DR costs 3 points.

Damage Resistance often takes limitations to reflect reduced coverage or effectiveness. For example, Hellboy has several points of standard Damage Resistance, but also more with the limitation 'Combat Hand Only' for -75%. (This grants no protection in combat under the *GURPS Lite* rules, but is useful if the hand is deliberately

attacked, he tries to parry a weapon with it, or he has to grab something dangerous.) Other characters may have DR that only works against specific attack forms.

***Enhanced Move***                      ***10 points/level***

Each level of Enhanced Move increases your maximum speed in one mode (running, swimming, or flying) by your basic Move score. Movement is only increased if you are moving in a fairly straight line (i.e. not in complicated combats), and Basic Speed and Dodge are unaffected. You can also buy half levels for 5 points, increasing your maximum by half your basic Move (round down).

***Extra Fatigue***                      ***3 points/level***

You can exert yourself more strenuously, for longer, than your ST level might imply. Each +1 fatigue costs 3 points. (*Note: with GM permission, realistic human characters may buy up to 3 or 4 levels of this, representing athletic fitness.*)

***Extra Hit Points***                      ***5 points/level***

You can withstand more physical injury than your HT level might imply. Each extra Hit Point costs 5 points. (*Note: with GM permission, realistic human characters may buy up to 3 or 4 levels of this, representing extra body mass or sheer will to live.*)

***Extra Limbs***                              ***Varies***

*Extra Arms* beyond the normal human two have a base cost of 10 points each. If they are very short, and so can only be used in close combat and cannot be used with weapons which have to be swung, *or* if they cannot be used to make melee or close combat attacks at all (due to structure or lack of strength), they only cost 5 points. Longer than human arms cost +10 points per arm for each extra yard of reach.

Having three or four *Legs* costs 5 points, five or six costs 10 points, and seven or more costs 15 points. This helps if the character suffers crippling injuries to a leg; most multi-legged creatures can keep going at slightly reduced speed so long as they have at least four working legs, and hobble about at half speed even on three. Each additional yard of reach when kicking costs +10 points.

***Flight***                                      ***40 points***

You can fly at twice your normal Move speed. To perform tricky aerobatics and tight turns, buy *Flight* skill (Physical/Average, defaults to DX for races and creatures who have a natural ability to fly, DX-4 for wizards, psionics, and others who gain the ability through weird powers).

*Winged Flight*: If you have to use large and potentially vulnerable wings to fly, this is a limitation. A wingspan equal to twice your height is -25%; small wings, with a span equal to half your height (probably just used to steer), are worth -10%. *Glider Wings* are equal to the larger wingspan option, and have other limitations; if you *must* descend one yard per turn as you fly, that's a -50% limitation, while a glider who can sometimes maintain or gain height using updrafts (available at the GM's option) takes -45%.

*Cannot Hover*: Fliers who always have to move at half their maximum speed or more take a -15% limitation. This is not available to those with Glider Wings.

***Full Coordination***                      ***50 points/attack***

You can make more than one attack per turn, using each limb only once. Each level of Full Coordination adds one attack. (So the maximum number of levels is limited by your number of limbs.) If you make an All-Out Attack, you can claim the same bonus for each limb used, but not mix the bonuses so you can swing twice with each limb, *or* take +4 to hit with each attack, *or* take +2 damage with each. Fighting opponents on more than one side, *or aiming* several weapons at different foes, also requires Independently Focusable Eyes (see below).

***Independently Focusable Eyes*** ***15 points/level***



You can focus in different directions with each eye. (Buying more than one level of this Advantage thus requires having more than two eyes.) This lets you *aim* different weapons at different foes simultaneously, or take full advantage of Full Coordination (above).

***Invulnerability*** ***Varies***

You are *completely* invulnerable to damage from some attack form. The cost depends on the rarity of the form involved:

*Any Kinetic Damage*: 300 points. (You can still be knocked down or forced back, however.)

*Common* (e.g. Crushing, Cutting/Impaling, Metal, Psionic): 150 points.

*Occasional* (e.g. Cold/Ice, Fire/Heat, Earth, Bullets): 100 points.

*Rare* (e.g. Weather, Radiation, Acids): 75 points.

*Very Rare* (e.g. Mud, Insects, Fruit): 50 points.

***Modified Arm ST*** ***Varies***

If a being has more or less strength in some of its arms than in the rest of its body, buy the additional ST with a limitation. This is -70% for one arm only, -50% for two arms. The added ST applies only to lifting (*not* including whole-body lifts using leg and back strength, or carrying objects long distances), throwing, punching, and weapons use, and does not count for Fatigue. If it can only be used for striking blows and throwing things, not for any lifting, this is an additional -5%. (Hellboy's *Hand of Doom* has extra ST with this -75% limitation.)

***Regeneration*** ***Varies***

You recover lost hit points *quickly*. This includes Rapid Healing (p. 00) for free. The cost of the advantage depends on how quickly you regain the points: 1 point per 12 hours costs 10 points, 1 per hour costs 25 points, 1 per minute costs 50 points, and 1 per turn costs 100 points.

***Regrowth*** ***40 points***

You can regrow lost limbs and organs! A finger, toe, or ear takes 1d weeks, a hand or foot 1d+1 months, and an eye, arm, or leg 2d+2 months.

***Shapeshift*** ***Varies***

If a person or being has the innate ability to transform into another, radically different form, this is treated as an advantage, with cost calculated as follows:

1. Create the alternate form as a character, with its own character sheet.

2. Look at the *differences* between the human character sheet and the alternate form. Find everything that makes the alternate form cost *more* – all higher attributes, and added advantages and skills – and add up the points cost. This is the *Positive Points Total*.

3. Likewise, find all the things which make the alternate form cost *less* – all lower attributes and disadvantages – and add up the points there. This is the *Negative Points Total*. (Note; this does *not* include the value of any advantages or skills which the alternate form is missing or can't use.)

4. Treat the Positive Points Total as an advantage, and apply a limitation (p. 00) with percentage value equal to the Negative Points Total. Remember that limitations have a maximum value of -75%. Also, the points saved by the limitation cannot exceed 80% of the Negative Points Total.

For example, suppose a character can switch into an alternate form with 300 points' worth of improved attributes and advantages, and -60 points in reduced attributes and disadvantages. Applying a -60% limitation to 300 points would normally make the net cost 120 points – but that would save 180 points, which is more than 80% of -60, so the net cost of the alternate form becomes 252 points. For another example, see *Were-beasts*, p. 00.

***Strikers*** ***Varies***

This is a set of advantages covering body parts which make the possessor more formidable in combat. Most are used at Close Range (see p. 00), but a few serve in lieu of longer weapons.

*Claws:* There are several options here. *Blunt Claws* (15 points) do an extra +2 crushing damage on any punch or kick (including Unarmed Combat attacks), and on any attack made with a Generic Striker (see below). *Sharp Claws* (25 points) convert a kick or punch from crushing to cutting damage. *Talons* (40 points) are longer claws which can do thrust/impaling or swing/cutting damage of your choice, when you make an attack. *Long Talons* (55 points) are similar, but do thrust+2/impaling or swing+2/cutting.

*Combat Hand:* One of your hands is hardened and shaped for fighting. Punches struck with it do Thrust damage (rather than Thrust-2), plus any bonuses for Unarmed Combat skills. (Hellboy's Hand of Doom is a Combat Hand with extra Damage Resistance on that hand, Modified Arm ST for combat only, and Bad Grip in that hand only; see *Damage Resistance*, *Modified Arm ST*, and *Bad/Poor Grip*.) Cost: 10 points.

*Generic Strikers:* This is any additional body part which can be used to batter or crush at Close Range only; examples include short, blunt horns, or a heavy tail. (Hellboy *doesn't* use his tail noticeably in fights, so it's treated as purely cosmetic in game terms.) Always roll against DX when using Generic Strikers. Unarmed Combat skills don't work with them. They do thrust/crushing damage. Cost: 5 points.

*Spear:* This is a long horn or horns, tusk, etc., which can be used exactly like the weapon of the same name (with reach 1, *not* usable at Close Range). Roll vs. DX (or Spear skill) to hit. It does thrust+1/impaling damage, and costs 30 points.

*Teeth:* Humans and herbivores have blunt teeth, for no points cost; if used to bite, these do crushing damage. Figure the damage using the animal attack/damage table (p. 00), but with half the being's actual ST. *Sharp Teeth*, as possessed by most carnivorous animals, cost 5 points and do cutting damage based on the same table, using the creature's full ST. *Fangs*, as seen on sabertoothed tigers and many demons, are the same but cost 10 points and do impaling damage.

### ***Unaging*** ***15 points***

You never grow old naturally, and cannot be aged by magic. You can start at any age you choose, and hence can spend as many starting points as you like on skills. You are also immune to the effects of age that are detailed in the *GURPS Basic Set*.

## DISADVANTAGES

### ***Bad/Poor Grip*** ***-10/-5 points***

Your hands (or other gripping members) are clumsy or incapable of delicate work, giving you a penalty to DX or DX-based skills for many actions, including most acrobatics, catching things, fine mechanical work, climbing, and *most* melee weapon use (but not punching!). *Bad Grip* (-10 points) gives a -4 penalty; *Poor Grip* (-5 points) gives a -2 penalty.

A being with two hands may have this disadvantage in just one of them, for a -50% limitation. (Hellboy has Bad Grip in his right hand only.) He can then use his other hand for delicate work or one-handed weapons use with no penalty, but any two-handed tasks (including climbing and much acrobatics, and use of many weapons) take the *full* penalty.

### ***Bestial*** ***-10/-15 points***

You think and react like a wild animal, with no concepts of morality, propriety, or property. You fight or flee if threatened, ignore anything that doesn't seem important to you, and respond positively to anything pleasurable. You cannot use artistic or social skills (except Area Knowledge or Intimidation), even at default. This is worth -10 points, or -15 if your behavior is actively repugnant to humans.

### ***Dependency*** ***Varies***

You require some special substance to survive. The value of the disadvantage depends on the rarity of the substance:

*Rare* (cannot be bought, must be found or made): -30 points.

*Infrequent* (very expensive or hard to find): -20 points.

*Occasional* (expensive, somewhat hard to find): -10 points.

*Common* (available almost anywhere): -5 points.

*Illegal*: adds 5 to any of the above.

The value is modified by how often you must receive the substance:

*Constantly*: 5 value. You must carry and use the substance all the time. For example, an exotic atmosphere. Lose 1 hit point per minute without it.

*Hourly*: 4 value. Lose 1 hit point per 10 minutes after missing the hourly dose.

*Daily*: 3 value. Lose 1 hit point/hour after missing a dose.

*Weekly*: 2 value. Lose 1 hit point/6 hours after missing a dose.

*Monthly*: Listed value. Lose 1 hit point/day after missing a dose.

(Note: With GM permission, this disadvantage can be taken by normal human characters, to reflect, say, a medical need for a special drug.)

## ***Dread***

## ***Varies***

A supernatural aversion prevents you coming within a certain distance of a specific thing. You take no actual damage from it, but you *cannot* approach it voluntarily, and if you are involuntarily brought within that range, you can take *no* actions except to take the most immediate direct route away. (If you can act normally if brought within the prohibited radius by an external force, halve the value of the disadvantage.)

For -10 points, you cannot come within a yard of the thing. Each extra yard increases the base value by -1 point. The value is then modified by the rarity of the thing:

*Rare* (exotic radiation or minerals): Half value.

*Occasional* (microwave radiation, arctic cold): Unmodified value.

*Common* (smoke, magic, horses): Double value.

*Very Common* (sunlight, living plants): Triple value.

At the GM's option, the object of a being's Dread can be used to imprison it if the object is placed as a barrier across the being's only avenue of escape. The classic example is the Seal of Solomon, used to trap djinn inside bottles and lamps.

## ***Horizontal/Semi-Upright***      ***-10/-5 points***

You walk in a horizontal or near-horizontal posture. If you are *Semi-Upright* (-5 points), like many apes, you can stand upright to punch opponents or hold babies, but you must use all four of your limbs to run, or take -2 to Move. If you are *Horizontal* (-10 points), like a dog or horse, you can only stand upright very briefly, or use one limb for manipulation while standing on the other three, or two while sitting; carrying anything in one limb halves your move and makes you clumsy.

## ***Inconvenient Size***      ***-10/-15 points***

You are radically different to the normal human size, and hence have trouble using most human tools or weapons, fitting through doorways, climbing stairs, etc. If you are big (greater than 8 feet tall), this is worth -10 points; if you are small (less than 2 feet), it's worth -15.

## ***No Fine Manipulators***      ***-30 points***

You have nothing more dexterous than paws or hooves on the ends of your limbs. You cannot do any sort of fine work, or wield weapons. You may buy ST with a -40% limitation, as it cannot be used for many of the purposes which a human with hands can accomplish.

### **Short Arms** **-10 points**

All of your arms are shorter than a normal human's, either because you are small or because your body has an odd shape. You cannot use melee weapons which have to be swung, your reach with fists or melee weapons is reduced by 1 (to a minimum of 1 Close Combat only), and you make rolls to grapple opponents at -2.

### **Unliving** **-50 points**

You aren't truly alive, but are animated by supernatural forces. When you are reduced to exactly 0 hit points and fail a HT check, you collapse, apparently dead, and can only be restored by some special, predefined condition. If you are reduced to -1 hit points, you immediately die.

### **Unhealing** **-20/-30 points**

You do not recover lost hit points naturally at all, even with medical attention; you get no daily HT roll to reduce damage. First Aid still works (assuming that you are vaguely normal biologically), as it restores hit points lost to shock, and magical or psionic methods also help. If you can recover damage normally in special conditions (e.g. when bathing in blood, or remaining on holy ground), or you have other magical powers which enable you to steal hit points from others, this is worth -20 points; if you can *never* heal naturally, it's worth -30. If instead you merely cannot recover Fatigue Points, the value is halved.

### **Vulnerability** **Varies**

You take extra damage from certain attack forms. For each level of Vulnerability, add an extra 1d damage when hit by the attack form, *before* subtracting DR. The value *per level* depends on how common the attack form is in the campaign – see *Invulnerability* (p. 00) for definitions of these rarity categories:

*Very Rare*: -3 points.

*Rare*: -5 points.

*Occasional*: -10 points.

*Common*: -15 points.

### **Weakness** **Varies**

This is a damaging sensitivity to the *presence* of a specific substance or effect. The base cost is as follows:

1d per minute: -20 points.

1d per 5 minutes: -10 points.

1d per 30 minutes: -5 points.

Halve the value if the damage done comes off Fatigue rather than hit points. The rarity of the problem also affects the value, as for Dread (p. 00).

*Taboos*: If a being suffers pain and injury from taking certain actions, this can be treated as a Weakness.

Example frequencies for this: *Very Rare*: Swearing marriage vows. *Rare*: Breaking your sworn word.

*Occasional*: Revealing your true identity. *Common*: Failing to play a trick on someone after meeting him. *Very*

*Common*: Killing any living thing.

If the character breaks the taboo, the associated damage is suffered until the problem is corrected and he atones for his error (if possible). If breaking the taboo results in banishment from the physical world, or some similar incapacitating effect, rather than harm, the value is twice the base value from rarity.

## **SPIRIT POWERS**

‘Spirits’ is a general term used here for intangible monsters made of immaterial thought or the stuff of immortal souls, or maybe ectoplasm. Ghosts are just one example. Spirits deviate substantially from the human baseline, but they do have the same attributes as humans: ST, DX, IQ, and HT. These define what they can and can't do in relation to other spirits.

## ***Fatigue***

In order to interact with the material world, a spirit must spend Fatigue points. Fatigue is the most important attribute of a spirit; powerful spirits may have *hundreds* of Fatigue points. The average tends to be closer to the human norm, however: 10-20 Fatigue. Spirits recover Fatigue normally.

*Special Sources of Fatigue:* Spirits can tap into some places or people to obtain Fatigue quickly. Places of occult power can provide a spirit with an additional 5-30 Fatigue per day (as determined by the GM). This energy can be tapped into only if the spirit is in the area. Acts of worship from a great number of people can allow spirits to gain 20-100 additional Fatigue per day, depending on the number of worshippers (roughly 1 point per worshipper).

((BEGIN BOX))

## **SPIRIT WORLDS**

Hellboy's own universe is surrounded by or adjacent to numerous other universes, which are often referred to as worlds. Quite how this works is a subject of some debate, but many BPRD scientists theorize that each universe including the one in which they themselves live is a four-dimensional aspect of the full multi-dimensional reality. Because time is one of our universe's four dimensions, the relationship between the passage of time in different worlds is sometimes strange, but mostly, all universes which are accessible to each other share much the same time-flow as Earth.

Some of these worlds are close in some sense, enabling creatures in one to observe the other with merely the exercise of a minor innate power or a simple spell. Others are more distant, and indeed may be described as being sealed off. Powerful magical entities can even use such worlds as prisons for others. Any world aside from Earth which can easily be visited by spirits is known as a *Spirit World*. Humans can only gain access to other worlds by using magic or advanced and bizarre science, unless they can find a permanent gate created by supernatural chance or previous magical activities.

A whole set of these worlds, all quite close to Earth, form what is known as the *Spirit Realm*, which is readily accessible to many spirits. At least one of the worlds making up the Spirit Realm is that known as *Faerie*, which is mostly occupied by beings known to humanity from old folktales. (There may in fact be more than one faerie world. In at least some of them, the passage of time can be quite dangerously unpredictable for visitors from Earth.) Other worlds may be the homes of the gods mentioned by many religions, including the Norse Asgard, the Greek Olympus, and so on. (Norse myth speaks of the Nine Worlds, with Midgard our Earth being the lowliest. Somewhere in the Spirit Realm is Yggdrasil, the world tree, which, it is said connects all the Nine Worlds with its roots and branches.) Gates to such worlds may once have existed in locations such as Mount Olympus, in Greece.

One other well-known world is of course Hell, which serves as a place of torment for demons and damned souls. Occupants of Hell require significant magical power or assistance to reach Earth, but some demons can manage the trip. There may or may not also be one or more Heavens, but they are even harder to visit.

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## ***Spirit Abilities***

Most spirits are usually invisible and intangible to the physical world (but see *Materialization*, p. 00); only other spirits can sense them without the aid of magic, psi, or other special abilities. Beyond this, they have a number of powers:

*Perception:* Spirits can see, hear, and smell normally. Their sense of touch is very limited unless they Materialize. They can even taste objects to a limited degree, especially objects offered to them in ritual.

A spirit's senses go beyond the normal human range, however. It has innate Awareness, and can sense the presence of other spirits and magic. A successful IQ roll allows a spirit to sense the location and approximate power of a nearby magic item, a being's mental or emotional state, and mortals with supernatural or psychic powers.

Spirits also have the ability to hear their names whenever they are ritually invoked, regardless of distance or intervening barriers. This can include anything from a sincere prayer from a descendant or loved one to a medium attempting to channel a departed one's soul or a sorcerer's ritual of summoning.

*Summoning Tokens:* Spirits sometimes give mortals tokens like feathers, locks of hair, and magic dust, allowing mortals to call upon the spirit by burning the token, casting it onto the winds, and so forth. This works like ritually invoking a spirit's name (above), allowing it to appear immediately.

*Movement* is determined normally for spirits. Since they aren't bound by physical limits, they can move in any direction, through the air and solid objects. A spirit can instantly transport itself into the presence of someone who ritually invokes its name (see above). A spirit can also hitch a ride inside a vehicle, but this costs 1 Fatigue per hour to maintain a connection to the vehicle (and is not available to spirits that cannot physically materialize; see below). Although physical barriers do not impede spirits, many magical ones do.

*Communication:* Spirits can project their thoughts as speech and hear thoughts directed at them. This works like telepathy, except that communication is not stopped by psychic defenses, and neither the spirit nor the people it's communicating with can read thoughts or do anything other than speak to each other. Such communication costs the spirit 1 Fatigue per short sentence (a few seconds' worth of speech). Evil spirits sometimes use this power to plant thoughts in a mortal's head, making him hear voices. These thoughts can't control a person's actions, but may trigger repressed anger or fear and cause people to do things they otherwise wouldn't.

*Spirit Travel:* Spirits have the innate ability to travel to one spirit world (see p. 00). Usually this is the spirit's home — e.g., demons travel to and from Hell. If the spirit has no particular home spirit world, it may choose one it can travel to. Spirits can travel to multiple spirit worlds with the appropriate enhancement (p. 00).

*Possession:* Spirits have the ability to displace a living being's soul, taking control of his body. This is resolved as a Quick Contest of Wills and can be attempted only once per day on any given person. If the spirit wins, it gains control over the body for 3d seconds. This costs 5 Fatigue. On a tie, the victim suffers from the equivalent of the Split Personality disadvantage (with the subject in control, not the spirit) for the same length of time.

The spirit can try to extend the possession by taking a penalty to its Will roll and spending extra Fatigue. Taking possession for 3d minutes is done at -2 Will and costs 7 Fatigue. Attempts to possess for 3d hours are at -4 Will and cost 10 Fatigue. Possession for 3d days has a -8 penalty and costs 15 Fatigue. A critical success on the spirit's part or a critical failure by the victim doubles the length of the possession. A critical failure by the spirit or a critical success by the victim costs the spirit 3d Fatigue (in addition to the normal cost) and renders it incapable of possessing *anybody* for 3d days.

The subject's state modifies the possession attempt. If the subject's soul has left his body (from a near-death experience or some kind of astral projection), the spirit's roll is at +8. If the victim is undergoing a painful or terrifying ordeal (torture, rape, starvation, etc.), the spirit is at +6. If the target is in an altered state of mind (from drugs, alcohol, fever, etc.), the spirit has a +4. Even a willing person gets a resistance roll (representing an instinctive reluctance to lose control), but the spirit's roll is at +10! Each previously successful possession of a particular subject by the spirit gives that spirit +1 to its roll (maximum +3).

When a person is possessed, the spirit's vital energy infuses his body with greater strength, speed, and endurance. The possessed body's ST is raised by 1/5 the spirit's ST (not Fatigue), and its DX and HT are raised by 1/8 the spirit's DX and HT, respectively.

*Poltergeist Effect:* A spirit can use its energy to manipulate objects in the physical world. By spending Fatigue it can move things, throw punches, and perform other physical actions. The Fatigue cost is great, however; most spirits are capable only of affecting small objects for short periods of time.

Each *action* the spirit attempts costs it Fatigue. The effective ST and DX the spirit exerts in the world determines the cost, and can exceed the spirit's natural attributes. An action costs 1 Fatigue per 2 ST exerted. DX costs 1 Fatigue for a base level of 10 and 1 Fatigue for every DX +2. A direct attack does Thrust-3 damage based on the ST of the effect.

*Probability Alteration:* Spirits have the power to channel their will to affect the outcomes of events. The effects of this power depend on the intended result and the amount of Fatigue the spirit spends.

The spirit must first win a Quick Contest of Wills with the target, unless the spirit is trying to *help* the subject, in which case only an unopposed Will roll is required. A bonus or penalty to any one roll can be applied on a success, at 2 Fatigue per +/-1 (maximum +/-10, for 20 Fatigue). This includes short actions, long actions, or such things as rolls on the Jobs Table. Activities that are not normally resolved by random rolls may also be affected in this way, but the GM must assess the base probability for success or failure before assessing the bonus or penalty.

Use of this power requires a great deal of imagination on the part of the GM and players. Anybody who's had a bad day knows the myriad little things that can go wrong in the course of normal life and can draw upon those experiences for inspiration.

### **Materialization**

Spirits can assume a material or semimaterial form. There are four levels of materialization, ranging from sound effects to actual solidity. Most spirits don't have enough energy to become fully solid for very long; only powerful spirits can maintain materialization for any length of time. Full materialization is also dangerous because physical attacks can hurt or destroy the spirit while it is materialized. The levels of materialization are:

*Sounds:* The spirit can produce disembodied sounds. Simple sounds (moans and howls) are easier than complex noises or speech. Microphones and recording devices can pick up the sounds. If the spirit wishes, the sounds can be picked up *only* by machines, and not by living creatures (producing disembodied voices on an audio recording or over a radio, for example). Producing simple sounds costs 1 Fatigue per 10 seconds. Speech or complex sounds cost 1 Fatigue per second, and a Will roll is required to make the sounds clear. A failed Will roll results in unintelligible noise.

*Visual Effects:* The spirit can cause a visual manifestation of its form to appear. This form has no substance and is translucent unless the spirit spends extra Fatigue to make it appear solid. This costs 1 Fatigue per 5 seconds, doubled if the spirit wants to appear solid. The spirit can choose to make itself visible to some people and not others, or only to cameras and not to living beings (or vice versa), if it wishes.

*Ectoplasm:* Spiritualists often speak of *ectoplasm*, a tenuous substance like smoke associated with spirits. Manifesting ectoplasm allows a spirit to touch physical beings and to have a sense of touch, but not to exert force or inflict damage (the ectoplasmic form has a ST of 0). This costs 1 Fatigue per 10 seconds.

*Full Materialization:* This effect is costly, but it temporarily provides the spirit with a physical body. It costs 1 Fatigue for every two levels in *each* physical stat (ST, DX, and HT), rounded up. Clothing appears around the spirit at no additional cost, but other objects (including weapons and armor) cost 1 Fatigue per pound of weight. This energy cost is per minute. If the spirit has any special powers or advantages, it may use them in material form. Spirits in material form are still immune to many of the concerns of mortal beings. They are unaffected by starvation, suffocation, disease, poison, and most weather conditions, although they can be harmed by the same attacks as other physical beings, unless they have special advantages protecting them. If the spirit's physical form is reduced to 0 HT and it fails a HT roll, it is forced back into spirit form.

*Multiple Forms:* A spirit normally materializes in the same form every time (its *base* form). Spirits can learn to materialize in forms other than their base forms by using a special skill, *Shapeshifting*; this is Mental/Hard, with no default. GMs may apply penalties to the skill for large changes. (Changing sex is at -2; becoming another species is at -8.) The spirit's advantages and disadvantages do not change, and its attributes are determined as above. The spirit can vary its size and appearance, however. Spirits may use this ability to appear as animals or strange inhuman creatures (or to assume human form if their base form is something other than human).

### **Spirit Weaknesses**

Most spirits have very short life spans. Every month, a spirit must make a Will roll. A roll of 14 or higher is an automatic failure, and any missed roll reduces HT by 1. If HT ever reaches 0, the spirit is destroyed.

*Modifiers* (these *do* affect the 14 maximum): +2 if the spirit has a compelling reason to stay in the material world; +2 if it stays within 50 yards of a suitable place of power for the whole month; +1 to +5 if the spirit is worshipped or paid respect.

If these bonuses add up to +3 or more, Will rolls to maintain HT fail only on a roll higher than modified Will or a 17 or 18, whichever is lower. If they total +5 or more, the spirit doesn't have to make a Will roll that month.

## **Point Cost**

All these *powers* and *weaknesses* are treated as a 100-point advantage, called *Spirit Form*. The enhancements and limitations below can modify it.

*Special Enhancement: Animation.* The spirit can possess physical objects as well as living beings. This includes dead bodies. Most objects provide a +8 bonus to possession as they have no spirit. The object's abilities depend on its form (and the GM's judgment): a painting could talk, a statue or suit or armor could move around normally, a car could drive. +20% for a small class of objects (a specific make or model of car, the works of a particular artist), +40% for a large class (cars, buildings, corpses), +80% for any physical object.

*Special Enhancement: Easy Materialization.* The spirit can materialize at a lower Fatigue cost. Each halving of Fatigue cost is +20%, and Fatigue costs reduced below half a point become 0.

*Special Enhancement: Extra Worlds.* The spirit can travel to additional spirit worlds, +10% per additional world. For +100% it can travel to any spirit world the GM allows.

*Special Enhancement: Physical Form.* The spirit has one physical form it can materialize at will for only 1 Fatigue point, remaining in that form for as long as it wishes. It costs no Fatigue for the spirit to return to its normal incorporeal form. The physical form has the spirit's normal Attributes and abilities, plus any advantages the spirit may have that apply to the physical world. The spirit cannot change the appearance of its physical form without materializing another (and paying the full Fatigue cost) or having an appropriate advantage or spell. This enhancement can be taken multiple times for multiple physical forms. +80%.

*Special Enhancement: Spectral Touch.* The spirit can use touch only supernatural abilities while insubstantial by interpenetrating with the target. (Some spirits may know specific spells that they can use without this enhancement.) +40%.

*Special Enhancement: Unlimited Lifespan.* The spirit doesn't have to make monthly Will rolls to avoid losing HT. +30%.

*Special Enhancement: Visible.* The spirit is normally visible, at no Fatigue cost. The advantages (free visual effects) and disadvantages (being visible to normal sight) cancel out. +0% if the spirit is obviously unnatural (glowing, translucent, etc.), +5% if it looks human, +5% if the spirit is visible only to living beings and not machines (cameras, etc.), -5% if the spirit is normally visible only to machines and not living beings (showing up in photographs, on film, etc. but invisible to the naked eye).

*Special Limitation: Limited Materialization.* The spirit can't produce all the effects listed under *Materialization*. -20% for Can't Materialize, -15% for Sounds Only, -10% for Sounds and Visual Effects Only, -5% for Sounds, Visual, and Ectoplasm Effects Only. Only the -10% and -5% levels can be combined with *Visible*. Cannot be combined with *Physical Form*.

*Special Limitation: Limited Perception.* The spirit can only dimly perceive the physical world when not materialized. -5% for each -1 to Sense rolls. -30% if the spirit cannot perceive the physical world *at all*.

*Special Limitations: Missing Power.* The spirit lacks a basic spirit ability. Each missing power is a separate limitation: -5% if it can't taste/smell, hear its name being invoked, travel instantly to the site of a summoner, or ride in vehicles; -10% if it can't use Awareness, spirit travel, communicate telepathically, or tap Fatigue from places of power and worshippers; -20% if it can't use Poltergeist Effect, Possession, or Probability Alteration.

## **Advantages**

The following advantages, some of which only appear in other *GURPS* books, are redundant for spirits, as their effects are included in the Spirit Form package: *Awareness*, *Doesn't Breathe*, *Doesn't Eat/Drink*, *Doesn't Sleep*, *Immunity to Disease*, *Immunity to Poison*, *Insubstantiality*, *Invisibility*, *Invisibility to Machines*, and *Unaging*. Spirits that wish to be invisible in material form *do* need to buy *Invisibility* and *Invisibility to Machines*, however.

Some other notes:



**Alertness (p. 00):** Spirits add Alertness to IQ rolls to use their Awareness ability. Powerful spirits often have very high Sense rolls. Spirits can also have *Acute Awareness* (a bonus to Awareness IQ rolls) for 2 points per +1.

**Extra Fatigue (p. 00):** This advantage is common, often at very high levels, among powerful spirits. It increases the size of the spirit's natural Fatigue pool (which can be recovered with rest and time). It does not take into account the extra sources that spirits can tap into to augment their natural Fatigue (p. 00).

**Invulnerability (p. 00):** In their natural form, spirits are immune to any and all physical attacks that aren't specifically described as affecting spirits. In physical form, they can have Invulnerability to particular attacks, or to certain effects, even if they don't cause damage. For example, spirit-affecting spells are considered a Rare hazard, so it costs 75 points to be invulnerable to them.

**Magery (p. 00):** Spirits with innate spells (p. 00) must usually have Magery in order to cast them.

**Regeneration (p. 00):** Spirits may possess the ability to recover rapidly from damage in either physical or spirit form (and the advantage works in either form). Spirits commonly have the limitation that certain forms of damage prevent regeneration.

**Strong Will (p. 00):** This is one of the most common advantages among spirits, since most of their activities are Will-based. Powerful spirits often have extraordinary Will scores.

## Disadvantages

In addition to the disadvantages inherent in Spirit Form (notably limited ability to interact with the physical world), spirits often have a number of other disadvantages related to their unique nature.

**Compulsive Behavior (p. 00):** Spirits often have certain behaviors hardwired into their personalities. These can range from quirks (a spirit never using its true name) to things like Compulsive Generosity or Compulsive Lying.

**Dependency (p. 00):** Spirits often require special things to maintain them, such as unique magic items (rare), being at a specific place (infrequent), human blood (occasional), or human emotions (common). Many or all spirits may be completely unable to survive in *No Mana* areas (p. 00); in that case, all characters with the Spirit Form advantage might also take a Dependency on mana (common, constantly), or GMs may prefer to treat this as another built-in aspect of Spirit Form. (No mana regions are quite rare in Hellboy's world, so in truth, this wouldn't be much of a disadvantage. If PC spirits are permitted to take it, the GM should make sure that they sometimes encounter sterile regions where they just can't go.)

**Dread (p. 00) and Phobias (p. 00):** Many spirits can be driven off by something specific—holy symbols, sunlight, or whatever. If this has a physical effect on them, use Dread. If a spirit's reason for avoiding something is more psychological than physical, it can be treated as a Phobia. Use the rarities for Dread as a guideline: a Rare substance is worth -1 point (a quirk), an Occasional or Common one is worth -5 to -10 points, and a Very Common one is worth -10 to -20 points as a Phobia.

**Unliving (p. 00):** Spirits don't automatically have this disadvantage; their hold on existence can be as strong as that of any material being. It is appropriate for many spirits, however, particularly servitors and artificial spirits.

**Vulnerability (p. 00):** Many spirits have peculiar Vulnerabilities. The first level of the disadvantage allows the attack to affect the spirit in its spirit form. If the Vulnerability affects the spirit only when it is materialized, the total value is halved.

**Weakness (p. 00):** This disadvantage is used for spirits that suffer damage merely in the presence of a certain item or substance. Use the rarities given for *Dread* (above) to determine the cost multiplier. Some spirits keep their soul or life-force elsewhere, in a *soul object*—an item, plant, or animal. If the soul object is destroyed, the spirit takes 1d damage per minute until it is dead. This damage cannot be regenerated! This may occur rarely, but since it's irreversible, it's considered an Occasional Weakness worth -20 points. If the soul object is particularly difficult to damage (more than DR 15 or 75 hit points), treat the frequency as Rare and reduce the value to -10 points. This cannot be taken in conjunction with a Dependency on the same object.

## ***Ectoplasmic Bodies***

A being made entirely of ectoplasm, such as a human medium who has survived the death of his body while projecting, takes Spirit Form with the minimum *Visible* enhancement (+0%), and the limitations *Limited Materialization* at the -10% level (they can't occupy ectoplasm other than their current form!) and *Missing Power* (can't taste or smell, hear invocations, travel instantly, spirit travel, communicate telepathically, tap Fatigue, or use Poltergeist Effects, Possession, or Probability Alteration, for a total of -105%). With a maximum limitation level of -75%, this makes the normal cost of an ectoplasmic body 25 points.

Some such beings have unique features; for example, BPRD agent Johann Krauss has a special version of Physical Form (his containment suit) which is less useful than normal because it remains where he leaves it rather than appearing whenever he wants it (+50%), and Unlimited Lifespan in a slightly restricted form because it requires that he spends most of his time within his containment suit (+25%). The latter means that he also loses the *Limited Materialization* limitation, but he does gain the limitation 'Can only fully Materialize in his containment suit' (-5%). Hence, the net cost of his condition is 65 points.

((BEGIN BOX))

## **EXORCISMS**

An exorcism (in the general sense, as opposed to the specific ritual described on p. 00) is any procedure designed to drive a spirit out of a person or place. In game terms, the details can vary. At the simplest, the exorcist may identify a Dread or Weakness possessed by spirit (perhaps with Occultism skill, p. 00), and produce it to achieve the desired effect. It's often a safe bet that *evil* spirits will be driven off by holy symbols or prayers, although they may put up a fight. Certainly, most spirits seem to have one or two odd and obscure Dreads, such as the smoke from burning Arbutus leaves.

Less malevolent spirits may be *persuaded* to depart by negotiation, although spirits can be obstinate, obsessive, or just plain strange. It may be possible to fulfill some need which is keeping the spirit on Earth, which may be ethically highly desirable or highly unacceptable. (Some ghosts want justice, some want revenge . . .) At the other end of the scale, some traditions attempt to exorcise spirits by making conditions physically uncomfortable for them by brute force methods. Unfortunately, if the spirit is possessing a person, this can be very dangerous for the victim. For this reason, and because injury and pain make people *more* susceptible to possession, most exorcists avoid such methods.

Spirits which don't want to be exorcised are notorious for fighting back, using poltergeist effects, possession (sometimes switching hosts rapidly to sow confusion), threats, or other powers. A really powerful spirit with few major weaknesses can be a dangerous opponent, and even the most scholarly exorcist may need some strong-willed and muscular backup.

### ***Religious Rituals***

Many religions teach exorcism techniques to their priesthods. Sometimes, these can be treated simply as the sort of religious activities which many spirits dislike; roll Theology for the ceremony to be conducted correctly, and if it is, apply the effects of the relevant Dread. Characters without Clerical Investment may be prohibited from conducting such ceremonies, or may only do so at large penalties, depending on the religion's theology.

Advanced ceremonies of exorcism may be treated as rituals from the Path of Spirit (p. 00), even if the priest doesn't think of them that way and actually considers ritual magic to be evil. Such priests do not need Ritual Magic skill or Ritual Aptitude, but must have Theology at 14+ and Clerical Investment. They then study a version of the Path, but will usually *only* use *Lay to Rest*, *Exorcise*, and *Banish* (some militant fringe faiths might add *Ghost Sword* or *Spirit Trap*). Their Clerical Investment substitutes for Ritual Aptitude, for this purpose *only*.

((END BOX))

# A Hellboy Bestiary

*Note:* Where game statistics are given below, the format should mostly be fairly self-explanatory. If two numbers are given for ST or HT, the second number represents Fatigue or Hit Points respectively. Size is the number of yard-wide hexes which the creature occupies, which is significant in the full *GURPS* combat system. Move rates are for the creature's preferred environment; where it can also operate in a different mode, this will be discussed in the notes.

The notes at the top of each entry come from official but informal BPRD briefing documents. Whether such things can always be trusted may be an open question. The subsequent descriptions sometimes include uncertainty, or more than one option; on the one hand, the BPRD don't know everything, and on the other, monsters can be varied individuals, and this variation can allow GMs to surprise players who've read this book.

## ANUBIS

We don't know if this thing was really linked to the Egyptian deity. If it was, he's not as smart as he used to be. Still, it was very dangerous.

**ST:** 100    **Move/Dodge:** 9/5    **Size:** 8  
**DX:** 12    **PD/DR:** 2/8    **Wt.:** c. 3 tons.  
**IQ:** 10    **Damage:** 5d cr  
**HT:** 15/40    **Reach:** C,1-4

Hellboy met and (apparently) destroyed the creature called Anubis in the southwestern USA, in an area where the entire populations of several small towns had recently vanished. As the disappearances were not accompanied by any signs of violence, it seems likely that the cause was a complex supernatural phenomenon, and not *simply* the rampages of a giant monster. (Hellboy noted some peculiar mystical symbolism in the town he investigated, which may have been related.)

Anubis took the form of a semi-humanoid being with the head of a giant dog (*not* the jackal head of Egyptian religious art), along with other canine features. It would probably have been around 20' tall if it had stood fully upright. However, it could also adopt the appearance of a normal, relatively harmless (if mangy) looking dog, shifting instantly between the two shapes at will. (In its smaller form, it may have had ST around 4-6, no PD or DR, and no more than 5-8 hit points.) It fought by grabbing and punching; had it chosen to bite, it might have done 5d cutting damage. It was aggressive and arrogant; its other motives remain a mystery.

## THE BABA YAGA

Analysis suggests that this entity is at least peripherally associated with certain major high-threat incidents. Cross-referencing to Slavic myth suggests something old, enigmatic, and dangerous. Direct contact is unlikely, but all references should be reported.

**ST:** 13    **Move/Dodge:** 6/6    **Size:** 1  
**DX:** 14    **PD/DR:** 0/4    **Wt.:** c. 130 lbs.  
**IQ:** 18    **Damage:** 1d+2 cr  
**HT:** 17    **Reach:** C

**Powers:** The Baba Yaga is referred to as a mighty witch or perhaps a demon-goddess in Russian folklore, and even after being forced to retreat to the Spirit Realm, her supernatural influence appears considerable. She might display any powers the GM finds appropriate, though probably tending more to terrible curses than direct physical attacks. She also has a talent for necromancy, and can animate dead bodies or skeletons more or less at will. She can also use human skulls for pyrotechnic magics, transforming them into lanterns or throwing them so

that they explode on impact (treat as a *Fireball* spell, p. 00). As a nature goddess of sorts, she commands at least the passive loyalty of the wild creatures of Russia, and maybe more. Her teeth and nails are made of iron; her legs are wooden, but she gets around well enough anyway, using her giant pestle as a walking-stick.

**Transportation:** When on Earth, the Baba Yaga traveled in a giant mortar, which could fly and which she flew with the pestle (flying move 12). She also owns a magical hut which walks around on giant chicken legs, but according to legend, this never leaves her farmyard, on Earth or in the Spirit Realm although people occasionally have visions of it when her influence is involved.

**Limitations:** The Baba Yaga is essentially an entity of the Spirit Realm who could take physical form on Earth, and that form limited her to almost human levels of vulnerability. (The above values reflect that limited nature.) When it was badly injured, she had to retreat to the Spirit Realm, and couldn't heal the injury even there. (She may or may not recover over years or centuries, or she may be too dependent on the tacit worship which she no longer receives.) She is also prone to bizarre obsessions, calling up the buried bodies of dead sinners to count their fingers, or flying into people's kitchens to count their spoons. Like many supernatural creatures, she can probably also be counted on to stick to the letter of any promises she makes.

To the old Russian peasants, the Baba Yaga was the embodiment of the dark secrets of the deep woods. Although actually a spirit more or less a goddess she took a very physical form as a grotesque cannibalistic witch, given to stealing children to eat. She was occasionally outwitted and even defeated by human heroes, but she always came back. Between times, she dwelt in the Thrice-Nine Lands in the Thrice-Tenth Kingdom in the spirit world which is the dark fairyland of Russian myth.

Around the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, she appeared to the young Siberian monk Rasputin (p. 00), and told him that his destiny was to be the Agent of Change. He gave her half of his soul, which she hid in the roots of Yggdrasil (see p. 00), helping to make him extremely hard to kill. Although she continued to observe his career, she did not assist most of his plans directly; she seemed to regard him as an interesting child with his own life to lead, or as a potential companion whose excessive plans led him into mistakes.

In 1964, she was active in the region of Bereznik, in Russia, when Hellboy heard of her actions. He fought her and shot her through her left eye, forcing her withdrawal to the Spirit Realm. Since then, apart from once sending aid to Rasputin, she has been little more than an observer.

((BEGIN QUOTE))

Are not her iron teeth and wooden legs this country's bones?  
Do we not eat her food and breath her air? She is our mother  
and can never die so long as Russia endures.

((END QUOTE))

## CANNIBAL HEADS

A relatively minor but dangerous paranormal phenomenon. See past briefings for countermeasures, but there may not always be a lake handy. Be careful of their intrusion capabilities; they could be nasty if they gave up their old rural lifestyle for urban back alleys.

**ST:** 5/10    **Move/Dodge:** 7/7    **Size:** <1  
**DX:** 12    **PD/DR:** 0/0    **Wt.:** c.10 lbs.  
**IQ:** 10    **Damage:** 1d-1 cut  
**HT:** 12/5    **Reach:** C

These are monsters out of Japanese myth. By day, they appear to be normal human beings, but at night, their heads detach themselves from their bodies and fly around, looking for food. As the name suggests, Cannibal Heads eat human flesh, and they use their daytime appearance to inveigle victims (usually lone travelers in remote areas) to sleep somewhere remote from help. They hunt in groups, and their teeth are sharp.

Their great weakness is that they must reattach themselves to their bodies by daybreak. A detached head takes 1d hit points per round from direct sunlight, and even if it managed to shelter somewhere after sunrise, it would lose 1d hit points per day anyway.

In their daytime form, these creatures can be treated as human in all respects, although they may strike anyone meeting them as somehow sinister or just unpleasant, and they may well be able to bite for damage as above if pressed. They also tend to learn skills such as Acting, Area Knowledge, and Fast-Talk, to help in their hunting, and may well have some ability with weapons.

## THE DAOINE SIDH

A powerful but *mainly* self-restrained category of phenomenon, but including some exceptionally powerful and unpredictable entities. Unfortunately, some are downright vicious. Try to consult a specialist in the relevant folklore before making any substantial responses.

The Daoine Sidh are the very powerful *Ífaeries* of Celtic mythology, and hence are mostly encountered in the most remote areas of the British Isles. They are human-like in form, but strange and *Ífey*, recognizably not human. Some of them have considerable supernatural powers, often involving illusions. Legends suggest that the Sidh were once rulers of these lands.

They may actually be considered to be creatures of the Spirit World, although they lack most Spirit Form powers and are tightly bound to specific physical bodies. They dwell partly or largely in the *ÍOtherworld* — one or more spirit worlds where time may sometimes pass strangely relative to Earth. There used to be quite a number of permanent gates to the Otherworld, some of which only operated under complex circumstances.

Daoine Sidh culture is obscure to humans, although it probably resembles the old Celtic tribal patterns. They are known to be ruled by a king, who probably has significant supernatural powers, although he mostly prefers to observe from the shadows and the Spirit Realm. If other old stories are correct, there may be a whole court of faerie nobles, and perhaps a queen — although such figures may have lost considerable power since the days when they were treated almost as gods by the Celtic peoples. Daoine Sidh nobles can be treated much like humans, albeit with excellent attributes, spell-like powers, and odd personalities.

For all their power, this category of being have several limitations, including a physical reaction to iron in all forms (which provides a traditional test for shape-changed faeries), and a great aversion to religious symbols and ceremonies. Most of them are also absolutely bound by their sworn word and by numerous ancient rules. Detailed knowledge of folklore (roll against Occultism skill) can be a great help when dealing with them.

((BEGIN QUOTE))

ÍThe years, they *beat* upon us like the ocean upon a stone . . .  
We are worn away.Í

((END QUOTE))

Daoine Sidh do not age as such, and most are centuries or thousands of years old. However, they can and do *fade* over time, especially in the face of spreading human civilization with its iron and churches, and no living

children of the race have been born for at least a century. As they recognize, they are at best doomed to retreat to the Otherworld, or as they put it, 'down into the shadows under the world where the old people go.'

((BEGIN BOX))

**Changelings:** To make up their diminishing numbers, the Daoine Sidh have long been in the habit of stealing human children to raise as their own. If they can manage this (and, mundane protections and iron barriers aside, tradition suggests that Christian baptism may protect a child), they usually leave a small shapeshifted faerie in place of the infant. The parents may be fooled for some time, but the faerie inevitably either lets some of its appearance slip, becoming increasingly ugly, or it succumbs to a malicious sense of humor, whispering strange words in the dark or playing odd pranks. Eventually, it will likely slip away, leaving a distressed and confused family.

The traditional test for a changeling is to touch the child with some plain iron object, such as a horseshoe. In modern societies, with more and more iron and steel around, the trick is virtually impossible, and the Daoine Sidh have largely given it up, fearing human responses involving religious exorcisms or direct violence against their few remaining havens on Earth. Recovering a stolen child can involve following odd quests set by the faeries; these will be very difficult, but the Daoine Sidh do play fair.

((END BOX))

Despite some ambiguous attitudes to humanity, the Daoine Sidh are not entirely unsympathetic, and they *certainly* have no wish to see the end of the world. Hence, some of them have lent Hellboy subtle aid on occasion, mostly in the form of advice. They seem to regard him with special sympathy, as they know how strong the forces are which are trying to exploit him, and they of all beings understand about being non-human in a human-dominated world. They might even aid other BPRD agents on very rare occasions, if the situation merited their interest. However, it would be wise for the agents to watch the conditions attached to any offer of help.

### ***Goblins and Gruagach***

**ST:** 9    **Move/Dodge:** 6/8    **Size:** 1 or less

**DX:** 13    **PD/DR:** 2/0    **Wt.:** c. 70 lbs.

**IQ:** 10    **Damage:** (by weapon)

**HT:** 12/9    **Reach:** C

**Notes:** These creatures vary in exact size and abilities. Many display a wide range of powers, including flight (at their normal move rate), at least partial immunity to some forms of damage (especially heat or flame), and shapeshifting (especially among those who are placed as changelings in human houses). Almost all are surprisingly quick and evasive, which among other things gives them good Stealth skill. They also tend to know their own home areas, and how to live there (Area Knowledge and Survival). On the other hand, they all have an intense aversion to iron; blows from iron or steel weapons do them +1d damage, and even the touch of iron, while doing no actual serious damage, causes them intolerable discomfort, making them drop any shapeshifting disguise. They also have a Dread of Christian symbols and prayers, and quite likely other religious activity.

These are the least among the Daoine Sidh 'misshapen-seeming' creatures of less than human size. They may lurk in wildernesses and dark places, living as scavengers, or serve the greater Daoine Sidh as assistants and courtiers. Some have limited intellects but devious, malicious natures, while others are smarter, and may even be pleasant company.

BPRD briefings warn that they should be handled with a careful eye to the possible presence of more powerful faerie creatures in the vicinity. The best that can be said for them as a group is that they can usually be trusted to hold to the letter of any promise they give.

## **DEMONS**

An extremely dangerous category of extra-dimensional entity. The traditional paranoia related to the name is fully justified. Handle all contacts with extreme caution, and seek assistance from established religious specialists where possible.

While the metaphysics of Hellboy's universe are complex and somewhat obscure, one thing that is clear is that there is a place called Hell, which is much as that name suggests, and which is occupied by numerous malevolent beings who fully qualify to be called demons. These are technically spirits (see the *Spirit Form* advantage, p. 00), but they often appear as very solid and powerful. Fortunately, few if any of them can come to Earth unless summoned by magic, or remain there for very long; see the modifiers for *Spirit Form* for some idea as to their capabilities and common limitations. All have full use of the spirit Communication ability, enabling them to tempt and manipulate humans. Some remain immaterial and invisible, using Possession if they can, subtle manipulations if not; others take every opportunity to Materialize.

They vary considerably in power, and have a hierarchy in which the strong bully the weak. At the top are the Princes of Hell, including Belam, Belphegor, Molech, Astaroth, Mammon (the Prince of Covetousness), and Haborym. (It is not clear if there is an overall leader.) The Princes are extremely powerful, able to manifest on Earth (at least briefly) if even casually invoked, and with considerable abilities to transform unprotected creatures as well as solid matter, to change shape, create illusions, and cause destruction. However, they are also bound by ancient rules and limitations, which mean that they do not often actually appear, and if they do, they are unlikely to harm humans who haven't actually signed themselves over to Hell. Any encounter with an undisguised Prince is worth at least one Fright Check for a normal human, but the odds are that the Prince will work subtly and through intermediaries.

Lesser demons find it harder to travel to Earth, mostly because of those ancient restrictions, but have more freedom of action if they do somehow manifest. Still, they are highly susceptible to certain magical powers, and have a lot of trouble with religious artifacts and even devout prayers. They also tend to be watched carefully by Princes and other more powerful demons, who know full well that their underlings are all looking to claw their way up the infernal hierarchy. They tend to be cunning rather than smart, and very susceptible to all the sins they promote.

Occasionally, a demon not only comes to Earth, but becomes established. Such beings are a serious menace, but tend either to get themselves destroyed or trapped in some way through overconfidence, or remain well hidden out of caution (or cowardice). Some have occasionally got themselves worshipped as gods by small tribes or cults; a few can not only shapeshift into human guise, but carry off the act for years, often doing a great deal of damage along the way. Details for one known minor demon follow.

## ***Ualac***

**ST:** 14/30 **Move/Dodge:** 7/7 **Size:** 1  
**DX:** 12 **PD/DR:** 1/4 **Wt.:** c. 70 lbs.  
**IQ:** 10 **Damage:** 1d+2 cr  
**HT:** 16 **Reach:** C

**Special Abilities:** Ualac can fly at his normal move rate. He also has the equivalent of three versions of the spell Shapeshift Other (p. 00) at level 18, being able to transform victims into pigs or large monkeys or lizards. He also has a supernatural awareness of his surroundings and the universe, and may (at the GM's option) detect secrets such as hidden treasure within 100' or so of his location on an IQ roll; even while imprisoned and helpless, he acquired knowledge of major supernatural facts such as Hellboy's existence and title. He might also have other minor spell-like powers.

**Limitations:** Ualac is easily affected by rituals from the Path of Spirit (pp. 00-00); successful use of *Exorcise* also automatically prevents his spells working on the protected character. He has an active Dread of objects and consecrated images associated with Saint Dunstan, which may well be incorporated into ritual workings by knowledgeable sorcerers who seek power over him (-1 to Ualac's rolls to resist such rituals). He so fears being imprisoned or forced back to Hell that he will usually obey (or at least avoid) anyone who successfully uses any Ritual against him, and anyone who gains 5 or more points of success when casting *Bind* on him will gain his abject permanent service. Although he may try to tempt them with excess ambition, and demons and black magicians being as they are, one or the other will probably get the partnership into fatal trouble, sooner rather than later. Ualac also has a Phobia concerning holy symbols and prayers, and a Dread of consecrated ground.

Ualac is a fairly typical minor demon, except that, around 1,000 years ago, he somehow managed to gain access to the Earth. When entering the physical world, he initially manifests in a miniature form that can easily be taken for a small fly (flying movement 7, other attributes negligible), but if he can then enter the body of a character who has damned themselves by extreme sins or consciously giving themselves over to evil (through the mouth or some other orifice), he can possess and transform them. Initially, he then resembles a demonic version of the possessed human, but every hour thereafter, or every round if in combat or some other high-stress situation, he must make a HT check at -2 or transform to a hunched, gargoyle-like form with stubby wings and large, glowing eyes. He can at any time transform back to his fly shape, usually to escape some defeat, but he must then find another human body to possess.

Ualac acts in a relentlessly demonic fashion, forever seeking his own advantage and trying to tempt humans into acts that will put them in his power. He also seeks revenge on anyone who ever annoys him, and quite enjoys cruelty for its own sake. When he first came to Earth, he caused trouble for humanity until bested by Saint Dunstan, who trapped him in a box (probably with a Spirit Trap effect I see p. 00), where he remained until recently. He was released by the criminal occultist Igor Bromhead (p. 00), who bound him to service, but when they tried to steal Hellboy's power, both were defeated. Hellboy then handed Ualac (in his miniature form) over to the Demon Prince Astaroth, who trapped him again in a block of amber. Astaroth declared the intention to imprison Ualac for another 1,000 years, but demons are not noted for truthfulness; Ualac may yet be released under Astaroth's control, or if he is really lucky, escape somehow. If so, it will be interesting to see whether his vengefulness or his cowardice prove stronger.

When Ualac briefly stole Hellboy's crown (the symbol of his status, which hung invisibly and intangibly above his head), his attributes (including intelligence) and abilities rose to approximately equal to Hellboy's own, and he gained the ability to produce intense heat and some local but impressive telekinetic effects, and stronger resistance to magical control. However, he is unlikely ever to manage that again.

## DJINN

Be careful what you wish for. You are *extremely* unlikely to get it, but be careful anyway.

**ST:** 23/40 **Move/Dodge:** 24/6 **Size:** varies

**DX:** 12 **PD/DR:** 3/7 **Wt.:** varies

**IQ:** 10 **Damage:** (see below)

**HT:** 14/20 **Reach:** varies

**Note:** The Move rate above is flying speed. Djinn can also walk, but only the weakest of their kind bother much. Size and weight vary with the djinni's chosen shape, but djinn like to appear as either monstrous humanoids or whirlwinds, often very large I or, if they're showing off, as attractive human beings. If they fight physically, they either manifest sharp claws (2d-1 cutting) or wield large weapons.

**Special Abilities:** Djinn have the Spirit Form advantage, but with varying enhancements and limitations. For example, most cannot Possess human beings, but a few do little else. Most are very good at Materializing, and have high levels in the Shapeshifting skill (sometimes at 20+). Attributes vary considerably from the above standard; the weakest have few other powers, and lower flying Move rates, while the strongest make extensive use of Poltergeist Effect and Probability Alteration powers. Most are also partly or entirely immune to heat and flame, and some have magical pyrotechnic abilities; legend describes them as creatures of smokeless fire.

Djinn rarely bother with many skills, but they may have centuries of random knowledge, and they usually employ those combat forms they favor at levels around 14-16.

**Limitations:** Djinn all have an intense Dread of a mystical symbol called the Seal of Solomon. (Creating a copy requires Occultism and Artist rolls and at least ten minutes.) This can be used to drive them off or trap them. All except the vilest Ghls are also bound by their word, and will *never* break a sworn promise; sometimes, this adds up to a Reprogrammable Duty, although a bound djinni may be resentful and prone to twisting the terms of any command.



Djinn (singular *Ídjinni*) are supernatural beings native to Middle Eastern regions. Their personalities vary at least as widely as their powers. Some minor djinn, known as *Ghls*, have an unpleasant taste for human corpses; a few others are downright friendly, although they may not always know their own strength. Fortunately, the race of djinn has become rare and reclusive in recent centuries, although they may occasionally be encountered in surprising places, such as ruins, graveyards, and dung-heaps Í or wandering invisible or disguised in human society, looking for amusement.

## DRAGONS AND WORMS

Probably mostly mythical, but see past reports . . .

Monsters as powerful as dragons are rare in the modern world, although legends suggest that they were once almost commonplace. Perhaps magic has drained away from the Earth, and they, even more than the Daoine Sidh (p. 00), can no longer exist in a more mundane age. Still, just occasionally, such things appear from somewhere, even today.

A full-sized, fire-breathing dragon would be a formidable opponent, and in the unlikely event of one appearing, it would probably be necessary to call in the uniformed armed forces (with air support). However, lesser dragon-like creatures Í *worms* Í are still quite deadly. They tend to be far less intelligent than true dragons Í little more than animals Í but they are often cunning and savage.

### *The Saint Leonard Worm*

**ST:** 40    **Move/Dodge:** 8/5    **Size:** 8  
**DX:** 11    **PD/DR:** 2/8    **Wt.:** c. 2 tons.  
**IQ:** 5    **Damage:** (see below)  
**HT:** 12/22    **Reach:** C

This worm first appeared around 1400 years ago, when it terrorized a wood near Horsham, in West Sussex, England. It was eventually Ídriven back into the hollow of the EarthÍ by a local monk who was later canonized as Saint Leonard. It was assumed killed, but in 1954, it somehow reappeared, and a group of occultists named the Osiris Club (p. 00) persuaded the BPRD to send the young Hellboy to deal with it, largely so that they could study him. Although it came close to defeating him, it was killed when the fight shattered a statue of the saint, and the statueÍs sword pierced it through the head Í possibly a subtle manifestation of the power of the saintÍs original Íexorcism.

The worm had a long, muscular, snake-like body with vestigial forelimbs, and a crocodile-like head. It was fast and aggressive, and cunning enough to ambush its prey. It could bash with its tail for 2d crushing damage, or bite for 2d cutting, but its most effective attack, if it could outflank or maneuver around an opponent, was to wrap itself around them and squeeze; treat this as a grapple, subsequently doing 2d crushing damage per round until the victim breaks free (not easy given its strength) or the worm is killed or driven off. (If the worm is somehow stunned, a grappled opponent can make a DX roll to escape its coils each round until it recovers.)

## ECTOPLASMIC MONSTROSITIES

One of humanityÍs self-inflicted problems, in many ways. These entities are almost always generated by the actions of a human wild talent. However, once manifested, they may display distinctly non-human motivations and capabilities. Non-physical countermeasures are often required.

The Íspirit realmÍ might be described, metaphorically, as a vast, many-dimensional ocean. Some of the creatures found in it, especially many ghosts and those strange beings dwelling in its remote depths, lack the abilities necessary to influence the material world unaided, but can do so to a limited extent by working through

human mediums with the power of *Channeling* (p. 00). Unfortunately, not all such spirits are benevolent, and once they have found a route through to the physical world, some can be downright dangerous.

The rules for Channeling define how a spirit can retain control of ectoplasm even against the psychic's wishes; those concerning ectoplasm (p. 00) cover how a spirit can gain additional power while using an ectoplasmic body. Most ordinary ghosts and minor spirits are only a limited danger, however hostile they may be, as a competent, trained human medium will usually have a better Will roll, and the spirit will usually only have enough fatigue points for a few actions in the physical world. However, some stranger spirits have both powerful wills and considerable reserves of fatigue, enabling them to overwhelm a medium and tap his body for physical substance.

Ectoplasmic Monstrosities are spectacular and often frightening, but rarely a major risk except to unwary mediums, and perhaps to people in their immediate vicinity. However, they are extremely unpredictable, and both BPRD agents and priests of every religion consider that a prompt exorcism is usually indicated. These things *don't belong*.

For example, Consider the 1979 Tod Case. Mr. Tod unwisely took drugs which raised his effective Channeling skill and enabled him to contact creatures in the deep end, while reducing his IQ and Will for all other purposes. He made his Channeling roll by a large margin, and contacted a spirit which had ST 30/500, DX 11, IQ 9, HT 12/50, and +10 Strong Will. Unfortunately, he then missed several IQ and Will rolls, failing to realize that this spirit was highly dangerous until it was too late, and then failing to evade its attentions.

It occupied the ectoplasm he produced, and decided it wanted to break free into the real world. However, it only had 5 hit points (the default for a spirit being channeled). It needed more, or else, when Mr. Tod died, it would have to make its monthly HT rolls at -45. So, it successfully engaged Mr. Tod in a series of contests of Wills, and sucked out 18 hit points, enough to leave Mr. Tod comatose, but not quite dead, and itself with 23 total. That was still not enough; it wouldn't live long rolling against HT-27. But soon, Tod's channeling time limit came up, and the spirit had to feed him fatigue, to keep him from dying. (In game terms, he missed several HT rolls at various points, and hence was really very close to death.) It continued to do so, living in hope that someone would give Mr. Tod medical care, or do something else to give him more hit points, which it would then steal. However, instead of that, Hellboy showed up. It was able to focus considerable Poltergeist Effect ST through the Ectoplasm, but the stress of the ensuing fight, followed by the spirit's departure, proved fatal for Mr. Tod. (In game terms, the details of that fight scene can mostly be considered special effects. Mr. Tod's survival chances were negligible throughout.)

Clearly, there might have been better strategies for the spirit to adopt. But it wasn't especially smart, and it didn't really understand the material world very well. It just knew that it wanted to stay here, Mr. Tod seemed to represent its best chance, and it had somehow worked that this approach *might* work. *Cunning* ectoplasmic monstrosities can be even more dangerous.

((BEGIN BOX))

## KING VOLD

Reported by Hellboy to be a powerful entity, fortunately not much interested in dealings with humanity unless approached. And approaching him turns out to be a bad idea. In the event of contact, remain polite, withdraw as soon as feasible, and don't accept any job offers.

King Vold is an immensely powerful spirit, perhaps an ancient god or a relative of the Daoine Sidh, although some stories suggest that he began as a mere ghost. He usually appears in the Scandinavian region, in the form of a gigantic spectral horseman, carrying his severed head in his left hand, wielding a spear, and accompanied by a pack of wolfish hounds. Seeing him is worth a Fright Check for normal humans.

Perhaps fortunately, King Vold has little interest in dealing with humanity. He seems to be obsessed with hunting, and specifically with hunting other supernatural entities in the Spirit Realm. However, he may be

approached by those who can determine where he may pass, and he respects the courage of anyone who dares to face him. He will usually dismiss human concerns as irrelevant to himself, but he may ask favors of mortals, such as looking after one of his hounds which has gone lame for one night. He traditionally pays in gold.

Dealing with King Vold is, however, unwise, as he has no respect for those greedy enough to *want* his gold. The one human who received payment from him in modern times found that the gold coins which poured from Vold's mouth burned like fire, leaving a large hole all the way through his hand, and then turned to cinders. Other mortals might or might not fare better.

### *The Pack*

King Vold's hounds are actually the ghosts of Viking berserkers, turned into spectral werewolves. They usually remain in canine form in his presence, but may shift into wolfman or wild man shapes if he is absent. They can also materialize in any of these forms, and are very aggressive.

Use werewolf/wolfman statistics (p. 00) for these creatures, but raise ST to 20, Fatigue to 30, and hit points to 25, and reduce DR to 20. They usually attack with a sharp-nailed claw stroke, doing 1d+1 cutting damage which can slash through most protection (halve the DR of the target). They may or may not have the traditional werewolf vulnerability to silver.

((END BOX))

## FAERIE MONSTERS

References in numerous archaic sources suggest that these beings have been present in our dimensional frame of reference for a long time. Fortunately, they are often reclusive, but they are usually a threat to the public when they do surface, and when they choose to fight, they can be very dangerous. Specialist consultants may offer specific countermeasures, but use of heavy firepower will often be approved.

These creatures are related to the Daoine Sidh (p. 00), being the ugly, vicious monsters lurking in the shadows of the same tales. They too may be found most often in the lands of north-western Europe, preying on unwary humans when they can. They may also be found in faerie realms, perhaps serving as warriors or spies for less discerning Daoine Sidh. They share many Daoine Sidh weaknesses and aversions. As supernatural creatures, they are immune to aging, and will usually be aware of magical forces in their vicinity on an IQ roll.

The following are in fact just some examples encountered by Hellboy in the past. Other types may be found in any good book on Celtic folklore.

### *Grom*

**ST:** 90    **Move/Dodge:** 8/4    **Size:** 6  
**DX:** 12    **PD/DR:** 2/12    **Wt.:** c. 2.5 tons.  
**IQ:** 7    **Damage:** 5d+1 cr  
**HT:** 16/45    **Reach:** C,1-3

**Special Notes:** In his giant form, Grom is about 18' tall, with leather-bound hooves and jutting tusks. He is an aggressive fighter, with Brawling-13. However, he has some of the faerie vulnerability to iron, taking +1d damage from iron weapons. He would probably be driven off by major Christian symbols, such as the sound of church bells, and he proved vulnerable to sanctified charms.

Grom is a boar-like bipedal monster which is claimed to have played a part in Celtic mythology, before being trapped in a huge box beneath a river somewhere in Ireland. He was only released in 1959, when a malicious gruagach tried to use him against Hellboy. (Grom ate the gruagach.) He is animalistic and savage, communicating only in grunts, though he has some degree of cunning. However, his size and strength are maintained by magic; when attacked with anti-supernatural effects, effective exorcisms, etc., he has to roll every turn vs. HT-4 (with

other modifiers at the GM's option, according to the power of the effect), and if he fails, he shrinks to a smaller-than-human shape. Hellboy used a charm against demonic animals against him, with this effect. Grom then fled which suggests that he may still be on the loose somewhere, possibly having reverted to his full size, possibly searching for some means to regain that power.

In his smaller form, Grom has ST 8, 12 hit points, Move and Dodge 6, PD 0, and DR 3. He can punch for 1d.

((BEGIN QUOTE))

**Grom.** War monster. Champion of Connacht. Champion of Queen Medb, who fought Cu Chullainn in the valley of the deaf!

((END QUOTE))

### ***Iron Shoes***

**ST:** 23    **Move/Dodge:** 7/7    **Size:** 1  
**DX:** 13    **PD/DR:** 1/5    **Wt.:** c. 300 lbs.  
**IQ:** 8    **Damage:** (see below)  
**HT:** 12/17    **Reach:** C,1

**Notes:** Iron Shoes has Brawling-13, and can punch for 2d crushing damage but the iron shoes he wears enable him to kick for 3d, so he may well favor that. He also has Stealth-12 and Area Knowledge-13 for the area around his home tower. He has a Dread of Christian symbols (and probably those of other religions, too, should he encounter them), and takes 2d damage per round from being on holy ground until he disintegrates, leaving just his shoes.

Iron Shoes may be a single faerie monster, or perhaps more likely, a category of creatures with similar form and habits. However, it is traditional to talk about him in the singular. He is a gigantic, ugly goblin of cannibalistic habits. He mostly lives in old, ruined towers, in wilder parts of Ireland or the Anglo-Scottish Border country, and preys on unwary travelers. With the spread of human civilization, the type is largely extinct these days (or withdrawn to the faerie realm), but odd individuals may crop up; Hellboy destroyed one in 1961.

As the name and footwear show, this is one faerie creature with no aversion to iron. Although not very bright, he has a degree of aggressive cunning, and may set traps or ambushes for intruders. He also likes to taunt victims with rhyming threats from the shadows.

### ***Jenny Greenteeth***

**ST:** 13    **Move/Dodge:** 6/6    **Size:** 1  
**DX:** 12    **PD/DR:** 0/2    **Wt.:** c. 130 lbs.  
**IQ:** 10    **Damage:** 1d cr  
**HT:** 13    **Reach:** C,1

**Special Abilities:** Jenny Greenteeth can breathe air, but she prefers to dwell in water; she is as quick in both environments. Her nails are the equivalent of blunt claws, and she has an effective skill of 14 when concealing herself in ambush around the body of water in which she dwells. (She likes to sneak up on victims, grapple them, and strangle or drown them.) However, she takes +1d damage from iron weapons, and will be driven away by the sound of church bells or formal religious ceremonies.

Once again, going by the range of stories, Jenny Greenteeth is the name of a species of monster, encountered in remote pools and deep rivers throughout the British Isles and perhaps northern Europe. However, only one of these creatures is known for certain to still exist on Earth (assuming that Hellboy didn't return to deal with her permanently after their brief fight in 1959).

Jenny Greenteeth resembles a grotesque, scrawny hag, with glowing eyes and long, straggling hair. She is cunning and vicious, with a talent for ambush tactics and a taste for human flesh (especially fingers and toes). Although fairly dangerous in a fight, she is more likely to flee from danger, preferring to live to kill another day.

### ***The Nuckelavee***

**ST:** 30    **Move/Dodge:** 10/5    **Size:** 2  
**DX:** 12    **PD/DR:** 0/6    **Wt.:** c. 600 lbs.  
**IQ:** 9    **Damage:** (see below)  
**HT:** 15/30    **Reach:** C,1

**Notes:** The horse-shaped part of a Nuckelavee can kick with its hooves for 2d cr; the rider has arms with ST 16 and claws which can do 1d-1 cutting damage. Merely seeing a Nuckelavee is usually good for a Fright Check, at a penalty if the creature is close up. Fortunately, this monster is limited by various supernatural Dreads; it cannot cross fresh water (and takes 2d damage if forced over or into even a small fresh stream or pond), and will avoid holy ground and the sound of church bells. It also takes +1d damage from iron weapons.

The Nuckelavee is a sea-dwelling monstrosity which occasionally emerges onto land; it is extremely dangerous, although it may operate more as an agent of curses and supernatural dooms than anything else. It resembles a large horse with a human rider *growing out of* its back, but both horse and rider appear to have been flayed, with muscle, tendons, veins and bones all on display. It also emits an appalling stench which mingles death, excrement, and rotting fish.

When it chooses a victim, either on some kind of deranged whim or in obedience to a curse, the Nuckelavee prefers to grapple the human with its human arms and drag him under the water to drown, rather than killing him quickly. Anyone else who tries to interfere will likely be brushed aside. Some Nuckelavees can shapeshift into (or project the illusion of) an ordinary but very fine horse, which traditionally tempted unwise horse-lovers to mount it of their own free will.

## **GAKI**

One of the stranger categories of paranormal entity, and not just because it is capable of manifesting at least two physical forms. Each individual has a distinctive pattern of pseudo-addictive behavior. Analyze with care.

**ST:** 14    **Move/Dodge:** 7/7    **Size:** 1  
**DX:** 12    **PD/DR:** 0/0    **Wt.:** varies  
**IQ:** 10    **Damage:** (see below)  
**HT:** 15    **Reach:** C,1

**Special Abilities:** Gaki have the *Spirit Form* advantage (p. 00), with two Physical Forms, Unlimited Lifespan (possibly dependent on feeding its hunger), Visible, and several Missing Powers: Poltergeist Effect, Possession, Probability Alteration, and Spirit Travel. Some have Shapeshifting skill, and can adopt multiple human forms. In cat form, a Gaki has one level of Enhanced Move, Sharp Claws, and Sharp Teeth.

**Skills:** A Gaki may have skills which help it fulfill its unique hunger, including Stealth, Sex Appeal, or even Merchant.

Another creature out of Japanese myth, the Gaki is an immaterial spirit (possibly a restless ghost) which is tormented by a ravenous hunger for one specific thing. Possible needs include blood, corpses, heat, the scent of flowers, music, a particular drug or poison, or love or sex. A Gaki will die if its need isn't met, sometimes slowly, sometimes quickly. Gaki whose needs involve them in close contact with human beings are usually dangerous to the humans (costing at least 1 hit point in lost vitality or actual damage per feeding, and often more), whereas others are little more than unnerving nuisances which destroy or remove things. Gaki which feed on human flesh or blood are often compared to European vampires.

A Gaki's natural appearance is a sphere of smoke or flame, but it can manifest as a huge cat or a human being. As a cat, it can bite or claw for 1d-1 or 1d-3 cutting damage respectively, and run at Move 14. However,

even the most predatory Gaki prefer to use stealth and guile to feed their hunger, often employing seduction or killing someone close to an intended victim and taking the dead person's place. Japanese Shinto priests often know ceremonies of exorcism effective against Gaki, which also avoid Shinto shrines.

***The Giant Vampire Cat of Kyoto:*** This incident from Hellboy's past history involved a particularly large and dangerous Gaki which mostly appeared in cat form. For such creatures, increase ST, hit points, and damage in proportion.

## GHOSTS

More often psychic phenomena than free-willed beings, all appearances to the contrary. Traditional non-physical countermeasures are often indicated; consult appropriate religious groups when necessary.

Ghosts are (usually) the souls of dead humans, remaining on Earth for some reason after death or perhaps, in at least some cases, just psychic residues, bundles of images and emotions linked to some important site. The nature of the afterlife, and what happens to most people after death, is something of a mystery even in the world of *Hellboy*, but it is clear that most souls go on or are released after death but some remain.

It is known that powerful supernatural forces can restrain a spirit on Earth, even against its will, but most ghosts are bound by strong emotions or unfulfilled desires. Most people who study ghosts consider that exorcising them releases them from discomfort or distress, even if they resist it many are suffering from painful, pointless compulsions although where possible, it may be desirable or necessary to resolve any problems which are keeping them bound to the mortal world.

The 'psychic image' type, which may lack any volition or awareness of its own, may be created by strong emotions, sometimes in conjunction with the presence of supernatural forces, most often when somebody dies violently. Such 'images' may present themselves to almost anyone, but especially individuals linked to the scene in question or those with psychic powers. A variant type can speak through the remains of its old body, even if it is reduced to a skeleton, usually to speak brief words of warning or despair. While such an encounter may in theory be more interesting than frightening to living observers, the intensity of emotions evoked is usually distressing, and the visions or words may well indicate a problem which still needs resolution. (Furthermore, such ghosts tend to make houses and such uninhabitable, so people usually want them exorcised.) Still, in game terms, such a haunting can serve as a atmospheric source of clues.

A ghost with some free will, which is aware of its surroundings, is not necessarily evil or hostile; it may merely try hard to persuade mortals to deal with its concerns. Still, ghosts tend to be obsessive, and some are actively sinister, especially if they are bound by old grudges. To create such ghosts in game terms, design them as normal humans, as they were in life, and then add the *Spirit Form* advantage (p. 00) with whatever modifiers seem appropriate. Remember that ghosts are just as varied and individual as living humans; there are no 'standard' types. Very old ghosts, bound to the mortal world, obviously have the *Unlimited Lifespan* enhancement. Most are more melancholy than anything else, but the most powerful, who have dozens if not hundreds of points of Fatigue and full use of most or all spirit powers, can be very dangerous if they turn malicious.

((BEGIN BOX))

## WHAT CAUSES GHOSTS?

Not everyone who dies in Hellboy's world, stays around. So what determines who gets to be a ghost?

Partly, it's *motivation*. Ghosts usually have some reason for their persistence, such as seeking revenge for the cause of their deaths, or abiding romantic attachments. Sometimes, this focus persists beyond the point where it makes any sense; a ghost may still walk when all its enemies or loved ones are dead.

Second seems to be the presence of supernatural forces. In part, this can be linked to Mana Level (see p. 00); ghosts are much more common in 'places of magical power' that is to say, normal or high mana zones in

Hellboy's world. And ghosts probably can't function at all in no-mana areas; if the local mana level is somehow reduced, they may dissipate entirely, or perhaps more likely, remain quiescent until some source of supernatural energy becomes available, either through the raising of the ambient mana level or, more temporarily through supernatural activity such as a summoning ritual. But even in a low-mana area, someone who dies may become a ghost if there is a lot of temporary supernatural energy around, perhaps due to the use of powerful spells, rituals, or psychic activity. Hence, individuals who die in the course of a magical battle or ritual may well reappear as ghosts. For this reason, black magical rituals which use human sacrifice as a source of power often incorporate *Banish* or *Exorcise* procedures (see p. 00) – and if those are skipped or don't work well enough, well, black magicians are often very literally haunted.

Third, and related to other causes, may be *violent death*. Someone at the end of their natural life, dying of age or disease, tends to fade out slowly and relatively peacefully. Someone who dies suddenly or unexpectedly, on the other hand, may still have a lot of psychic ties to the material world, and their spirit may be confused and traumatized, and may even refuse to accept that they're dead.

But all of this said, ghosts *are* rare; not even violent magical battles in high-mana zones are guaranteed to produce them. GMs who want a game mechanic for this can require a Will roll for a newly deceased soul to hold itself together and in place, with a large basic penalty, but some bonuses if any of the above conditions apply. In addition, even the most mundane funeral ceremony may be treated as an effective *Lay to Rest* ritual (p. 00), with a corresponding chance to prevent an ensuing haunting.

(This of course further helps explain the traditional type of ghost which merely wants its mortal remains given proper burial.)

Thus, PCs who die in the course of play are unlikely to come back as ghosts, despite the often violent and complicated lives and deaths of supernatural investigators. GMs should feel free to ban the idea outright; PCs should see death as something to be avoided, not as an interesting way to gain a big new advantage. And in any case, a game full of ghostly PCs will soon seem goofy rather than scary. Still, this *might* be interesting as a once-per-campaign idea, if the GM and player are prepared to find the points from somewhere, such as an experience loan or a lot of new disadvantages – especially if the PC ghost lacks the *Unlimited Lifespan* enhancement, and hence has a distinctly finite time in which to resolve its issues.

((END BOX))

## GODS

In the unlikely event of contact with an entity with a plausible claim to the status of a pagan deity, BPRD agents are advised to withdraw and request specialist support. If possible, agents should also preserve basic courtesy in dealings with these entities. They customarily claim human worship, rightly or wrongly, and are intolerant of disrespect.

While the metaphysics of Hellboy's world seem to be primarily those of the monotheistic religions, with remote but overwhelming divine powers combined with rebellious demons and supernatural monsters seeking to bring down the divine order, it is also clear that there are, or have been, beings corresponding to at least some of the countless gods of pagan belief. While some of these may well have been demons masquerading in order to cause trouble, it does seem that at least some of them were neither malicious nor destructive. The most likely bet is that these were potent free-willed spirits, perhaps even created by the sheer force of mass human belief. It is also likely that they were fully capable of drawing power (i.e. fatigue points, in game terms) from human worship (see p. 00), and that this both made them very powerful in the heyday of their cults and explains their dwindling as those cults faded.

It also seems likely that most gods spent most of their time in their home spirit worlds (Asgard, Olympus, etc. – see p. 00). It is interesting to note that, when most of the Norse Nine Worlds were devastated in the apocalyptic battle known as Ragnarok (the source of the name of Nazi project engineered by Rasputin – see p. 00),

our world survived largely unscathed. It may be that other pantheons suffered equally catastrophic falls, or they may just have faded away.

Modern characters are unlikely to confront pagan deities at full power, but may encounter diminished remnants or artifacts dating back to the old days. Even something *associated* with a former god may have unpredictable powers. The worst danger may be a forgotten god which has discovered a new source of energy and returned to activity; such beings are rarely very reasonable or rational. (Hecate see below is one example of a deity who has been restored by supernatural means.) Members of some pantheons tend to be worse news than others – the gods of the Aztecs were hideously bloodthirsty, the Norse pantheon was grim and warlike, while the Greek gods were mostly merely stern – but even the gentlest mythologies had their very dark sides. (Remember, Hecate was worshipped by the Greeks.)

A god encountered at full power will have abilities far beyond the human norm, including a range of spell-like magical abilities (gods are prone to transforming humans into other shapes) and considerable strength. However, they may also have arbitrary limitations, especially in a world where they lack worshippers. They tend to be bound by peculiar rules, and to focus heavily on specific subjects (such as war, love, blacksmithing, or magic). Also, some gods at least manifest physical bodies in order to operate on Earth, and these bodies, while powerful, sometimes prove by no means invulnerable. A god whose earthly form is killed or suffers crippling injuries must retreat to the Spirit Realm. Some then have to remain there indefinitely, with the injuries visible on their spirit form if not actually reducing their power much; others have to find some new, ritually powerful source of energy or form in order to regain access to the Earth. This is the source of stories of crippled gods and of mortals defeating gods in combat.

## HECATE

A name tentatively reported by Hellboy to be associated with several recent serious incidents. This same name throws up far too many red flags on historical file searches. More information on current activities of associated entities is highly desirable.

Hecate is a pagan goddess (see *Gods*, above), worshipped in ancient Greece. She is associated primarily with magic, and also with the moon, but legends say that she eventually entered the underworld. She was also associated with crossroads, and went surrounded by a pack of dogs when she came to Earth. In short, she was always a dark and shadowy figure with power over mysteries. Her worshippers claim that she is at least as old as humanity, but this may (or may not) be an exaggeration.

When her worship was at its height, she chose to manifest a physical body on Earth. However, she was apparently cursed by another power – some texts say Thoth, the Egyptian god of magic – so that she was not only trapped in a single form, that of a woman with clawed fingers and the body of a giant serpent instead of legs, but she became unable to bear the light of day. Eventually, her cult dwindled away, although it may have persisted among a few witches and black magicians, and she fell into a comatose sleep.

In 1492, a group of Greek fisherman found her in an island cave, and sold her to a visiting Romanian nobleman, the father of Vladimir Giurescu (p. 00). He took her home and performed a ritual which restored her consciousness, either alchemically or by virtue of his worship. She became the patroness of the vampiric Giurescu clan, although her power was still only a shadow of what it had once been, and she was largely limited to the vicinity of her temple at Castle Giurescu, at least when on Earth.

((BEGIN QUOTE))

# ¡Gorgon-Eyed Hecate, Goddess of Crossroads, Queen of Dogs ...!



((END QUOTE))

When Hellboy came to Castle Giurescu in pursuit of Vladimir and his allies, Hecate confronted him, trying to persuade him to work with her to fulfill his destiny in the destruction of the Earth. He refused, shaking off her attempts to dominate him psychically, and they fought. Hellboy ran Hecate through with a spear and slammed her through the wall of the castle and into the sunlight outside, which annihilated her physical body.

However, part of her spirit survived within Vladimir Giurescu. Meanwhile, the ghost of Rasputin (p. 00), seeking to create a new superhuman servant, had accepted a gift from the Baba Yaga (p. 00); an iron maiden, a medieval torture device which had once belonged to the infamous Countess Elizabeth Bathory, now imbued with mystical power. He convinced his ally, Ilsa Haupstein, to enter it voluntarily in a necromantic version of the *Embody* ritual (p. 00). However, Hecate took advantage of this opportunity, and Haupstein's life-energy, and the iron maiden, provided a new earthly form for Hecate: a figure with the body of the iron maiden, arms with clawed hands, and a serpentine tail.

### ***The Iron Maiden***

**ST:** 60/250 **Move/Dodge:** 8/6 **Size:** 3  
**DX:** 12 **PD/DR:** 4/12 **Wt.:** c. 1,000 lbs.  
**IQ:** 17 **Damage:** 3d cut  
**HT:** 20/150 **Reach:** C,1-2

**Special Abilities:** Hecate is a goddess of magic, with powers that may seem almost limitless. She can plant illusions in mortal minds which completely deceive all of their senses, or place them in hypnotic trances by a mere effort of will. (The latter can be resisted, however, especially if she is trying to overcome their fundamental beliefs.) Roll Quick Contests of Will or IQ to determine whether such effects work, with modifiers at the GM's discretion. By a special effort (involving expenditure of a small fraction of her own spirit), she has at least once brought a dead human back to life as a vampire. All normal dogs and snakes obey her instinctively. While in that Realm, she can be invoked like most other spirits, and travel to whoever is calling her if she chooses. She also claims to have extensive powers of prophecy. She could doubtless achieve many other effects, if only by use of rituals; she can certainly be treated as having three levels in Ritual Adept, Ritual Aptitude, and Path of Spirit-24 (see chapter 4), giving her the power to control or destroy most lesser spirits.

**Limitations:** Unlike many gods, Hecate is forced to adopt just one specific form while physically materialized. Furthermore, she takes 4d damage per round when in direct sunlight, and suffers intolerable discomfort even in indirect daylight. As a spirit, she usually appears as a dark, towering, naked woman with glowing eyes, and often scaly skin or serpents instead of hair. She is probably less vulnerable to sunlight in this guise, although she still prefers darkness and shadows to daylight, but she lacks the gross physical power of the Iron Maiden (not that she needs it).

The above represents Hecate's current form when she is on Earth. Remember when depicting her that she is a *goddess*; she is accustomed to being worshipped, and while she may reward good service, she cares absolutely nothing for individual humans. She regards humanity in general as, at best, a source of followers. She is proud, arrogant, and tolerates no competition. On the other hand, she can afford to take the long view, and she would rather manipulate events subtly from the Spirit Realm than risk physical injury by manifesting on Earth. She sees Hellboy as her predestined partner in the birth of a new age for the world, and is prepared to take as long as it takes to overcome what she sees as his obstinate folly in refusing this role. But she *is* also intelligent, and she will see through most mortal attempts at flattery or deception.

### ***Witches of Thessaly***

**ST:** 13 **Move/Dodge:** 8/8 **Size:** 1  
**DX:** 13 **PD/DR:** 0/2 **Wt.:** c. 90 lbs.  
**IQ:** 10 **Damage:** 1d-1 cut  
**HT:** 13/10 **Reach:** C

**Special Abilities:** The Move rate listed is winged flight; bird-shaped creatures such as this can usually only move along the ground at 2 yards/turn at best. Their claws (and beaks, in full bird form) are supernaturally sharp; halve the effective DR of anything they hit. As attested witches, linked to Hecate herself, they may possess other magical powers.

In classical times, the region of Thessaly, in Greece, was notorious for its witch-cults. These sorceresses, worshippers of Hecate, were infamous for arrogantly *commanding* the powers of the moon and stars (rather than worshipping them), for mutilating corpses for ingredients for their spells, and for their insatiable appetites of all kinds. Their powers also included shapeshifting into animals, birds, and monsters, and the worst of them had great necromantic abilities.

This cult was generally assumed to have died out long ago, but it appears either that it survived in a secret, diminished form, or a few of its members were somehow resurrected when the Giurescu family restored some of the power of Hecate. Although nothing like as powerful as Greek and Roman descriptions of their predecessors, this small group retained their shape-changing abilities, usually appearing either as huge birds of prey or as half-bird, half-human *harpies* rather than as humans. The above attributes fit both these forms.

They serve Hecate as assassins, guards, and messengers, and may also seek power for themselves. A few of them (usually three) are usually present when Hecate manifests on Earth, if only to help her focus her powers.

## HOMUNCULI

The product of paranormal activities with an archaic pseudo-scientific element. We've got one of these on the strength now, so please remain polite ĩ but go careful if you meet others. They're not all as friendly.

ĪHomunculusĒ is a term which may be applied loosely to any sort of created being, especially a magically synthesized humanoid, but in particular it refers to one of the major products and great goals of alchemy (see p. 00). The only homunculus currently known to the BPRD to be active is one of their own agents, known as ĪRogerĒ (see p. 00), but given that this was one of the goals of medieval alchemy, others may exist.

(Roger's ĩolder brotherĒ ĩ see *Almost Colossus* ĩ was one other homunculus, an earlier creation of the same alchemist. He was physically similar to Roger, but uglier, possibly slightly less physically powerful, and prone to megalomania. He also had extensive knowledge of alchemy. He is currently believed destroyed, although how much this means in relation to such a creature is unclear.)

Roger can be used as a template for other homunculi, but actually, many were in fact *miniature* human figures; that type would of course have markedly lower ST, hit points, and DR, as well as Inconvenient Size, Short Arms, and possibly other disadvantages. On the other hand, some accounts hint that some homunculi might have minor supernatural powers, or at least might assist with their creators' work (perhaps providing additional Fatigue points for supernatural activities).

The ĩassistantsĒ created by Roger's ĩbrotherĒ were somewhat smaller and not very bright, though not as small as the ĩbottle creaturesĒ of old tales (say ST 10/14, DX 11, IQ 7, HT 13/9, with DR 3); they also had rather limited initiative and free will, making them usefully single-minded servants for their creator but not very interesting company.

The gigantic metal-boned homunculus also created by Roger's ĩbrotherĒ was almost certainly completely unique ĩ after all, it took a being with special insights into alchemy centuries to construct ĩ although it's possible that other alchemists could have come up with lesser monstrosities. That particular creature had ST and hit points in the dozens or hundreds, along with very rapid Regeneration; sheer size gave it a high movement rate and long reach. (It was also a rampant megalomaniac, with disadvantages including Bad Temper, Bully, and Overconfidence.)

## LAKE MONSTERS

Probably more of a cryptozoological than a paranormal category, this, and hence only marginally our concern. But sometimes, we have to deal with these things, and there may be paranormal factors in any reported case. They tend to be big, powerful, and usually of strictly animal levels of intelligence, but don't assume too much. And don't go swimming in their territory.

Many lakes around the world have legends of monsters dwelling in their depths — usually long-necked creatures, mostly shy but probably dangerous when roused. The most famous example comes from Loch Ness, in Scotland; in 1992, Hellboy and Abe Sapien encountered the Ogopogo in Canada's Lake Okanagan, which inflicted quite a lot of damage on Abe.

There are many theories about the nature of such creatures, and indeed, their nature may vary from case to case. The same set of legends which speak of the Daoine Sidh (p. 00) also mention "Water Horses"; see the Nuckelavee (p. 00) for a particularly unpleasant example. More scientifically-minded cryptozoologists may prefer to theorize about survivors from the age of the dinosaurs, perhaps plesiosaurs — though for families of such creatures to find sufficient food in a single lake, while remaining largely hidden, may require a supernatural explanation in itself. Still, they provide a good pattern for almost any lake monster, whatever its precise nature.

### *Plesiosaur*

**ST:** 10-30 **Move/Dodge:** 7/7 **Size:** 2-30  
**DX:** 14 **PD/DR:** 1/1 **Wt.:** 150 lbs.-2 tons  
**IQ:** 3 **Damage:** 1d-2 cut to 2d-1 imp  
**HT:** 14/10-25 **Reach:** C,1-8

These statistics are "realistic," based on known fossils; plesiosaurs varied significantly in size. A real *monster* might well be even bigger, with ST 40-50, Size 45, 35-40 Hit Points, and Reach up to 12, biting for 2d to 2d+2 impaling. The Move rate is in water; a plesiosaur, which is an air breather, can also haul itself up onto land and move around on its flippers like a seal, at about 3-4 yards/turn. (On the other hand, a monster with a plausible ability to remain hidden in an inland lake should probably be a water breather, with no interest in surfacing.) Plesiosaurs had long, supple necks — good for plucking victims out of small boats.

## SELKIES

Historical records suggest that these things should be mostly harmless. Unfortunately, you can't always trust the records.

**ST:** 12 **Move/Dodge:** 6/6 **Size:** 1  
**DX:** 12 **PD/DR:** (see below) **Wt.:** human normal.  
**IQ:** 10 **Damage:** (see below)  
**HT:** 14 **Reach:** C

**Note:** In human guise, selkies have normal human movement abilities and no special defenses. They may learn any skills, including use of weapons, although they are mainly noted for high levels of Area Knowledge of their home coastlines, and talents for subjects such as boating, fishing, and swimming (set relevant skills at 13+). As seals, they can move at full speed in water (but half move on land), they can dive at least 200-300 feet down and stay submerged for 10-20 minutes, and they have tough skin (PD 1, DR 2) and sharp teeth (1d-1 cutting bite).

Selkies are shapeshifters with the ability to transform into seals — or, perhaps more accurately, seals which can transform into human shape. Although the ability is inherited, they need a magic sealskin to accomplish the change from human form; if this is lost, they are trapped on land. They were traditionally native to the coasts of Scotland, although they may have spread anywhere that large seal species are found.

Selkies form small family-based communities which usually get on fairly tolerantly with neighboring human villages, if only by avoiding them. In the past, some intermarried (or at least mated) with humanity, producing

children who might or might not have been selkies, although tales suggest that humans usually wrecked the relationships by trying to prevent selkie brides from returning to the water.

However, the spread of human civilization, increasing numbers of motorized vessels, and in some cases pollution from industry or intensive fish farming, have all put pressure on selkies Ā who sometimes respond by turning violent. Although not as bestial as, say, werewolves, selkies tend to direct, simple responses to perceived threats, and sometimes go a little crazy when they're angry. And a smart, angry, violent creature with the ability to work on land and in water can be a very dangerous problem.

## THE OGDRO JAHAD AND ITS MINIONS

We don't know if these creatures actually exist or not, but the cults which have grown up around them have access to some of the most dangerous paranormal capabilities on record. All references should be reported to HQ **immediately**.

The Dragon, Ogdru Jahad, is a composite entity, one of the major powers of the universe, and probably its most violent; its components have been referred to as the Greater Furies of Destructive Nature. Fortunately, it has been inert for countless ages, trapped in seven vast prism-shaped conjoined cocoons in interdimensional space. Any beings who study it conclude that its first act on being woken and released would be to reduce the Earth to a cinder, before setting out to conquer or destroy all the known dimensions. It is also said that only one power can control it, which is also the power which created and then trapped it. The nature of this power is obscure, but it may be related to Hellboy's Hand of Doom.

The names of the seven components are Amon-Jahad, Adad-Jahad, Namrat-Jahad, Irra-Jahad, Nunn-Jahad, Belili-Jahad, and Nergal-Jahad. Although some human sorcerers occasionally invoke these names, they do not respond personally, being too completely dormant. However, there is a *lesser* manifestation of their power, sometimes known as The Serpent. This very occasionally exerts some subtle but powerful influence on Earth, such as empowering Rasputin (p. 00) so that he could attempt to bring about the release of the complete entity.

The Ogdru Jahad might be awakened by extremely powerful magic. Rasputin apparently came close, using his skill to focus the raw power of Elizabeth Sherman's psychic talent through Sadu-Hem (see below). But it is claimed by those who know best that they can only actually be released through the correct magical use of Hellboy's Hand of Doom (p. 00). The Ogdru Jahad has few active servants, but a few factions seek to awaken it, either out of malicious nihilism or because they believe that a new (and better, or at least different) Earth will be born from the destruction of the old. There are also some references to 369 Children of the Ogdru Jahad who are sleeping and imprisoned on Earth; supposedly, they could be awakened by the annihilation of humanity, and they in turn could awaken their Āparent.

((BEGIN QUOTE))

'Of giant strength and giant tread are they. Knowing no care they grind the land like corn.'

((END QUOTE))

### *Sadu-Hem*

**ST:** \*/100 **Move/Dodge:** 0/0 **Size:** 20

**DX:** 14 **PD/DR:** 1/10 **Wt.:** c. 20 tons.

**IQ:** 8\* **Damage:** (see below)

**HT:** 16/\* **Reach:** C,1-6

\*When first reawakened, Sadu-Hem had ST 30 in its tentacles, and 200 hit points; after extensive feeding, these rose to ST 45 and 300 hit points. The physical strength of its central ĀtrunkĀ must have been greater, but it

had no way to apply this actively. Its actual intelligence level is hard to assess; its thought processes were most likely totally inhuman, but it seemed content to serve Rasputin, or at least to follow his suggestions.

**Special Abilities:** Sadu-Hem was a bizarre monstrosity, totally non-terrestrial in its nature. It had a massive, upright cylindrical body, with organs of unknown function around the base and a crown of muscular tentacles at the top. It could attack with up to four tentacles simultaneously, using one or two against each human-sized opponent; it would usually grab with them and then squeeze for damage appropriate to its strength (2d-1 to 2d+1) if it wanted to kill them. If it did grab a foe, each tentacle could also drain 1d+1 fatigue per turn, and cause intense pain; apply the fatigue loss as a penalty to attacks on the victim's next turn, exactly like shock from wounds (p. 00). If a character's fatigue points were reduced to zero, he would lose consciousness and the damage would start to come from hit points instead. If a victim survived, lost fatigue (but not hit points) would begin to return at 1 point/turn after ten turns. Sadu-Hem could refrain from draining ST if Rasputin needed someone alive and they were approaching zero ST. Possibly with the aid of Rasputin's magical skills, it could also transform humans into Frog Monsters. What senses it may have possessed are also unknown; it certainly developed a psychic link to Rasputin, as well as being a conduit to the Ogdru Jahad.

Sadu-Hem may have been one of the 369 'Children of the Ogdru Jahad'; it was certainly associated with that power, allegedly having been left to provide the Ogdru Jahad with a foothold in the material world. It was extremely ancient, possibly older than humanity, and stood for an unknown but very long period in a lost temple to itself, on a mountain deep in the Arctic. It appeared petrified – in fact, it could be taken for a statue – but it was in fact merely dormant, and when it awoke, it sound transformed back to an organic form.

In 1945, obeying psychic messages from the Ogdru Jahad, Rasputin came to its temple, and then remained there in self-induced suspended animation. In 1993, a party of explorers – Trevor Bruttonholm (p. 00), the three sons of the Cavendish family, and Arctic explorer Sven Olafson – also arrived, and Rasputin awoke. He in turn awakened Sadu-Hem, and together they transformed all of the party except Bruttonholm into Frog Monsters. Rasputin then magically dominated the rest of the expedition to use as porters to shift Sadu-Hem to their ship, and to sail it to America. Sadu-Hem devoured the crew, along with victims in ports along the way, and drew further life energy from the lake under Cavendish Manor, where Rasputin hid it. However, when Rasputin was defeated by a BPRD team and the ghost of Elihu Cavendish, founder of the dynasty, Elizabeth Sherman (p. 00) unleashed her full pyrotechnic power against Sadu-Hem, which also caused Cavendish Manor to collapse on top of it. The BPRD believes that all this was fully enough to kill it; certainly, there is no evidence to the contrary.

## ***Frog Monsters***

**ST:** 20-30 **Move/Dodge:** 6-8/6-8 **Size:** 1

**DX:** 12-14 **PD/DR:** 2/5-10 **Wt.:** 200-400 lbs.

**IQ:** 7 **Damage:** 2d-1 to 3d cr

**HT:** 14-18/15-25 **Reach:** C,1

(Note: Where ranges are given for attributes, lower end values are appropriate for a newly transformed creature, while the higher end fits a Frog Monster whose human side has been completely submerged.)

**Special Powers:** These monsters are fully amphibious, equally fast on land and in water. Aside from striking with their clawed fists, they can attack with their long, prehensile tongues; any victim struck by this suffers fatigue loss and pain exactly as for Sadu-Hem's tentacles (see above). Victims were left with distinctive circular scars all over their skin around where they were struck. Hellboy's Hand of Doom is immune to this effect, but most other forms of wearable or natural protection would probably be ineffective. The tongue can grapple and hold a victim like a tentacle as it drains energy; treat it as having ST equal to half the monster's normal level for this purpose. Fully transformed Frog Monsters may also have Regeneration (1 hit point/minute).

Sadu-Hem and Rasputin transformed human beings into these creatures, to serve them as slaves. The transformation was not instantaneous, but took place when the servant needed raw power (such as on entering combat). Initially, the Frog Monsters may even have been able to transform back into human form, although eventually their monstrous natures would take over completely. Nonetheless, they might or might not retain some

fragments of their human nature and motivations; they were stronger if they lost all vestiges of humanity. They were completely subservient to Rasputin, unless remnants of their humanity distracted them.

At least four Frog Monsters were created. Hellboy destroyed two; the others, who had some human impulses left, may still be in hiding somewhere.

## SKELETONS AND ZOMBIES

A **relatively** minor paranormal threat in themselves, susceptible to heavy firepower if elegance isn't achievable. However, their presence is usually symptomatic of more subtle dangers.

Animated skeletons and corpses (usually human) are a fairly common supernatural phenomenon, created by curses, wild magic, hauntings, necromantic rituals, or even insane science. (The term "zombie" derives from Voudoun traditions, but is used here to indicate any sort of animated corpse.) They are frightening opponents, and not only because the sight of them is unnerving for normal humans. Usually mindless and always lacking normal human sensitivity, they are immune to pain, shock, and fear effects; they fight relentlessly until they drop. They may also be able to see in the dark, as their senses are, after all, supernatural.

On the other hand, they rarely have Mental skills, and being held together only by raw supernatural force, they almost always have the *Unliving* and *Unhealing* disadvantages (p. 00). (Then again, if destroying them doesn't resolve their curse, or if the magic animating them is especially powerful, they may have very fast Regeneration, as per p. 00.) The specific style of magic which animates them may also give them special weaknesses, usually Dreads or Vulnerabilities; for example, Voudoun legends say that zombies are destroyed by salt.

In general, skeletons are quick on their feet, but relatively weak and fragile, while zombies are slow but strong. It is entirely possible that zombies left undisturbed for a few decades or centuries have their flesh wither or rot away, and hence eventually become skeletons. Both types are usually mute, although zombies can sometimes speak in slow, slurred voices.

Encounters with animated human remains are usually worth a Fright Check (p. 00) for anyone not very well accustomed to such things. Zombies rot and smell of decay, while the unnerving appearance of animated skeletons is often enhanced by strange sparks of light in their eye sockets.

### *Animated Skeleton*

**ST:** 9    **Move/Dodge:** 6/6    **Size:** 1  
**DX:** 12    **PD/DR:** 0/0    **Wt.:** c. 70 lbs.  
**IQ:** 7    **Damage:** 1d-2 cr, or by weapon.  
**HT:** 10    **Reach:** C,1

**Special Notes:** Typical skeletons have DR 2 or more vs. bullets, beam weapons, and impaling attacks; they can be smashed up well enough, but puncture wounds don't worry them much. Nor do extremes of temperature; in fact, they may be able to completely ignore anything short of the point where they burst into flame. Bone generally sinks in water.

**Skills:** Skeletons animated to fight usually carry melee weapons, and have the skills to fight with them, usually at DX level.

### *Zombie*

**ST:** 14    **Move/Dodge:** 5/3    **Size:** 1  
**DX:** 9    **PD/DR:** 0/0    **Wt.:** human normal  
**IQ:** 7    **Damage:** 1d cr, or by weapon.  
**HT:** 15    **Reach:** C

**Special Notes:** Really terrifying zombies have lots of additional Hit Points, and may be immune to the damage multiplier for impaling attacks; they have to be hacked or blown apart to stop them. Even if they aren't animated by bizarre infectious diseases or vile pollution, the wounds they cause may well become infected; they *are* rotting corpses, after all.

**Skills:** Some zombies carry weapons; others simply club with their hands. To represent their dangerous power, they may be given weapon skills or Brawling at around DX+2.

### **Further Notes**

The above details are for mindless automatons created by necromantic magic or powerful ancient curses, usually to guard some place or thing. Their IQ ratings merely indicate the chance of their noticing events around them, such as stealthy intruders; they may also have to make IQ rolls to understand complex commands from their creators. Vicious zombies in the B-movie idiom are bound to have a taste for living human flesh (or brains), but otherwise, these creatures can get by without food or drink.

**Free-Willed Undead:** An alternative type is a skeleton or, perhaps less often, a corpse, which retains some kind of intellect and free will. This is usually animated by the power of a ghost or other spirit, or less often by some unusually subtle necromantic magic. Change the IQ levels above to human normal levels, and assume that the being can probably talk and quite likely has a range of knowledge and skills. Such creatures range widely, from haunted skeletons who merely issue a few cryptic words and then crumble to dust (something which seems downright common in Hellboy's experience), through to vengeful revenants whose body parts continue fighting even if they are chopped apart.

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### **The Restless Dead**

Sometimes, the restless dead are so solid and three-dimensional that it may be impossible to tell that they aren't alive by merely casual inspection. Whether these are ghosts whose determination to resolve some unfinished business grants them powerful Materialization abilities (p. 00), or free-willed revenants whose souls just won't leave their bodies and who have the power to keep themselves from obvious decay, can be hard to say. Frankly, the difference is often largely academic.

One possible, and exceptionally powerful, example is Lobster Johnson (see *Conqueror Worm*). The figure who Hellboy and Roger met in the year 2000 could easily pass for living (and carried a handgun which fired very solid and lethal bullets); indeed, questions of age aside, there was never any firm evidence that he was anything other than alive. But his behavior, and some comments he let slip, made it fairly clear that the deceased Lobster Johnson was in fact wrapping up some old business from 61 years before.

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## **SVARTALVES**

According to agents' reports, individually, they're quite weak and vulnerable. But they're also fast, vicious, and fearless, and they work in gangs. Most significantly, they appear to be closely associated with other paranormal entities of extremely high threat levels.

**ST:** 9    **Move/Dodge:** 6/7    **Size:** 1  
**DX:** 12    **PD/DR:** 0/0    **Wt.:** c. 100 lbs.  
**IQ:** 9    **Damage:** (see below)  
**HT:** 13/8    **Reach:** C,1

**Abilities:** Svartalves have the equivalent of Combat Reflexes, Stealth-14, and probably other skills on an individual basis. They usually wield slim, rapier-like swords, with skill Shortsword-12. Although these only do limited damage (1d-1 cut, 1d-2 imp), something in the nature of their blades or of the svartalves themselves

makes this damage effectively armor piercing; halve the DR of anything they hit. They also have claw-like fingers (1d-2 cr).

These dark elves out of Norse myth are lanky and bony, with glistening gray-black skin, greasy black hair, and crystal blue eyes. Their movements are reminiscent of spiders or small, predatory animals. If they are killed while on Earth, or even lose consciousness due to injury, their bodies evaporate in a cloud of soot and black vapor.

They are menaces out of Norse legend. Following the fall of the Norse gods (p. 00), some of them survived on Earth as ghouls or scavengers; they may also have had some ability to move between the ruined Nine Worlds. Since then, a few of them have occasionally had dealings with humanity, usually murderous. They have no love for other species, cruel natures, and a great interest in supernatural power, making them useful foot soldiers for some dark forces.

## VAMPIRES

They're real, the relevant countermeasures are well understood and they've cost us **far** too many good agents over the years. Remember, they're probably at least as smart as you, more experienced, and they sometimes have unique paranormal abilities. Call for backup if possible, **use** all the advantages you know about, and if you can, don't be too proud to requisition a flamethrower. But wooden stakes through the heart do generally work fine.

Vampires are, of course, powerful undead beings which drink blood (preferably human) to survive. Vampire legends are widespread and quite varied, and it's likely that vampires do actually vary a lot in their power and capabilities. Some experts suggest that the vampire was originally a manifestation of the power of the plague, and a few fit this image, being cadaverous and sickly, resembling a human plague-rat, but most modern vampires are more suave and subtle, and some can be seductive as well as cunning.

Although very dangerous, and frequently capable of inflicting vampirism on others, vampires are fairly rare. They have several major limitations and vulnerabilities which are widely known among even amateur hunters, and they do not always cooperate well, seeing each other as competition for food supplies. (Some can control their children the vampires they themselves created but even those servants have to be fed.) Indeed, they have a reputation for back-stabbing selfishness, which makes it hard for them to find *allies* of any kind but even without their fabled powers of mind control, they can offer minions the possibility of vampiric immortality, so they often have groups of dedicated servants.

### *Typical Vampire*

**ST:** 20    **Move/Dodge:** 6/6    **Size:** 1  
**DX:** 13    **PD/DR:** 0/0    **Wt.:** Human normal range.  
**IQ:** 12    **Damage:** By weapon type or Bite (see below)  
**HT:** 15    **Reach:** C,1

**Special Advantages:** Vampires typically have a conditional invulnerability to damage; they can be *injured*, but cannot be killed by anything except some specific attacks. They suffer no penalties (shock, reduced move, etc.) for damage from anything except their specific weakness, until they are reduced to 0 hit points or below, at which point their Move rate is halved. They also have no need to breathe, or to eat or drink anything except blood.

They also have sharp fangs and can bite helpless, stunned, or grappled opponents to drain their blood. They do normal cutting bite damage (1d for ST 20); each round thereafter, they can drain 1 hit point of blood damage and for every 3 hit points drained, they regain 1 hit point of damage. (Injury due to their specific weaknesses may need more blood or long periods of time to heal or may literally *never* heal.)



Vampires also tend to have keen senses (Alertness +2 to +6) and can see in the dark, and many can cast spells (see p. 00), usually to control human minds or summon hordes of vermin, or Shapeshift into forms such as a wolf, bat, or cloud of mist.

**Special Disadvantages:** On the other hand, vampires *can* be killed permanently by fire (or other extreme heat), ordinary sunlight, and wooden stakes through the heart. They may also be vulnerable to beheading, although that traditionally merely follows the stake through the heart (which may merely immobilize rather than killing the vampire), and they may suffer potentially fatal damage or immobilizing weakness from odd conditions such as immersion in running water or contact with holy symbols (which may or may not have to be wielded by a true believer – GM’s option) or holy water. Silver may be effective, although that is more usually associated with werewolves. Their special vulnerabilities usually do them 1-3 dice/turn of damage; exact levels are at the GM’s option.

They also have several features which reduce their ability to pass as human; they look pale and corpse-like and lack normal body heat (except possibly for a day or so after feeding well), and they may not cast shadows or reflections in mirrors. They have a Dread of holy symbols and sacred ground, and often of one or two peculiar things (garlic, wormwood, wild roses, crossroads . . .). Also, of course, their need for blood (usually at least one pint a day) tends to be a problem; without it, they may die completely, suffer permanent or temporary loss of attributes as if due to aging, slip into a death-like torpor, or go on a berserk killing spree.

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### *The Vrcolac*

If it exists at all, the Vrcolac might be considered the god of vampires. It is described in Romanian legends as eating the sun and moon, and thus causing eclipses. When Hellboy was hunting the vampire Countess Ilona Kkoso, she confronted him with the image of the Vrcolac, but that was probably just a magical illusion.

Probably.

((END BOX))

((BEGIN QUOTE))

So great that he eats the moon. That is the size of his power.

((END QUOTE))

The most dangerous vampires can allegedly return to life even after being reduced to dust and ash, if special conditions are met, such as blood being spilt on their remains. The truth of this is left to GMs; effectively unkillable opponents can be interesting opponents, but they can also be very frustrating for players. In general, it is recommended that PCs who go through a comprehensive vampire slaying procedure (stake, beheading, holy wafers in the mouth, *and* exposure to sunlight) should be sure of the result.

**Skills:** Vampires typically retain all the skills of their former human existence, and may learn more. These can definitely include formidable ability with weapons, often in the 15-18 range. They may also have exceptional abilities in Stealth. However, *some* become stuck in their ways, and may be downright unfamiliar with modern technology.

This represents a fairly typical European Gothic vampire; folklore suggests that there are many variations. GMs may choose to emphasize the traditional ravening beast or hungry ghost type, the gothic aristocrat, or the modern stylish amoral predator – or switch between them, to keep PCs on their toes.

Some sources suggest that all victims slain by a vampire will themselves rise from the grave as undead, but most suggest that the vampire has to follow some special procedure, at least draining the victim of blood, and possibly more. Likewise, vampire children may be free-willed, abject slaves of their parent’s will, or capable of breaking free with an effort.

### *Vladimir Giurescu*

Vladimir Giurescu is or was a slightly unusual but formidable vampire with an especially complicated history. He was born in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, into a Romanian noble family of dark reputation. In 1492, his father purchased the earthly remains of the goddess Hecate (see p. 00) from a group of Greek fishermen. Returning with them to his castle, he improvised a ritual treatment which restored her to some degree of activity.

Then, a few years later, Vladimir was thrown from his horse into a frozen river, and drowned. His father brought him back to the castle, and begged Hecate to restore him to life. After three days, in which Vladimir's father sacrificed first the house's dogs, then his servants, Hecate imbued Vladimir with part of her spirit, and he rose as a vampire. His first victim was his own father, who he transformed into a lesser vampire. In time, Vladimir came to control the family, consigning his insane parent to a cellar complex with his books. He ruled the area around the castle as its lord, but he does not seem to have attempted to extend his power for some centuries (although there may be untold tales from that period).

During the Napoleonic wars, Vladimir did emerge, and served as an officer with various armies, apparently to build up his influence in the mortal world; Napoleon referred to him as 'Giurescu the Devil'. In 1882, he reappeared in London, allegedly seeking to build a secret empire, but was driven away. (The resemblance of this episode to the plot of Bram Stoker's novel *Dracula* is close enough to suggest that the author may have known the true story.) Then, in 1944, the Nazi leader Heinrich Himmler proposed a project 'Vampir Sturm' – the creation of an army of vampires to serve the increasingly desperate Third Reich. A delegation was sent to Giurescu's castle to propose an alliance, led by Ilsa Haupstein (p. 00), who also assisted with Project Ragna Rok (pp. 00-00). Haupstein actually fell in love with Giurescu, but when he traveled to Germany to meet Hitler, the Nazi leader evidently recognized that this was one individual with whom it would never be safe to share power; he had Giurescu and his harem of vampire brides arrested and killed.

However, Giurescu's skeleton survived, and at the end of the twentieth century, Ilsa Haupstein, who had spent the intervening period in frozen sleep in a secret Ragna Rok installation, recovered it and returned it to Castle Giurescu, where Vladimir was once again restored to life. When last heard of, Giurescu had been destroyed in combat with Hellboy, and his castle blown up, while Hecate had recovered the fragment of her spirit which she lent him, to empower her new 'Iron Maiden' aspect (p. 00). But Giurescu's skeleton was later stolen from Bucharest airport, suggesting that he may yet reappear again.

Giurescu was hard to destroy, even by vampire standards, even if reduced to charred bones by fire. When he was killed, his minions would place his body in a shrine to Hecate, close to her material form in Castle Giurescu; when the moon shone on his body, she would restore him to full power. However, he seemed to need such restoration even after severe but relatively mundane injuries, which represents a weakness as compared to some vampires, making him dependent on loyal servants. However, he had a talent for recruiting such people.

In *GURPS* terms, he had Attractive Appearance, +2 Charisma, and skills including Broadsword-14, Leadership-15, Riding-14, and Tactics-14. He also had the ability to transform into a giant bird of prey, which he used both in combat and to escape from powerful enemies. Unlike some vampires, he did not frighten animals by his presence.

Giurescu's father and vampiric brides displayed lesser powers; their destruction at various times was likely permanent. If necessary, use the details for a typical vampire above for them. His father was grotesquely ugly and skeletal, while his brides were chosen for their above-average Appearance.

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### *Non-European Vampires*

Vampire legends exist far beyond Europe, and local types seem prone to variations. Fire and holy symbols of some kind seem to be more or less universal countermeasures, but other weaknesses and peculiarities can be much more varied. Globetrotting vampire hunters should never neglect their prior research. Such creatures seem mostly to stick to their home areas, but some may follow immigrant communities around the world.

The Chinese vampire, the *Xixiegui*, is similar to the European type in many ways, but with some differences, too. It casts shadows and reflections and ignores running water, but has Dreads of consecrated incense and peach wood. It can rarely pass for human, being pale, very corpse-like, and possibly mute. Some stories suggest that it

must be killed but sucking out the single last breath which empowers it is a tricky, dangerous, and unpleasant task but it may also be possible to immobilize it by touching its forehead with a piece of paper with an appropriate prayer written on it. GMs who don't mind a somewhat comic effect should note that new Chinese vampires at least may still be subject to *rigor mortis*, and with stiff limbs, they have to move around by hopping (-1 to Move, -2 Dodge), as seen in certain movies.

The Indian *Baital* is actually an incorporeal spirit, but when it finds a suitable corpse, it may possess and transform that. It can then shapeshift between a bat-like shape with claws and gliding wings, and a human form which drinks blood. It is relatively restrained as vampires go; it likes riddle contests, and will respect and even aid anyone who outwits it. It suffers no damage from sunlight, although it prefers the night, roosting in caves or hollow trees by day.

Central American and African cultures also suffer from vampiric creatures. The African *Adze* is destructive of animals and even crops, and can shift between insect and human shapes and its inatural grotesque humanoid form. New World vampires include shapeshifters and ghostly, vengeful figures.

((END BOX))

## WERE-BEASTS

The lab teams would love to find an explanation, but believe it or not, we value your survival higher than we value biological samples. The transformations involved may be psychological as well as physical, so don't let sympathy for a human manifesting this capability slow you down. And try to be the wood-cutters, not grandma.

Stories of humans with the innate ability to become animals are found virtually everywhere in the world. Probably the most common, or at least the most popular, species involved is the werewolf, but there are many others. The nature of such creatures, whether malicious or merely strange, and the origin of their power, varies greatly, but werewolves and many others are usually assumed to be tough, dangerous, and sinister. Details of were-beast abilities likewise vary considerably; this book can merely offer some typical or interesting cases. If detailed as a character, use the Shapeshift advantage (p. 00).

For example, one might be an ordinary human being (with 10 in all attributes), who can transform into a large, savage wolf with magical abilities:

**ST:** 11    **Move/Dodge:** 9/6    **Size:** 1  
**DX:** 14    **PD/DR:** 0/30\*    **Wt.:** c.200 lbs.  
**IQ:** 5    **Damage:** 1d-2 cut (bite), 1d-2 cr (paw).  
**HT:** 12    **Reach:** C

\*Not vs. silver or fire: see below.

**Advantages:** +6 Alertness; Acute Hearing +4; Acute Taste and Smell +4; Blunt Claws; Combat Reflexes; +30 Damage Resistance with the -40% limitation (not vs. silver or fire); Enhanced Move 1/2, Four Legs (5), Sharp Teeth (5).

**Disadvantages:** Bad Temper; Bestial; Bloodlust; Horizontal; Mute; No Fine Manipulators.

Applying the Shapeshift rules (p. 00), this represents an 108 point advantage for the character. In wolf form, he has an animalistic brain but keen senses, and is frighteningly hard to kill. Of course, some humans may not regard this as an advantage at all. Furthermore, the transformation may happen uncontrollably during nights of the full moon

### *Wolfmen*

One variant on the werewolf type is the wolfman, who transforms into a bipedal form but with a wolf's head on a furry body, claws on its hands, and usually a savage nature. For a possible example of the type, use the werewolf pattern above, but make the alternate form's IQ 7, delete the Acute Hearing, Enhanced Move, Four

Legs, and Horizontal, and change No Fine Manipulators to Bad Grip. This gives a character with similar abilities to the above but with Move 6 and Taste/Smell rolls of 17, for an advantage cost of 134 points.

### ***The Grenier Family***

William Grenier was the young son of a noble medieval family who ruled the village of saint August, in the Balkans, who were cursed by a saintly Christian monk for devil worship (probably just a remnant of some old pagan practice) in their family chapel. The curse caused them to transform into wolves once every seven years. When they were discovered by local villagers, the entire family was massacred except for William, who was smuggled away by a family servant. The village was subsequently renamed Griart, to avoid the attentions of the Inquisition as the story spread.

When he grew to adulthood, William found that the curse was also making him unaging, while a psychic link to his dead family caused them to become ghosts (see p. 00). Over the ensuing centuries, he gained enough mystical power to hold them and others who he killed on Earth, while the power of his wolf form grew greater as his humanity slipped away. He also gained the ability to make the change voluntarily.

((BEGIN QUOTE))

Each time more of the creature remains, until all that is man is this thin skin.

((END QUOTE))

In 1994, Father Edward Kelly, a Catholic priest, came to Griart to investigate the mysteries he sensed in the area, and declared the intention of reopening the old chapel. William Grenier found and killed him, and then forced his own family to materialize in their wolf forms and murder the entire population of the village. Hellboy, who was a friend of Kelly's, came to Griart, and fought and killed William, thereby releasing the ghosts he had trapped and ending the curse.

Grenier himself took a giant wolfman form by the time Hellboy met him, but because the origins of his nature were not normal lycanthropy, he lacked the traditional werewolf immunity to non-silver weapons. If he somehow appears in a game, use the wolfman details above, but with ST 35, IQ 10, HT 14/40, Move 8, Dodge 6, PD 2, DR 10 (not modified vs. silver), attacks for 2d-1 (a crushing damage punch or cutting bite), a reach of up to 2, and Size 2. The ghosts of his family had the Spirit Form advantage, of course, and could materialize in wolfman form, with DR 5 and no special vulnerability to silver. They were not actually themselves malicious, but William could cause them to act with savage bloodlust.

[[[Hellboy, revised (2) first draft, by Phil Masters <phil@philm.demon.co.uk> and Jonathan Woodward <woodward@io.com>]]]

# 7. RUNNING THE GAME

Up until now, we've talked about characters and things in Hellboy's world, and how to depict them in terms of *GURPS*. This chapter deals with actually running the game. It's intended primarily for GMs the people who do the setting up but a lot of it may also be interesting for players. *However* it ends with a complete sample

adventure, to get new GMs started. If you're going to play that, please don't read it. That spoils the fun and, as new roleplayers should soon realize, it's pointless.

# The Essential Set Up

First, we've got to talk about the basic assumptions that will underpin your game. An RPG is a flexible thing, with a lot of choices for those involved, and you've got to make some of them before you do anything else.

## SINGLE SESSION OR CAMPAIGN?

The *Hellboy Sourcebook and Roleplaying Game* can be used to play single-session scenarios, or extended campaigns. The former option has its advantages; you don't have to get all the same players together regularly for repeated sessions, the GM can set up extreme situations which don't permit sequels, and the players can create characters who wouldn't logically work together more than once. Indeed, it isn't a great problem if some or many of the PCs get killed or driven insane in the course of events, providing that it doesn't happen too early in the game. This can be a great advantage in a horror setting like this; if important characters didn't feel they were at serious risk (because the GM is keeping them alive for repeat games) where's the horror?

However, most roleplayers decide fairly soon that they want to play the same characters repeatedly. After all, it takes a certain amount of effort to create an interesting character, and the relationships between PCs often develop interestingly in play. People naturally want to see what happens next. Thus, most games form part of continuing *campaigns*. Fortunately, the BPRD provides an excellent framework for keeping PCs together, even if they disagree occasionally. It's not the only option – groups of PCs can work for other organizations, or just be friends or allies against a dangerous supernatural world or even blood relations – but it's a solid straightforward basis.

So, assuming that this is going to be a continuing campaign, the next questions are *When and Where?*, *Whose Party?*, and *How Big?*

## TIME AND PLACE

The assumed date for *Hellboy* games is today. This makes sense because any questions about details of the setting are usually pretty easy to resolve. Even if you don't know a fact from common experience, you can look in an atlas, newspaper, or a mail order catalog, or on the Internet, and probably find the answer in moments. Furthermore, there's a sense of immediacy to this sort of game; when most of what the PCs see and hear is stuff that's totally familiar to the players, the occasional strange or terrifying thing will leap out at them all the harder. The players aren't forever being distracted from the core of the plot by historical details or debates.

However, there are alternatives. Major events in *Hellboy* stories go back to the 1930s, the BPRD was formed in the late '40s, and Hellboy has been an active agent since the '50s. GMs who have a yen for period flavor and the atmosphere it adds are free to set games any time in that range, or even earlier if they don't mind putting in a lot more work. 1930s stories could evoke a pulp action style, with globe-trotting adventurers flying or sailing around, meeting gangsters in Chicago, Nazi decadence in Berlin, or warlords in China. (There are modern movies which depict this style, for those not familiar with the original pulps.) World War II would probably involve the PCs being in uniform, or at least make them members of Allied intelligence agencies, fighting supernatural elements of the Nazi menace (especially the machinations of the Special Group) and perhaps other dark forces which seek to take advantage of the global carnage. Adventures in the early days of the BPRD, on the other hand, might have a distinct B-movie air; badly-animated giant monsters aren't mandatory, but reports of supernatural activity could well come mixed up with paranoia about flying saucers or the Red Menace. Or GMs could amuse themselves setting horror stories against the modern-history feel of the Swinging '60s, with hippies prone to unwise tinkering with mysticism and altered states of consciousness, or the Yuppie '80s, with glossy fashion

victims who'd do anything to stay ahead. There are other *GURPS* books which could help enormously in setting up period games; see Appendix B.

While modern day games can and often will involve global travel, with agents catching intercontinental flights at whim in pursuit of evil and clues, earlier periods may see heroes slightly more geographically tied down. That's not to say that travel is impossible, but it's more expensive and it probably takes longer, so it needs a better excuse. Only the most capable specialists will routinely be sent around the world to do their work, and they'll often be treated with suspicion when they arrive in some remote spot. However, even in the present day, PCs will require a base, and should become familiar with it. The BPRD has its HQ (p. 00), and while that's often just the place where agents get issued with equipment and orders, it's still a home of sorts. There's little sign of permanent BPRD local offices in the comics – the organization isn't really big enough – but perhaps some could be set up, on the West Coast, say, or in Europe, to reduce response times? That would be one excuse for creating a PC group with some autonomy. And other groups can have other homes, from big cities through major universities to religious centers.

The choice of period and location can also influence decisions about the next issue:

## ORGANIZATION AND SUPPORT

For supernatural investigators and suchlike adventurers, there's a good and a bad side to working for an organization such as a BPRD (or the FBI, or the Army, or the Vatican) – and both are reflected in the game system.

The good side is that you get support. If you're needed in another country, and the organization agrees that you are, it'll pay for your flight there. It'll also pay you a salary, help with taxes, and perhaps even send in backup if you get into trouble. This is mostly covered by the *Patron* advantage (p. 00), and perhaps also by *Ally* (p. 00). In game terms, working for a formal organization is a wonderful, simple way to keep a PC group together – even if they don't like each other. And it provides a quick (if somewhat repetitive) way to set up adventures; they get assigned to deal with some problem, and the story is how they deal with it.

The bad side, of course, is that *you're* working for *them*. They expect you to do what you're told, and they may want boring bureaucratic stuff like reports afterwards. They may have all sorts of other rules. This is covered by a *Duty* (p. 00). An organization also ties down the PCs and the GM in other ways.

Thus, some PC groups may prefer to play freelancers. They may be complete amateurs in the paranormal investigations business, or they might run something like a small private detective agency with a rep for handling strange cases. This can be fun, but the lack of structure can be a problem, especially if it turns out that different PCs are prone to severe personality clashes. A random group of people can be thrown together by chance to deal with a one-off scenario, but why should they hang together for a campaign?

One answer to this can be to ask the players to work together from the very beginning of the character creation process, so as to come up with a group with links and mutual loyalties. Perhaps some of them are related by birth or marriage, or they went to the same college and formed strong bonds there. Even if they don't *like* each other, they can have old obligations. Perhaps one is rich and employs another, who's married to a third, who was born in the same lost Inca city as a fourth . . . In fact, once the game starts, some players will enjoy finding reasons for the group to hang together, while the GM can play up the weird nature of the life of a supernatural investigator. Even if they aren't actually *friends*, they may be the only people who can understand (or believe) what the rest of the group has seen and endured.

It's also possible to compromise between employment and independence. PCs might, for example, be consultants working for the BPRD or some other organization, or semi-professionals such as priests with a proven talent for exorcisms, who get asked by members of their church to deal with special problems. Such people can't be ordered around in the same way as full-time agents, but they have some combination of moral obligation and financial incentive to work together. Of course, they don't get a Patron, but nor do they get a Duty. (Although they may well have a pressing Sense of Duty, or advantages or disadvantages relating to another group.) Mixed groups can provide interesting roleplaying opportunities, with the professionals interacting with the talented amateurs.

## PC POWER LEVELS

The power level of PCs and hence of opponents they can reasonably be expected to fight is defined by the base character points level which the GM sets for PCs; see p. 00. GMs should think carefully about this, and discuss it with their players. Low points characters are often easier to play and identify with, being closer to the human norm, but they're also more vulnerable and less flamboyant than the characters in most *Hellboy/BPRD* comics, which may be where the players want to take their inspiration.

### ***75-150 points: Agents vs. Evil***

**GURPS** characters of 50 points or less aren't really credible recurring hero material in a *Hellboy* game. They may be competent scientists, folklorists, or detectives, or reasonable soldiers, but faced with supernatural monsters, they are mostly victims. At best, they are narrowly focused. 75 points is a working minimum for a fair beginning human agent of some kind, or perhaps an amateur but not incompetent supernatural investigator, interested folklorist, or whatever. (75 point games will probably be more like traditional investigative ghost stories than *Hellboy* comics.) 100 points is the normal value for playable **GURPS** adventurers, and offers plenty of options without excessive power levels. 150 points produces notably tough or well-rounded characters, and may allow characters to afford some limited psychic or mystical powers without being too weak otherwise. Incidentally, if players try too hard to make combatant characters at low points levels, the results may be distorted (and still not tough enough to go toe-to-toe with demons and werewolves); if this is what they really want, the GM should discuss raising the points level.

At these levels, GMs should enforce clear limits on disadvantages. The recommended limit is a total of -40 points, or any number of points in *one* single disadvantage (plus up to five quirks). Characters with more than this will tend to be dominated by their problems, and will warp campaign plots.

Setting starting points at this level also tends to imply that all PCs will be human, and possibly that the GM wants to avoid weird mystical or psychic powers among the PCs. This can be a good idea if the GM wants to run subtle and thoughtful plots; psychic characters can often see right through mysteries (perhaps literally), and combat-oriented powers tend to make fight scenes short, messy, and perhaps too easy. If players really want to play something weirder, an acceptable compromise may be to charge them an Unusual Background cost (p. 00), and to reserve veto power over their exact character details; they can have the unique powers they want, but they have to pay for their uniqueness. They should also be encouraged to take a few mundane skills and abilities, so that they don't look too useless at times when their power isn't useful.

### ***150-250 points: Serious Powers***

At this level, PCs can be formidable indeed. If they are normal humans, they might be tough ex-special forces soldiers, top of the line agents, or multi-talented genius scientists with significant physical skills as well. If they have psychic or mystical powers (and even if they have to pay an Unusual Background), they can use them often and to significant effect. And if they are non-human or otherwise bizarre, they are the sort who the BPRD would try very hard to recruit, if only to keep a close eye on them.

Disadvantage limits can be relaxed at this level, especially for non-human characters, but GMs should still be ready to exert veto powers; -50 or even -75 points is probably okay, but much more than that will dominate the character's life in an annoying way. Remember, major psychological instability will get powerful characters closely watched by organizations such as the BPRD, and quite likely in deep trouble if they remain freelance, while powerful enemies dogging a PC's every step will often cause trouble for the rest of the group, making the character unpopular and hard to play.

### ***250+ points: Shaking the Foundations***

The highest value characters in *Hellboy's* world are strange and unique. Even if the GM imposes an Unusual Background cost for their powers (which isn't necessarily recommended), this number of points enables PCs to be

powerful in stand-up fights. This may in fact discourage them from trying subtle investigative tactics, although they can also be very good at those, too.

Human characters at this level will usually be powerful psychics, versatile magicians, or cinematic special forces troops. In fact, GMs should be careful of mundane humans at the 300+ point level; they will tend to be highly capable in every sphere of life, with long lists of skills which they can employ to solve every minor problem, leaving little scope for other characters to do anything but fight. GMs should also watch out for massively wealthy characters, and those with long lists of highly reliable allies; they'll tend to solve problems by throwing money or NPCs at them, which soon gets boring. That's not to say that ultra-capable people, multimillionaires, and great leaders don't exist, but it's hard to see why they should go in for the life of a supernatural investigator.

Of course, if the PCs are created at this level, the question may arise of how and where they fit into the past history of the setting. In particular, if they work for the BPRD, why weren't they assigned to some of the most serious past cases? And how do they relate to characters like Hellboy? It's probably best to ensure that they have recently appeared (or at least, only recently developed their powers to the full), and it may also be worth basing the game in a BPRD regional office.

### *Characters from the Comics*

One other possibility which may appeal to some people is to play characters from the published stories, especially Hellboy himself and his immediate colleagues. (There are character sheets for them ready made in chapter 2.) This can be fun, especially for one-off scenarios which can be slipped into odd moments in the world's history. (Although it might seem odd if the results of those scenarios would logically mess up the comics' back story.) However, it can also have drawbacks.

To begin with, many people playing this game are likely to be fans of the comics. That's fine, but it will mean that everyone has their own ideas about how the characters will be likely to behave. At minimum, this will mean that players try to fill in dialog for each other, and lose focus on their own concerns; at the worst, it can lead to serious arguments over whether some other player is handling a character right.

And for that matter, there may be disputes over who gets to play which character. The comics are built around Hellboy, which is only natural; he's one of the toughest beings on Earth, the world's greatest paranormal investigator, and probably one of the most important beings on this plane of existence from a metaphysical point of view. In a game with a group of participants, though, that means that he's likely to dominate. Roger the Homunculus isn't too bad as a second PC, being about as tough as Hellboy and with special powers of his own, while Abe Sapien is capable but more nearly human, as his own unique powers are rather specialized. Liz Sherman is very powerful, but has limited control and is potentially fragile, while Johann Kraus is another specialist, albeit with some useful knowledge. But if the group has more players, or if the GM doesn't want to unleash all this power against the plot well, someone may have to play a brilliant consultant who stands at the back and looks worried a lot, or a human metal detector. Some players will enjoy this, and some plots have the scope to make such characters useful to have around, but it's not always easy, especially over the long haul.

## Creating and Running Scenarios

Having laid down the groundwork and ensured that everyone has an appropriate PC, the GM has the job of setting up adventures or cases — *scenarios* — for those PCs to deal with. This is where the real work begins, although new GMs shouldn't feel too intimidated; unlike the author of a novel or comic, a GM has a bunch of other people providing input and adding interest.

It's worth emphasizing out here that RPGs are a group activity; GMs aren't the only people working on the plots, and in exchange for this help, they have a moral duty not to railroad the PCs. The trick is striking a balance between too little structure and too much. It should also be said that scenario plots, like battle plans in warfare, never survive contact with reality; the players are sure to do something unexpected, coming up with



some brilliant masterstroke or stupidly missing some self-evident clue, or the dice may throw up a weird result. Part of the skill of a good GM is learning to adapt, adjusting smoothly to the unexpected; *really* good GMs make it look easy.

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### ***Low Resolution, High Contrast***

Many players and GMs – including some who’ve previously played in other modern-day horror RPGs – may benefit from looking at the *Hellboy* comics art style before playing this game. It’s notable for its *simplicity*, with large blocks of black ink and areas of single colors. Simplicity should also be the keynote in games.

In brief; to get the style to fit the source material, don’t overdo the details. For GMs, working out the exact floor plan of the villain’s base is probably superfluous, just as, for players, planning out an attack in fine detail before moving in is probably a waste of time. These things (attack plans *or* floor plans) never last ten seconds in *Hellboy*’s knock-down fights, anyway. Likewise, tracking the exact quantities of ammunition and supplies carried by each character is probably too much like hard work – so long as they show a willingness to carry enough. What matters is when they get stuck with three rounds left, they’re a long way from home, and the monsters are closing in.

Of course, this simplicity can go too far. Even *Hellboy* art includes needed details, especially when they’re important to the plot, and in any case, some players and GMs like thinking stuff through. But don’t knock yourselves out over the fine print.

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Of course, sometimes the plot will threaten to wander off into some dull or unplanned area, leaving the GM high and dry. In those cases, GMs shouldn’t be too proud to take a few seconds out if necessary, and should try to find a way to get things back on track *politely*. Throwing mindless enemies at PCs until they turn around is crude and unmannerly, but helpful NPCs, additional clues, or orders from ‘a senior agent back at HQ,’ can act to guide things more or less subtly. Some players may spot what the GM is doing, but provided that it’s not too blunt and it doesn’t offend the PCs’ ethics or logically look too suspicious, most players will forgive it so long as the rest of the game is good.

Scenarios can be as simple or as complex as the group wants, and RPGs can be very varied indeed, but given the specific title of *this* game, there are a few guidelines worth considering.

## **THE HELLBOY STORY PATTERN**

At the simplest, a *Hellboy* story follows a straightforward pattern. Something bad is happening somewhere; Hellboy or the BPRD find out something about it; Hellboy bursts in, finds out a few more details, fights a monster, and stops the bad thing. When stories follow this pattern, the interest lies in the nature of the monster and the evil it’s committing, and the way that Hellboy and his allies respond to events. Variations can include fights with several monsters, other characters lending a hand, the monster departing undefeated because it has accomplished whatever it wanted to do, and revelations about the personal history of Hellboy or other individuals along the way.

This pattern works perfectly well for game scenarios too, especially in ‘high power’ games featuring characters who are able to survive fights with powerful supernatural monsters. However, it’s important not to become stuck in too rigid a pattern. The players will notice and get bored, or make too many jokes about what’s sure to happen next. In any case, games built around normal human PCs cannot include too many major fight scenes without unacceptable casualty rates. Hence, at the very least, it may be necessary to shift the emphasis in the standard plot structure away from combat once in a while.

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## *The Briefing*

BPRD agents are often sent on missions with a briefing from one of the Bureau's directors – usually Dr. Tom Manning (p. 00). GMs who want to preserve a lot of the specific "feel" of the comics can reproduce that, describing the darkened room, the projector, and the selection of often poor-quality but essential images which flash up on the screen. It's entirely reasonable to prepare a complete briefing speech for the director; agents can be told that they'll have a chance to ask questions afterwards, and it's important to hear all the essential facts first. Highly organized or artistically talented GMs can even prepare a set of "slides" to flash up.

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This usually means focusing on investigation – a process which can enable characters who are far less physically powerful than Hellboy to defeat seemingly overwhelming opponents. Remember, although Hellboy is far from stupid, he's very strong and incredibly robust, and he has a very direct nature. Hence, when he locates a problem, his instinct is to move in and fight it head on. This usually works, and many opponents are obliging enough to explain their own activities in the ensuing chaos. But there are alternatives.

The point is that most supernatural creatures have some kind of vulnerability or requirement, or an overwhelming motivation, and by exploiting this, normal humans can deal with them. This in turn means that agents should be prepared to *investigate* – to engage in extended searches for clues, library research, and conversations with witnesses, all of which are perhaps a little dull to depict in comics but which can be fascinating in roleplaying game sessions. Once these are complete, the agents must also be prepared to make plans, acquiring whatever silver bullets, holy symbols, or flamethrowers they may need, laying ambushes and evacuating civilians. They should also ideally have backup plans and fallback positions; GMs shouldn't deliberately warp plots to foil *all* the players' good ideas, but a few twists and turns are part of the fun.

In game terms, an investigative scenario downplays combat skills in favor of Research, Natural Sciences, Occultism, and Influence Skills. Even in the big confrontation scene, PCs may lean as much on Stealth and Camouflage as on Guns. *Really* smart PCs may even be able to catch monsters off guard and finish them without a fight; although this can seem rather anticlimactic, it's always possible to throw in some minor action to keep restless players amused.

## *Variations*

For more complex stories, probably stretching across multiple sessions of play, the plot can be expanded and transformed from a single investigation and confrontation to a series of such encounters. For example, the PCs might find themselves investigating a large conspiracy, and have to deal with its agents, minor schemes, and attempts to acquire resources, while picking up more clues at different locations (perhaps scattered all around the world, for some added "tourist effect"), before they put everything together and fight one last big battle. (See almost any James Bond movie for examples of this approach.) Or perhaps some major monster appears and goes about its inscrutable plans while sending minions to oppose the PCs who are trying, first to work out what it is trying to do, and then eventually to stop it.

Alternatively, the PCs could be on the defensive against one or more opponents who are trying to gain access or power over some thing or place which they are seeking to defend. For example, they could be assigned to transport a magical artifact from one place to another, or they could be bodyguards for an important figure who somehow threatens the powers of evil, or they could simply find themselves looking after the innocent inhabitants of a community which is sited over a place of mystical power. (This last doesn't fit the BPRD's duties very well, although agents could be sent to provide temporary assistance to local law enforcement, but it works fine for "freelance" characters. TV watchers may find it familiar.) In such cases, the adventure will usually consist of a series of defensive fights and preventative actions, until either the PCs piece together enough information to take the fight to the enemy and win, or some crucial event removes the value of the thing being defended.

## *Mythological Research*

Another feature of many *Hellboy* stories is the use of real world myths, legends, and folklore. Most of these are northern European or Balkan legends, but Hellboy has fought cannibal heads and vampire cats in Japan, and

doubtless many other such beings. Furthermore, the background to the stories contains hints of the mythology of modern movements such as Theosophy, which claims that humanity has experienced recurrent cycles of destruction and rebirth. (Theosophy in turn draws ideas from Indian mythology.)

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### ***Hellboy and Humor***

If a *Hellboy RPG* session is going to catch the feel of a *Hellboy* comic, then along with the horror and mythology, it really needs to include some humor. But it *has* to be the *right* sort of humor.

There are a fair number of jokes in the comics, but it's a dark, straight faced sort of comedy, and it tends to be over in one line; if it went on longer, it would dilute the more serious mood too much. Part of it consists of snappy or sarcastic one-liners from Hellboy himself (and there's no reason why other characters shouldn't provide similar in games where Hellboy doesn't appear); these are the main form of a more general style, which pits pulp-style down-to-earth grit against the weird melodrama of supernatural horror. Similar effects occur when, for example, Kate Corrigan explains the wild claims made by the Monks of Agartha to the BPRD team in *Hollow Earth*. (*Yeah, I know. But at least they're not hurting anybody.*) There is also the black humor of traditional fantasy, manifested most obviously in beings such as the Daoine Sidh; the storyline of *The Corpse* is in fact mostly a string of macabre jokes, from the greedy talking corpse to the behavior of the huge but dim-witted monster Grom. And, of course, there are occasional incongruities such as *Pancakes*.

Bringing this sort of humor into games has to be handled with some care. GMs shouldn't build entire long plots around jokes, and they should actively discourage players from *continuously* trying to make feeble funnies. (Puns should be banned outright.) When things get really serious, so should the players, by and large, but the occasional sarcastic comment is fine, especially if it's designed to annoy some arrogant, humorless opponent, and so is a little black humor in the behavior of less bright monsters. Play it the way that seems to work, but don't try too hard; comedy is never mandatory.

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Chapter 6 contains examples of a few beings from around the world suitable for use in games; there are many more. GMs should feel free to read books of legends and folklore, and borrow not only creatures but also plots and other ideas. Even if the players recognize the things which the PCs encounter, they can get a sense that their characters and the opposition are participating in the latest version of ancient conflicts, and that they are thereby putting themselves on a par with legendary heroes. There are countless books full of such useful ideas, but GMs in a hurry should note that there are also a number of *GURPS* books dealing with the myths and legends of different cultures, including game statistics (see Appendix B).

### ***Behind the Scenes***

One narrative device which is common in comics and novels, but which doesn't work so well in RPGs, is the depiction of events of which the leading characters – the heroes or PCs – are unaware. This is usually a matter of showing the villains setting up their plans, or discussing their failures afterwards. It can also involve the heroes' allies discussing the situation, and either emphasizing how dangerous things are, or describing some problem of which the hero is currently ignorant.

This is hard or impossible to use in exactly the same form in RPGs. GMs *can* narrate scenes which are happening in the absence of the PCs, but apart from the fact that this gives the players information of which the PCs are ignorant, it reduces the game to a self-indulgent exercise in storytelling by the GM. However, there are some corresponding techniques for GMs to employ.

It can help that the sort of enemies who Hellboy fights tend to be grandiloquent and verbose, so at least they may explain their plots and motives when finally confronted. GMs can also encourage stealthy PCs to eavesdrop on conversations between hostile NPCs when possible, thus rewarding planning while adding to the atmosphere. PCs can also discover documents or other records which describe the villains' plans and which also convey something of their characters; highly organized GMs prepare *props* in advance, writing in character and even

using unusual fonts in their word processors for style. Likewise, friendly NPCs (perhaps deceased) can leave letters or diaries.

GMs can also use neutral or minor NPCs as commentators. This is especially appropriate in atmospheric horror tales, which traditionally involve lots of howled prophecies, half-mad wanderers, and crazy old coots prone to issuing horrible warnings about what happened to the last lot of people who went up to the old dark house.

But it's also important not to overdo this. Aside from anything else, the PCs are supposed to be the central (heroic) figures in these stories, and it's *their* conversations and reactions which should be most important. GMs can provide hints and atmosphere, but shouldn't try to tell the players what to think.

## THE ART OF THE GM

Once you've got the framework of a scenario worked out, you need to prepare some more details. You'll need game statistics for any major NPCs or monsters that the PCs are likely to encounter, but there's no need to get carried away. A useful informer they may encounter in a back street dive maybe needs an IQ value (to measure how well he notices stuff that the PCs try to pull, or how well he resists their attempts to intimidate him), and an Area Knowledge skill to measure how well he can answer questions they throw at him. If, despite everything, the PCs find an excuse to start a fight, well, odds are that this petty informer has physical attributes around the human norm, which can be jotted down in a second. Conversely, even minor combat opponents may not need *full* details; if their sole purpose is to charge the PCs screaming with an axe, what does it matter that they are experts on baseball history?

It may also be worth having rough floor plans sketched out for any location where combat is possible, or the precise arrangement of walls and obstructions may be important (such as, say, a building where the GM expects the PCs to chase a dangerous beast). Some GMs go into great detail here, finding architectural magazines in libraries and copying plans of all sorts of buildings, and plotting out expected events on city street maps; others use rough sketches and improvisation. It's very much a matter of taste and style; more complete plans save having to improvise too much, at the cost of imposing a straightjacket and maybe slowing the game. That said, GMs should avoid *giving out* too much detail; if they describe every light switch and battered desk, the players are likely to assume that there's something important here, and waste time while getting bored double-checking *everything*. The *Hellboy* comics may be taken as inspiration here; the art style is deceptively simple, forcing readers to pay attention to those important details which *are* depicted.

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### *Standardized Opponents*

It's worth having standard notes for ordinary thugs, enemy troops, or opposing agents. The Nazi Thug on p. 00 is one example. It's perfectly reasonable to assume that most such individuals fit a fairly standard pattern, and if any of them assume unique importance, they can always be filled out with a few special skills, disadvantages, quirks, and variant attributes.

*Mindless Thugs* might be ST 12, DX 11, IQ 9, and HT 11, with skills such as Brawling-12, Guns (Pistol)-10, Intimidation-11, and Streetwise-10. More effective professional crooks might add Lockpicking or Stealth at some level (and not necessarily bother with raised ST or HT); hardened brawlers might have better HT and Brawling, and High Pain Threshold or Toughness.

*Trained Soldiers* could have ST 11, DX 11, IQ 10, HT 11, with Guns (Rifle)-12 and Camouflage-11, plus very likely other weapons, vehicle, or practical skills according to their unit type. Officers would usually add Military Rank, Tactics, Leadership, and maybe Strategy at some level. These are rank and file soldiers, perhaps conscripted; veterans will have Combat Reflexes and Tactics skill, and *elite* troops can be seriously impressive, raising every attribute by a point or two and having several useful skills at 13 or 14.

*Secret Agents* focus more on subtlety and specialized training, with, say, ST 10, DX 12, IQ 12, HT 10, and Guns (Pistol), an Unarmed Combat skill, Stealth, and two or three skills appropriate to their assignment (such as

Vehicle Skills, Interrogation, Disguise, or Area Knowledge) at 12. Some have Legal Enforcement Powers, and all sorts of specialist talents are possible.

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Actually running a roleplaying game is simple in principle, and can be done successfully with no experience, but like most things, it benefits from practice. It may be easiest for beginners, and even experienced GMs trying a *Hellboy* game for the first time, to start simple, with one-off missions against straightforward foes, gradually increasing the complexity as everyone gets used to the system and the characters settle down and become established. Perhaps the main thing to remember at this point is to avoid too much combat, especially for low point value investigative characters, but even for more powerful PCs. On the other hand, those fights which do occur should be *interesting*. Certainly, the *Hellboy* comics feature a lot of combats, but each of them has a clear purpose, and is an opportunity for the depiction of character, not a mechanical sequence of blows until someone falls over and doesn't get up. Horror games such as this are slightly different from the sort of 'dungeon bashing' RPGs which some readers may have played previously; heroes fight monsters because the monsters use violence against innocent victims, not because the monsters are guarding chests full of treasure.

It's also important to try and give every PC a turn in the spotlight. This can be difficult; some players are just more extroverted and assertive than others, and some PCs have more obviously useful talents. However, GMs should try not to play favorites, and should assume that players have given their characters specific abilities because those are the abilities they want to use. On the other hand, GMs shouldn't force players to do more than they want. The quiet player in the corner *may* be enjoying watching the extrovert hamming things up, and may even be smart and cautious enough to let more rash and unthinking folk take the brunt of opponents' attacks.

### ***Fudging and Fixing***

It is usually possible for a GM to cheat, and sometimes, it *may* be a good idea. There are always excuses for rolling dice in secret – if only to keep the players nervous – and every now and again, if things are going wrong, the GM *can* lie about those rolls – or rather, interpret them his own way, bending the rules. This may well be preferable to having the whole game fall to pieces due to unforeseen events.

However, it's a bad habit, and even if they don't see the dice rolls, players *will* eventually realize that things are happening, not because they're likely or prearranged, but because they suit the GM's plans. Rather than warping probability, it's often better to subtly manipulate the world at a higher level.

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## CLASSIC BITS

*Hellboy's blowing things up again.*

– Abe Sapien (*Wake the Devil*).

While games which steal too many images from *Hellboy* comics will look obvious and crude to players who've read the same stuff, putting *one or two* of the following into any scenario can help get the 'feel' right.

**Darkness.** This is part of the standard *Hellboy* art style as much as anything else, and of course it's a stock horror effect. GMs should make sure that PCs have to venture into a lot of dark areas, and emphasize its effects. Require Vision rolls to see anything properly – even if it's big and well lit, the PCs' eyes will have problems adjusting – and use Hearing rolls to see if they pick up important noises. (Even if they do, it may not be enough; emphasize the uncertainty.) Characters with Acute Senses, Alertness, or Night Vision will have an advantage, but they can't spot *everything*. Ask for the occasional roll even if there's nothing around, just to keep them guessing, and maybe have them blunder into minor obstructions to remind them of the situation. Be careful not to overdo this; darkness should be scary, not comic.

**Falling From Great Heights.** This happens a lot to Hellboy himself, and almost as much to some of his colleagues. This may be partly down to Hellboy's persistent bad luck, and partly to the fact that so many of his adventures take place in ruined towers (see below). Immediate drama aside, it's an effective way to trap PCs in dark areas, or to split teams into smaller, more vulnerable groups. PCs should have to make Vision rolls when

entering rooms with rotten wooden floors, and DX rolls when moving along narrow or slippery ledges, or if fighting near sheer drops. Note that GMs may have to set the heights to a little less than what is depicted in the comics, or assume that PCs often land on soft rubbish or in water. The *GURPS* rules for falling damage are fairly realistic, and plummeting long distances onto hard stone is pretty dangerous for anyone not as tough as Hellboy himself.

*Ruined Towers and Crumbling Houses.* Favorite places for ghosts to haunt, monsters to infest, and villains to hide their laboratories. Mostly located in out of the way areas (especially with mountains or lakes); otherwise, someone would have fixed them up by now.

*Dead Bodies.* Again, these are something of an obvious feature for horror – but there’s a little more than that involved. In Hellboy’s world, they may speak chilling warnings, or show unpleasant signs of whatever killed them. Merely encountering a dead body is worth a Fright Check for inexperienced characters, and even hardened agents and pathologists may worry if encountering unexpected, horribly mutilated, or animated corpses.

*Ghosts.* It’s not just the active, malicious undead enemies; it’s the unquiet spirits, trapped on Earth. Ghosts have limited freedom of action or psychic energy, and often fade out after speaking a few words. The hostile ones are crazy, relentless, and obsessive.

*Fisticuffs.* Knock down, drag out fights as seen in the comics really depend on having characters as powerful as Hellboy himself around, along with comparable opponents. But if you *have* got characters on that level, then any combat is going to involve everyone involved getting knocked around. A lot. It’s tough on the furniture.

*Big Explosions.* When you’re fighting supernatural threats with modern technology, sometimes you have to resort to simple, reliable solutions. A good team should include at least one agent with Demolition skill. Furthermore, mad scientists never build decent safety systems into their experiments, and gunfights all too often break out near ammunition stores or fuel tanks. Characters who aren’t as tough as Hellboy should be careful.

*Firestorms.* It’s not just explosions; hellish demons, incendiary grenades, and powerful pyrotechnic talents can unleash flame over vast areas. Descriptions should emphasize that such fires don’t last long, but while they do, they drive back the darkness. However, they’re very hard to control.

*Wisecracks.* Hellboy deals with the sinister weirdness of his life by acting the part of the classic pulp hero to the full – including reacting with one-liners to the most powerful supernatural foes. In games, it’s mostly up to the players to provide these; the GM will likely be fully occupied providing megalomaniacal or angst-ridden rants for the villains. Good roleplayers will keep the jokes under some control; even Hellboy himself can be sickened or chilled by real evil.

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For example, the GM may have placed a glaring clue in some room which the PCs are certain to visit, which is the key to moving them on to the next part of the plot. However, the PCs somehow manage to avoid entering that room. A clumsy GM will *tell* the players that they are entering the room; a wiser GM will quietly move the clue to somewhere else on their path, altering its details as necessary. But then, perhaps they manage to avoid noticing it, by whatever combination of not looking and failed Sight rolls. So the GM, rather than insisting that they see it anyway, brings in a sharp-eyed friendly NPC, rolls in secret if necessary, and has that character spot the clue. (This will also, hopefully, remind the players that they should look for such things, while setting the NPC up as an interesting person to deal with.) However, while it may be necessary for the NPC to *find* the clue, it’s probably best if the PCs are still the ones to *interpret* it, if possible; that way, the players can still feel that *they* are the leading actors. And if they still manage to ignore it – well, perhaps it’s time for some direct orders from HQ. Or perhaps it’s time to start wondering if the GM and players have a lot of different assumptions about the game which need straightening out.

Fixing problems arising from fight scenes can be harder, as they tend to involve unmistakable signs of damage on one side or the other. The question of whether or how often PCs should die is discussed below, but for now, the main thing to say is that scenario plots and outcomes should depend as little as possible on the precise results of a single fight scene. Also, villains may be notable for their tendency to gloat at downed foes (which usually requires that they not actually be dead), and to assume that a hero, beaten once, is no further threat. Careful use of this habit can enable a GM to recover a scenario from an unexpected PC defeat.

Incidentally, it is extremely unwise to assume that *PCs* will respond to a fight in any particular way. To begin with, they may be *extremely* unwilling to surrender, however sensible it might seem to anyone else. Even the toughest fictional heroes will usually lay down their weapons and play for time if the villains have hostages or a massive advantage, but players *hate* to admit that they can't win. This is a particular problem if they enjoy competitive games and don't really identify with their PCs at all; 'death before dishonor' is a good excuse for aggressive but unrealistic roleplaying. The best ways around this for GMs is to exploit relevant psychological disadvantages (and to demand that players remember them), to require Will rolls to act in the face of a clear and overwhelming chance of death, and to make opponents ruthless enough to render PCs unconscious given half a chance. Smarter foes may also have access to magical powers or clever technology which can restrain PCs non-lethally, if they have need for this.

Players also tend to be painfully unwilling to let a defeated opponent get away. This runs against the conventions of many comics, wherein a fleeing opponent can *always* outrun pursuit if the plot demands it, but players don't like knowing that they haven't won completely. Even if their characters were briefly disabled or distracted, they will work out their maximum move rates and weapon ranges, and demand every chance to pursue. While it's tempting to make all villains twice as fast as any PC, this is rather flagrant. It may be better to give the villains a retinue of loyal but disposable thugs, zombies, or whatever, who should be capable of delaying the PCs at whatever cost to themselves (which can demand *lots* of thugs). Extensive use of traditional secret doors and escape panels is also effective, and fits the *Hellboy* style. Some GMs may find that the only way to be *sure* that a villain will survive is to keep him 'offstage' altogether, working through agents and minions.

### ***Splitting the Group***

One cliché of horror stories which most players may know better than to imitate voluntarily is having a large group of characters split up, thereby becoming much more vulnerable. Unfortunately, this has become a standing joke, especially among movie fans.

The *Hellboy* comics don't feature this often because they center on one major character and usually just a few allies, but they do offer a few techniques for handling it. Having the party feel safe, so that they go to separate rooms to sleep, and then kidnapping some of them, can work; as can simply having the floor give way beneath one of them so that he or she drops to a different level of the current ruin. Specialized powers can also serve to split groups, as only some of them may be able to venture into particular areas (for example, the area may be flooded, and only one of the PCs can breathe water), or an important location may look too dangerous for the less tough PCs. (Of course, the *real* danger may well then appear where it's least expected, among the weaker PCs ...)

Split groups are also a challenge to GM. The trick is to shift between them often enough to prevent any players getting bored, and to try and make sure that things are equally interesting for everybody. Unfortunately, if one group gets into a fight and the other doesn't, the combat will probably take longer to run and seem more exciting than any peaceful exploration, but it should be possible for things to average out in the end. In mystery plots, there may also be a problem with one group of players knowing what's happened to another group, reducing the tension of wondering if they're safe and giving some people information which their characters don't possess. Some GMs like to take each subgroup into a different room when the party is split, while others trust players to detach their own knowledge from that of the characters, and find that the 'inactive' players can enjoy acting as an audience. This is something which each game group has to settle for themselves, deciding what works for them by experiment if necessary.

## **DEATH AND THE PC**

*We've both buried a lot of agents over the years . . .*

Ī Dr. Tom Manning, to Abe Sapien (*Almost Colossus*).

A common issue in horror roleplaying games is whether or how often PCs should be at serious risk of death (or equally final fates such as total insanity). Actually, this is an issue in almost all RPGs, but it has a particular significance in horror.

After all, the whole point of horror is that *bad things happen to people*. Whether it's something as simple as being stabbed by a maniac, as massive as the annihilation of the world, or as subtle as a personal collapse into despair, something horrific has got to be at least a lurking possibility. And this threat usually applies to the protagonists – the PCs, in game terms – else it doesn't feel very immediate.

Games have a random element. While PCs may be tougher and smarter than most victims, a serious threat is going to have a statistically significant chance of actually killing a PC. (This is especially true in investigative games, where the PCs aren't as indestructible as Hellboy.) GMs can get around this by having a monster switch targets just when their current victim is on the brink of death, or even by fudging secret dice rolls, but sooner or later such cheating will become obvious – and then, the one thing that dies is the suspense.

So, should GMs just grit their teeth and kill PCs when the dice say so? Well, yes, sometimes. That's part of horror, and it proves that the game is being played hard. However, players do have to put some work into creating a good PC, and may be naturally irritated to see that work go to waste. Also, players develop a degree of identification with their characters, talking about their acts in the first person. This is part of what makes game fun, although it shouldn't go too far. Even the most well-balanced, clear-headed gamer is going to get a little unhappy if terminal things keep happening to him.

*(Note to all gamers: If you or your friends are really coming to confuse yourselves with your characters, it may be time to back off and calm down a little. Contrary to some silly scare stories, RPGs aren't actually dangerous – they don't drive people to suicide or murder – but it's not worth getting distressed or treating them as worth more than reality. It is just a game.)*

And finally, even horror stories are *stories*; death may happen more often than in other stories, but it still forms part of the plot, and hence it should have a meaning of sorts. That meaning may just be that the monster is evil and kills lots of people, but how often do you need that hammered home on a PC?

### ***Fear vs. Reality***

So the trick is to set things up so that terminal fates are always *possible*, but are actually rare – at least when it comes to the PCs. One way of handling this is to have the bad things happen to NPCs, at least to begin with, and this can work pretty well. If the PCs keep finding horribly mutilated corpses, they'll soon realize that there's a monster on the loose which may be a threat to them. They'll also get the chance to use observation and forensic skills to work out what sort of monster, setting them up to win (and survive) the eventual confrontation. This is a classic, effective horror technique, although it can be overdone in itself; we all know of TV series and comics which bring on new characters only to kill them off, and those get to be a bad joke after a while.

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## IT'S NOT THE END OF THE WORLD?

Hellboy stories aren't just horror; occasionally they're *high stakes* horror. Often, the monster or villain is just a local threat, but sometimes he or it really does have a good chance of destroying the world, or at least a good part of it. The danger of the release of the Ogdru Jahad is just the version of this which hits Hellboy himself all too frequently; game scenarios could involve others. Remember, along with Rasputin and Hecate, this setting includes numerous Demon Princes and space-dwelling monsters who would be happy to cause large-scale carnage on their own account. And even if they don't have enough raw power of their own, smart monsters could do something with natural plagues, humanity's own nuclear or biological weapons, or ancient magics.

Putting this sort of thing into a game plot is certainly a way to increase tension and drama. The snag is, if the PCs screw up, it's not just them who suffer. Wiping out the game world may demonstrate a point, but it also tends to end the campaign, and be a little *too* depressing for the players. On the other hand, saving it through sheer luck devalues the seriousness of the story.



The solution to this problem is probably to offer the PCs a series of solutions to the threat, but make sure that they increase in personal danger and trauma for the PCs. In the extreme case, they may get a chance to save the world, but at the likely cost of their own lives. That way, screwing up the first attempt can cost the PCs, without ending the campaign.

For example, look at the climax of the main plot of *Conqueror Worm*. (Anyone who hasn't read that story yet may wish to skip the following.) The worm has a very real chance of wiping out the world, but Hellboy has an effective countermeasure. However, that gets destroyed by a malicious opponent and some bad luck. Fortunately, Hellboy and Roger find another solution — one which puts Roger at huge risk, but which works. In fact, Roger then feels obliged to insist that Hellboy should kill him, and is only saved by the intervention of Lobster Johnson — who in turn goes to his final death as a result. The heroes saved the world, but it took both luck and a willingness to sacrifice themselves.

Similarly, in games, the GM can push the PCs to the limit to save the world, without *necessarily* killing them. Still, given bad luck and poor judgment, some of them may have to carry through on their self sacrifice. That's heroism for you.

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Sometimes, it's desirable to confront the PCs with the threat sooner rather than later. This is when the target-switching and unexpected, accidental revelation of monster weaknesses becomes unavoidable, but it's also the point when good players, who understand basic tactics, can be a great help. They should be prepared to keep a monster distracted, especially if one of their number is down and at serious risk. They should know how to exploit weaknesses and bluff; they shouldn't be too proud to retreat if they can't win; and they should ideally include at least some characters with skill in First Aid or Physician. Of course, some players may be too cocky or rash — but this may be one reason to let the odd PC die. It's tough, but it can be a teaching experience, so long as the GM makes it clear that he's playing fair and that better play would have led to a different result. (And if players refuse to learn, well, maybe they shouldn't be playing horror games.)

And if all else fails, and the PCs are all wiped out — well, hopefully they made some sort of reports, or at least left some clues. So there's usually the option of sending another group in to work out what happened to the first lot, and to prevent it happening to anyone else.

## Running a Campaign

A *Hellboy* campaign can simply consist of a string of scenarios, involving (mostly) the same PCs but otherwise unrelated. At the end of each adventure, the agents go back to BPRD HQ, file a report, and wait for the next problem to blow up. However, if the PCs are *interesting* characters, sooner or later, the players are going to ask what they do in their down time. And if the scenarios have complex, engaging plots, they're likely to leave open questions and loose ends. Giving all this the feeling of an integrated whole, with developing characters and recurring themes, is what makes for a memorable *campaign* — as opposed to memorable adventures.

(A good comparison might be one sort of TV series, whether set in a hospital, on a starship, or in a coffee bar. Each episode will usually be a complete story in its own right, with a beginning, middle, and end, and perhaps one-off villains or guest stars. But the chances are, the series which you'll most remember are the ones where the characters deepen and change over time, where secrets are hinted at for a while and then revealed, and some guests or villains prove so popular that they get brought back.)

Getting this to work is as much a job for the players as for the GM, but there are a number of ideas and techniques that encourage it. One is to develop some 'non-adventuring' NPCs as interesting people. If, say, the characters are BPRD agents, then they may get to know some of the scientists and administrators at HQ; working with these people, talking to them and picking up minor, simple subplots around them encourages a strong sense of continuity. Some players will pursue this sort of thing with vast enthusiasm, building huge family backgrounds and private lives for their characters full of melodrama and incident, which is fine, but does sometimes need keeping under control. The problem is that such 'personal' plots can take up a lot of time and energy, distracting from both major storylines and other players' interests. If necessary, the GM can encourage players to work on

this sort of thing between game sessions, writing up notes and maybe coming to games a few minutes early to roll some extra dice and settle some key details.

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## CHARACTER EMPLOYMENT

In a long-running campaign, especially one where some or all of the PCs *aren't* agents of the BPRD or some other such body, you should consider the question of how characters make their living. Normally, this means that they should have jobs.

A job has two key elements; the abilities required to perform it, and how well it pays. Characters need a certain minimum income to maintain their social Status (see p. 00), and so higher-Status characters generally need better-paid jobs. Such jobs in turn demand higher skills, or carry greater problems — whether of long hours and stress, or the risk of personal injury or death.

In general, someone with a useful skill at level 12 can hold down a basic, Status 0 job. Less well-paid positions merely demand average or better Attributes — unskilled labor requires adequate ST and HT, whereas a sponsored student or apprentice perhaps needs an IQ high enough to suggest promise. Senior managers need high levels of Administration skill, and some other skills reflecting knowledge of their business or experience in negotiation, and are paid enough to support high Status. Surgeons and pilots have high-stress jobs which require several skills at high levels, and are paid (more or less) accordingly. BPRD agents are paid less than their risky, complex jobs might suggest — about enough to support Status 0 (although they have uniquely *interesting* work and the job satisfaction of saving the world from time to time). BPRD administrators are paid rather more, but getting to that level takes time, hard experience, several skills at high level, and unusual talents.

The *GURPS Basic Set* and various *GURPS* sourcebooks have detailed rules for determining how a character's employment works out. In brief, each job has prerequisite skills or attributes, and once per game month, the player must make a roll (usually against one of those skills, possibly with modifiers). In the event of a critical failure, the character suffers a financial loss, perhaps takes some kind of injury through an accident or a dangerous task gone bad, or maybe gets fired. GMs can improvise something similar, or roleplay out the interesting parts of any PC's employment.

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Another technique is to make sure that villains are interesting and able to come back, or at least to provide the PCs with a target for their actions over several sessions. Off-stage manipulators and faceless organizations work well for this, as PCs can't kill them with one lucky shot (at least until the big final confrontation in the villains' HQ). In Hellboy's world, there's even the option to bring dead villains back as ghosts; this shouldn't be overused, but might be interesting occasionally.

Certainly, major villains provide a running theme for a campaign. Each scenario involves a plot by the villains, which the PCs must attempt to foil, or perhaps an attack by the PCs on a villain stronghold. Thus, each scenario can see a local victory (or defeat), but the central enemy organization still survives — at least until the campaign comes to some kind of climactic battle. Such a climax may end the campaign on a high note, or the PCs may move on to other challenges. (In the latter case, it's probably worth running a couple of lightweight, low-key scenarios in the sessions immediately after the big battle, to give the players time to recover their breath and decide what they'd *like* to do next.) The PCs can pick up clues in each scenario which helps move them onto the next, especially if they are moving towards a final confrontation, further strengthening the sense of campaign continuity. Sophisticated GMs can also add subplots, red herrings, and 'downtime' stories to vary the pace; again, study the structure of your favorite continuing TV or comic series for ideas.

## CHANGING THE CAST

It's entirely possible for the PC 'cast' to change in the course of a campaign. Death or crippling injury aside, characters can sometimes find new interests, or suffer extreme disagreements with each other or their bosses

which make it impossible for them to stick around. This provides a good excuse if players have to leave the game for personal reasons, or if they simply want to try a different character.

Of course, "change" doesn't have to mean "departure." Characters can change radically, probably as a result of what they learn (see *Character Improvement*, p. 00). A group can start out as naive recruits, and end the campaign as hardened agents with new ideas and objectives. They may also gain promotions, or in freelance games, learn how to take the fight more effectively to their enemies; this may mean that they change from investigators and tacticians to administrators and strategists. (Of course, there's a limit to how much long-term strategy the BPRD can manage, but given a continuing threat, it can try.) Behind-the-scenes games like this may seem less dramatic than gunfights in ruined castles, but they have their own interest.

The only problem may be if PCs "grow apart" in radical ways, so that what was once a tightly-knit team becomes a bunch of people with nothing in common. GMs can sometimes improvise reasons why they should stay together anyway, but it may be better if the players try to develop their PCs in ways that don't clash. Unfortunately, sometimes, the *only* logical way for a character to develop is away from others — at which point, in the worst case, the PC may have to be retired from the game, permanently or temporarily, and a new character introduced for that player.

(Whether the new PC should start from the same points value as the other PCs when they started out, or whether he should get a free bonus to keep things "fair," is a matter of taste. However, the former may feel more satisfying, and a shrewd player should be able to come up with a new character who can do things that the old hands can't, even with a point difference.)

In the end, a campaign *should* feature very different PCs to those who were in at the start — either because they're actually different people, or because they've learned more, improved their skills, and lost some illusions. Hellboy's world can be a tough place, but one of the recurring themes of the stories is that those who live too much in the past are going nowhere, while those who move on and choose their own path can make things better. Scenarios will usually be about stopping bad things from happening, but campaigns should be about building things up.

*And after that?*

*Wherever the wind blows.*

— Kate Corrigan and Hellboy (*Conqueror Worm*)

## Sample Adventure: City of Night

*The City rests for man so weird and awful,*

*That his intrusion there might seem unlawful,*

*And phantoms there may have their proper home . . .*

— *The City of Dreadful Night*, James Thomson.

This is an example scenario for a team of BPRD agents — either a squad of human specialists, or a smaller group of paranormal types (or perhaps Hellboy himself — before his recent resignation — and a couple of his usual companions). It could also be adapted, with a little ingenuity, for a team of "freelancers." It sends the group to a remote corner of the world to confront a twin threat — an ancient supernatural power and a more modern human evil.

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### *Freelancers*

Most of the notes regarding this scenario assume that the PCs are working for the BPRD. If the PCs aren't Bureau agents, the GM will have to work out the best way to get them involved in this incident, and determine what resources they'll be able to muster for the trip. One possibility is that they are somehow associated with Reginald Clay, and he asks them for help when all the proper authorities try to ignore this mystery. Alternatively,

if they are investigators for hire, they might be employed by Rudolph Frankelle's closest living relative, who emigrated to the U.S.A. in the 1950s and became rich, and who wants this family mystery cleared up.

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## **The Setup**

*Lights, please.*

*This is the best photograph we have of Doctor Wilhelm Sterne, who achieved some small reputation in 1930s Germany as a scholar of Arabic and North African history. Also as a dedicated member of the Nazi Party. He appears to have convinced the hierarchy to finance his researches by rewriting large portions of Near Eastern history, adding an anti-Semitic slant.*

*February 1941. General Erwin Rommel arrived in Libya to take charge of Axis operations in North Africa. I imagine that most of you know something about all that. March 3<sup>rd</sup>, Doctor Sterne also arrived in Libya, on a military transport. Orders from Berlin were for Rommel and his staff to provide him with, quote, "All necessary assistance in his scholarship." Rommel seems to have given Sterne a bodyguard of second-rate troops and forgotten him. Records suggest that Sterne made a thorough nuisance of himself in the mosque libraries in Libya and Tunis for a few weeks, then he disappears from view. There's one final letter from Rommel's staff, essentially disclaiming responsibility for losing him. It says that he'd wandered off into the desert with his bodyguard and a couple of armored cars, and disappeared. Rommel was doing well just then, so Berlin was doubtless disinclined to blame him.*

*U.S. Military Intelligence had a file on Sterne, but the last thing in it was correspondence they found in Berlin in 1946.*

*Five days ago. A U.S. citizen named Doctor Reginald Clay telephoned the embassy in Mali. Clay is working on a restoration project in the city of Timbuktu. Two days before his call, a Westerner - a very old man - had walked into town out of the desert and collapsed. Clay was one of the first people the man met, and when he died after a few hours, Clay helped the local police try and identify the body.*

*The man was wearing the remains of a military uniform, and carrying papers in German. Clay thought that this was odd, and contacted the American embassy while the local police called the Germans. His instinct was correct. The papers identify the man as Private Rudolph Frankelle of the German Army, missing since 1941.*

*You'll see from this picture, Frankelle looked his age. First reports suggest that the causes of death were dehydration and old age. The State Department found this odd enough to monitor the case, and discovered that Frankelle was last heard of as a member of Sterne's bodyguard. He has only distant family in Germany, and we're assured by the German police that they're as puzzled as anyone else.*

*The State Department dug up Sterne's file, and realized that his known associates included members of Project Ragna Rok. Under the circumstances, they thought it best to hand the file over to us. They've been in contact with the government of Mali, and everyone is happy for us to pick up the problem. If there is one.*

*Your job is to determine as many of the facts as are accessible in Mali. Decisions about further action will be based on what you find.*

## **Resources and Arrangements**

The BPRD will arrange the team's travel to Mali and Timbuktu, including any bureaucratic details. As usual with BPRD field missions, the team will have considerable freedom of action while in the field, but will be required to justify any unusual decisions afterwards. They will also have radio contact with HQ, although any aid sent to them may take a while to arrive.

**Guns:** The Bureau has arranged with the government of Mali for agents to carry standard issue sidearms (i.e. pistols) in the country, concealed if necessary. (Freelancers would have to make their own arrangements . . .) This may be stretched to one or two rifles or light automatic weapons, if anyone asks, and maybe even a few grenades, but the team will then be reminded repeatedly to be tactful. Mali is a sovereign state. Heavier weapons are out; this is an *investigation*, not a war.

*Radios:* Cellular phones don't work in Mali outside the capital, so the team will be issued with a satellite base unit to relay their personal radio signals back to HQ. They will be told to find somewhere safe to locate this while in the field, preferably operated by an agent with appropriate technical skills. If there are four or more of them, they may be issued with one heavy but portable handset capable of sending direct via satellite, as a backup.

*Other Equipment:* The team will be issued with body armor if they wish, and if anyone insists, rocket packs are available. However, the technical staff will point out very clearly that the agents are heading into a desert area; armor will be very uncomfortable, and heavy rocket packs will be completely intolerable for prolonged wear. If they have to go out into the wilds, they will be able to borrow vehicles and camping equipment from local government representatives. (In the event, these will turn out to be old and basic, but just about adequate.) Other equipment may be available if the PCs seem to the GM to have made a decent case to justify the expense. Agents who guess that a trip into the desert may be in prospect would do well to requisition a couple of GPS receivers, which make locating oneself a lot easier.

## ***Mali***

The team will receive basic briefing notes on Mali; the GM is welcome to locate some real-world information on the subject if he wants to add some detail.

Mali is landlocked, with a population of around 11 million. It is one of the poorest countries in Africa (and thus in the world), with accordingly low life expectancy figures. Its people are mostly peasant farmers living along the Niger and other rivers, with a fair number of nomadic herders living in less fertile areas, and a few bustling market towns and cities with a little local industry. In terms of terrain, the country runs from desert in the north to scrubland and semi-jungle areas in the south. It is classically underdeveloped, although its mineral resources may have potential. The country has a democratic government, with a number of active political parties. The capital is *Bamako*, in the south-west.

The French ruled it (as the French Sudan) from the 1890s to 1960; when they left, it took the name of an empire which ruled the area in the Middle Ages. Since then, it's had some ups and downs, including a couple of coups and a rebellion by the nomadic Tuaregs of the northern deserts; these days, it's mostly peaceful, but even minor economic or climate problems can hit it hard. The national language is still French (and if the PCs don't include any French speakers, they may want to ask for an interpreter from the local government while they are in the cities), although most Malians speak local languages and dialects, primarily one called *Bambara*. Mali is 90% Muslim, with some pockets of animist religion.

Visitors should have a full set of vaccinations. (BPRD agents receive such shots as a matter of routine; if necessary, the research department have access to a special fast-acting treatment which provides effective protection, at the cost of making the recipient uncomfortable for several hours.) The State Department advises travelers that, while violent crime is mostly fairly low in Mali, petty theft is common, and banditry is sometimes a problem in the north – including around Timbuktu. Americans aren't usually specifically victimized, but any western visitor is *by definition* a rich and tempting target for criminals. If the agents stick together, they should be safe enough, but it might be wiser not to go out alone at night in town.

*Timbuktu* (Tombouctou in some modern sources) is a city in central Mali, sited on the southern edge of the Sahara desert and just a few miles north of the Niger River. In the Middle Ages, it became rich as a place where desert caravans met traders from the south to deal in gold, salt, and slaves. The Emperor of Mali built famous mosques and colleges, and recruited countless scholars. It went into a decline after the Empire fell, the French didn't do very much for it, and the old trade patterns are now all but vanished. However, international organizations have been trying to preserve the great mosques and the medieval libraries. The current population is around 30,000.

## **BACKGROUND: GM ONLY!**

Wilhelm Sterne was (and still is) a talented occultist and a passable ritual magician. He was indeed happy enough to work with the Nazis, but more for convenience than out of any actual belief; mostly, he was just out for himself, and specifically for power. His obsessions did give him a certain mad charisma.

His journey into the desert was carefully planned, and he certainly didn't get lost. His first destination was the location where an ancient and very powerful (and evil) Djinni (p. 00) was magically imprisoned. Through luck and good research Sterne managed to release the being and take control of it with the same ritual. However, this was merely a means to an end.

His second destination, even deeper in the Sahara, was a location which he had identified by extensive occult research; the City of Brass, mentioned in Muslim folk tales. He believed it really existed, and that the popular stories understated its significance; he wanted to use the Djinni to gain access to the site, and to make the expedition feasible.

His plan worked up to a point, anyway. The City of Brass really existed, although its population was long dead, and it was protected by powerful magics, mostly illusions. The Djinni was able to guide Sterne there, and to keep his expedition supplied along the way. Together, the Djinni and the magician were even able to penetrate the outer magical defenses. However, partly thanks to the Djinni's malice, the humans then became trapped in a maze of illusions. The Djinni thought that it might be able to escape, but it underestimated Sterne, who discovered that it could come and go in spirit form, and so used it to fetch supplies and implements. He then happily set to work to try and break the spells, with his surviving bodyguards as his assistants.

During the 1950s, Sterne was even able to establish contact with his old friend Herman von Klempt, who was then hiding out in South America, using the Djinni as a messenger. Von Klempt sent Sterne a little advanced technology to help his quest, and Sterne used this and the Djinni's magic to keep himself alive after a very peculiar fashion. The Djinni found the ensuing decades, bound to the service of an insane human, deeply humiliating and annoying, but it couldn't find an escape clause. So it watched and waited for the idiot to finish his half-understood work.

Recently, Sterne did indeed complete his great project; the creation of a great magical design on the desert, through which he can ritually destroy the City's illusions. The first ritual he conducted destroyed the illusions which prevented any human leaving the area, and his three surviving bodyguards, long since driven quite mad themselves, fled in the night. Sterne didn't care; he is now working on the final ritual which will grant him access to the City of Brass and all its power.

The fact that, thanks to the terms of his original spell, this same act will grant complete freedom to an ancient, evil, and now very irritated supernatural being, hasn't even crossed his mind.

## ***Inspirations***

The primary source of ideas for this scenario is the story called 'The Story of the City of Brass,' in the collection of eastern folk-tales variously known as the *1,001 Nights* or the *Arabian Nights*. Other tales in that collection describe the nature and behavior of Djinn. Another source of atmosphere is James Thomson's 19<sup>th</sup> century poem, 'The City of Dreadful Night.' Both can be found on the Internet and in numerous books.

## **ON THE SCENE**

The GM should skate fairly quickly over the 'setup and departure' phase of this story, while nonetheless emphasizing that the PCs are heading out to a remote and underdeveloped region. They're BPRD agents, they can have a reasonable equipment issue, and they can find what they might need to know in the briefing notes that will go with them on the aircraft. So move!

A BPRD jet gets the agents to Mali's main airport at Bamako. Timbuktu has a small airport of its own, but the Bureau isn't sure if it has adequate facilities for their jets. Air Mali flies there three times a week, but the schedules don't fit, and anyway, taking weapons and special equipment on scheduled flights can get complicated, while dropping in by rocket pack frightens the locals and is only justified when things are more urgent than this. So the Bureau has arranged to charter a private plane for the last leg of the trip.

## ***Bamako and On***

The only reason for delay in the capital Ĩ apart from recovering from the long flight Ĩ is that FrankelleĒs body is now in a morgue here, awaiting transport back to Germany. (Yes, this is poor procedure, but as so often with BPRD cases, the local authorities want the weirdness off their own hands as quickly as possible.) If any of the team have Forensics skill, or can at least sound like they have a logical reason for asking, they can view the corpse; FrankelleĒs clothes, papers, and other possessions are still in Timbuktu.

They wonĒt learn much thatĒs new, but should at least have some impressions confirmed. Frankelle was actually in fairly good shape for an 80 year old man Ĩ not exactly overfed, but not starving. However, he had clearly suffered from spending far too long in the sun recently. His thin hair was in a rough approximation to a military cut, but had grown out somewhat lately.

Any such examinations complete, the team can find their transport for the last leg of the journey. This turns out to be piloted by an affable French expatriate named Gregoire Montaigne, with a dense accent and a casual manner that verges on foolhardiness. (He might or might not *actually* smoke while refueling the aircraft, depending on his hangover.) It turns out that he has picked up a little about the case, but this mostly means that he shrugs and says ĩah yes, a weird business . . . you get a lot of weird business out here, you know . . .Ē

Unlike some people the agents may have met, Montaigne is quite prepared to entertain the possibility of supernatural explanations for anything, but it will soon become apparent that this is mostly because heĒs extremely superstitious, as well as being devoutly but sloppily religious. He sometimes takes silly risks because he believes that some lucky charm or the saint of the day will protect him, or because a newspaper horoscope says itĒs a good time for him, or because heĒs attended confession recently. He has the skill (Piloting-14) and reflexes (DX 12) to extract himself from his own mistakes, but a flight with him may start out amusing and end with the PCs swearing never to leave the ground again.

## ***Timbuktu***

Timbuktu is a desert town with vestiges of its ancient glory still just about visible. The buildings are mostly mud brick, with the addition of some modern concrete, and a very little stone. Fortunately, there are a couple of adequate hotels, and even one or two restaurants; the place gets a few intrepid tourists who want to boast that theyĒve been to one of the most legendarily remote places on Earth. ItĒs not exactly luxury, but it may not be as bad as the agents feared. The PCs have two points of contact here; the local police, who will be grateful to find somebody they can offload this business onto, and Reginald Clay.

The main thing that the police can offer is a look at the dead manĒs possessions. These consist of a genuine 1941-vintage German infantry uniform, and a batch of brown and crumbling papers which identify the bearer. He had no weapons. The mystery is still as previously stated, but exacerbated by a couple of details. Firstly, the uniform, while rather worn and shabby, is in remarkably good condition for its age, even disregarding the desert conditions. And secondly, if anyone thinks to check specifically, or goes through all the stuff in detail (possibly making an IQ roll), they will note that Frankelle was wearing a set of modern, lightweight, pure silk underwear, with a French label, and high-quality modern desert boots.

(Sterne used his control of the Djinni to acquire regular good-quality supplies for his men. While not exactly *considerate*, he sometimes thought to command that they should have ĩthe best of everything.Ē The Djinni would simply walk through walls into shops and storerooms a thousand miles away and return with any minor luxuries.)

## ***Doctor Reginald Clay***

The PCs will recognize Clay from pictures they saw in the briefing, and he will come to see them as soon as he knows theyĒre in town even if they donĒt seek him out. HeĒs an African-American man in his 30s, short and with a broad build, dressed sensibly for the climate, pleasant but somewhat focused on the mystery in hand. He has an academicĒs curiosity. HeĒs not sure about supernatural explanations, but he recognizes that thereĒs something very weird going on, and heĒll talk to anyone who might have some kind of explanation. HeĒs also prepared to act as a guide and interpreter around the city, which may well be helpful.

That said, if anyone asks, he'll also be quite open about his own work, and it may be possible to divert him onto that if the agents prefer not to say too much about their own. He's a scholar of Medieval Muslim Africa. UNESCO is trying to restore the crumbling mosques and libraries of this city, and he jumped at the chance to work on this.

If drawn out about his personal history, he'll say that his interests started as an adolescent curiosity about his ancestry, and grew into an academic career. He's not actually a Muslim himself, but he has considerable sympathy for local culture. The one way to get him arguing is to disparage or dismiss the locals; he'll point out that they once ruled a great empire, and refer to their current situation as a product of historic bad luck and foreign invasion by fellow Muslims from the north as well as Europeans. (Later, he may act as a conscience to the party if anything happens to threaten the inhabitants of the area.)

He isn't particularly comfortable talking about magic or the supernatural in relation to his own work; he sees himself as a scholar of history and to some extent philosophy, not of the occult. Nonetheless, if pressed, he'll acknowledge that this sort of thing involves some study of beliefs about the supernatural, and in fact he has a limited but useful knowledge of some specific related topics. (This may come in useful later.) He'll deny any knowledge of any relevant supernatural beliefs in this region.

Most importantly, he'll certainly fill out the details of Frankelle's arrival. Actually, Frankelle didn't just walk into town; he encountered a band of Tuareg nomads out in the desert to the north, and they brought him in. (Perhaps they hoped for a reward, perhaps they were simply compassionate.) Clay was in the market area when the Tuareg rode in on their camels, and became involved in getting the man to hospital.

Frankelle was conscious at times when Clay saw him, but unfortunately, anything he said was in German, which Clay doesn't speak. (He's fine in French and Arabic, and has a little grasp of some local languages.) However, he did pick out a couple of words; 'Doctor' was clear in any language, and there were a few other words which Clay can remember by sound and which German speakers may then be able to puzzle out. (Agents may radio HQ for help, as there are staff there with the skill German-13, though obviously this procedure is more cumbersome.) One phrase he repeated was something like 'Zikenug is volstandig'; this is fairly easy, given that 'Zeichnung' is a drawing or design, and 'vollständig' is complete. Another seemed to be 'start more zerlagen', which may take a little more effort (i.e. a better roll against German language skill); 'Stadt' is a town or city, 'Mauer' is a wall, and 'zerschlagen' is broken or smashed. Lastly, he once or twice muttered 'sonne is gut', which barely needs translation; to him, something about the sun was very good, despite the fact that it killed him.

## ***The Tuaregs***

The next obvious step is to contact the Tuaregs who found Frankelle. Either Clay or the local police can help with this; Clay will be more enthusiastic. It shouldn't be too difficult, although it may take some tactful asking around or expenditure of some cash. The city is actually ringed with a number of Tuareg encampments, and local guides cheerfully offer tourists the chance to visit one, see genuine desert nomad life, and try real nomad cooking. Of course, tracking down the correct group may take some more work. Most bands include some members who speak at least a little French, and Clay or any competent interpreter can help a lot. This is an opportunity for some reaction rolls, use of Influence and Language skills, and roleplaying. In the worst case, given local poverty levels, a few small cash payments can go a long way, although PCs should perhaps be careful; if they get a reputation for excessive generosity, nobody will do anything for them without a payment, which can be inconvenient. (They can run out of spare cash, and banking facilities in Timbuktu are limited.)

Eventually, they will find the band, whose members unfortunately only include one rather poor French speaker (skill 9). Clay or a police interpreter will be immensely helpful here, and even then, it will take a little effort to draw these people out; they don't want to be accused of banditry, and they sense that this act has got them involved in more than they expected. (If they're threatened, they're likely to clam up and look for a chance to disappear into the desert.) However, they should eventually be persuaded to explain that they found this old European in the middle of the desert, some way west of the road which runs north to the tiny communities of Araouane and Taoudenni and no, they don't have the faintest idea what he was doing there. There was nothing else which they saw which would seem relevant, and the sand that way is loose enough that following his tracks



would be virtually impossible. Clay or any other interpreter will scratch his head at this point, and say no, there really is nothing out there.

However, towards the end of the conversation, one of the Tuaregs will say something in his native language in passing, leading to a brief exchange within the group. If pressed on this (and Clay will ask, if he's present and the PCs don't), they'll eventually produce a muttered volley of speech in their native language. The interpreter will turn round and say, 'They say that they found him not very far from ' I don't know, some kind of forbidden area. A place where all travelers become lost and turned aside. It's something they don't like to talk about, I think. They just don't go there.'

## INTO THE DESERT

The first phase of the investigation in Timbuktu will probably take a day or so, and by the time the agents have enough clues to point them out into the wilderness, it'll be fairly late in the day. The natural next step is a trip out in the direction the Tuaregs have indicated.

Doctor Clay will tell the PCs what he knows about the desert, if they ask him. He'll point out that, essentially, north of the city is the Sahara, most of the way to the Mediterranean. It's not entirely uninhabited; the nomads of the area are mostly Tuaregs and other Berbers (an ethnic group very distinct from the black African peoples of the south and the cities), and while many of them are peaceable, well, the open wastelands have a lot of scope for banditry. If none of them have survival skills, he or a local policeman will advise on what to take. BPRD radios can be tuned to contact the local police station, which would definitely be an advisable safety measure.

The group may either drive or fly out, or make more complicated combined arrangements; it's up to them. Gregoire Montaigne is still at the airport with his aircraft, and will accept this job for his standard rates if anyone asks. Alternatively, they can borrow one or two rather rusty four wheel drive vehicles and some camping/survival equipment from the local police (and drivers, if they really push). There are no local car hire facilities. If they have brought rocket packs, they could use these for reconnaissance, but they don't have the range for the entire journey.

The PCs and their local associates can piece together approximate directions from the Tuareg. The best plan seems to be to follow the unmade road about eighty or ninety miles northwards towards Araouane, then turn left, following a set of landmarks suggested by the Tuareg, and see what they find. If anyone asks any other Tuareg about the 'place where travelers become lost,' most will deny any knowledge, either honestly or to avoid what they suspect is the mockery of city dwellers, but on a good or better reaction, about a third of them can confirm that such a story exists. In truth, it's not overly sinister or terrifying; it's just a region where people become lost and turned back on their own tracks, so the desert dwellers just don't go there.

Obviously, with these sorts of distances, the journey is going to involve spending some time. Flying is quicker, but that involves a bit more scouting about, confirming that the route matches the directions given by ground-level travelers. Once the PCs set out, the GM should emphasize the continuing intense desert sun and the heat of the Saharan day. The scenery's impressive, though, if you like sand dunes.

### ***Bodies***

As they travel, PCs on the ground or observing carefully from the air and willing and able to land *may* find a couple of clues that they're on the right track. (This is logically perhaps a bit unlikely, given the sheer size of the desert, but dramatic effect justifies a lot.) Specifically, they can find two bodies, recently deceased, several miles apart.

These are in fact two more of Sterne's bodyguard-laborers, who proved slightly less robust or determined than Frankelle. They are dressed similarly to him, mostly in WWII German army uniforms with more added good quality modern details. Their papers identify them as Joseph Uhlans and Hans Strauss. As an additional option, the second body may be lying near enough to a lot of supernatural power that it can prove to be animated by the soul it once housed; as the PCs approach it, it speaks (though clearly, definitely dead), saying '*the wall is broken.*' If the PCs include any skilled mediums or similar, however, they will probably not be able to get any

more information from this ghost (unless the GM feels like dropping a few extra hints); the guards were long ago driven quite mad, and the unaccustomed desert sun has burned away the last of their capacity for coherent thought, alive or dead. BPRD HQ can confirm that these two were also members of Sterne's party, if anyone calls them; they have fairly complete documentation by now.

### ***Into the Night***

Finally, the PCs will be approaching the City of Brass, and here is where they're in for a shock. In fact, they might be able to detect that something strange is coming up. If they're flying, or if they climb a sand dune and scan the scenery ahead with some care, let them make an IQ roll (at +1 if they're scanning the terrain from the air, -1 if they're merely on a dune). If they succeed, they notice that there's a kind of regular strangeness to the landscape in front of them – almost as if there was some kind of vast, curving wall, beyond which nothing looks quite real. (GMs can roll a few dice in secret and smile a lot at this point. The players may guess that the heat is getting to their characters.) Magical detection abilities will also pick up the presence of a *large* area of fairly subtle supernatural power.

The big shock comes when they cross the not-quite-visible boundary. They are now within the area of a vast magical illusion, cast to protect the City of Brass. Whatever conditions were like outside (i.e. however high the desert sun), they suddenly find themselves standing or flying in a zone of darkness, lit only by strangely dim light reflected sideways from the surrounding dunes. The sky above is pitch black and starless, and the landscape ahead is a flat plain rather than the rolling dunes visible from outside.

This could be good for a Fright Check even for hardened BPRD agents. (If they're in Montaigne's plane, he'll swear volubly in French, cross himself, grab a lucky charm and kiss it, then grab the controls just before the aircraft goes into a crash dive.) When they're over the shock, though, they can examine the effect. The boundary between desert sun and darkness has no obvious physical qualities except its effect on light, although magical detection abilities will confirm that there's *something* there, as if it needed confirmation. However, it does damp radio signals as well as light; Electronics Operation rolls (at default if necessary) are required whenever making a call to the outside world, with one retry permitted every five minutes and a roll at +2 required to maintain contact every ten minutes. The temperature either side of the barrier is the same, however; inside is hot and dark.

(Until very recently, this area was protected by much more powerful illusion effects, which, as the desert tribes said, rendered anyone who came this way lost and confused, turning them round and sending them back the way they came. They also kept people who somehow penetrated this defense *in*. Sterne has just recently broken this spell, leaving only the basic illusion which hides the city.)

BPRD HQ will be as startled as anyone by such a report, but will order the team to investigate further. (That's their job.) HQ have immediate access to fairly recent satellite pictures of this region, and will state as a fact that there doesn't appear to be anything there except sand dunes. Given time (at least half an hour, more likely several hours), they can obtain *current* satellite images of the location, with the same result, although expert analysts say that, when they look closely, they can see some slight oddities in the terrain. Clearly, there are powerful illusions involved. The team is *definitely* ordered to find an explanation, if possible.

## **THE SIEGE OF THE CITY**

Once they're within the zone of darkness and illusion, the PCs can head for the center. If they were flying, they'll probably want to land (especially if they're relying on Montaigne as a pilot; this is all far too much for him, and his mental state is increasingly shaky). Hence, their next discovery will likely be made at ground level.

### ***The Great Symbol***

After half a mile or so, in increasing gloom, they realize that someone has been marking the landscape with some kind of vast and intricate design. This has been done in several different ways in different places; mostly, tens of thousands of stones have been picked up from the desert floor and arranged in lines, but in some places, some kind of wheeled vehicle has been deliberately driven to make linear tracks, and in others, mostly where

several lines meet, flat stones have been placed and marked with complex patterns of symbols in chalk. A successful Occultism roll will tell characters that this is perhaps the largest and most complicated magical symbol they've ever seen; if it's made by 4 or more, they will recognize that it includes elements from both Western Hermetic practice and Middle Eastern Neo-Platonic lore. Detection abilities will simply confirm that it hums with latent magic.

This is, in fact, a giant focusing symbol, designed by Sterne to enable him to dispel the illusions shielding the City of Brass. The PCs may damage or delete parts of it, if they wish to, but nothing they can do on a sensible timescale will significantly reduce its effectiveness. It's far too big and powerful, and anyway, much of it has already served its purpose.

### ***The Encampment***

Next, after another few hundred yards, the PCs may be bemused to discover a neat, orderly, deserted camp. This is made up of half a dozen WWII vintage German Army tents, along with the remains of two half-track transports of the same vintage (long since rusted to uselessness). Behind the tents are seven man-size mounds of the local sandy soil, with crude headstones. (BPRD HQ can now confirm that Sterne took ten guards with him.)

What lies inside most of the tents suggests a bizarre mixture of a Spartan military lifestyle and exceptional luxury; plain camp beds adorned with silk cushions and covers, bottles of champagne and beer, simple camp stoves which were apparently used to cook fine (if tinned) food, which was then eaten off enamel plates. There are also a few old, brown, and faded items of personal significance; pictures and letters from family or sweethearts, all dated 1941. One tent, however, is different; it seems to be a workshop and a library. Characters with relevant skills can recognize books of magical lore, some of them quite rare, and the basic paraphernalia of alchemy.

Beyond this camp, the darkness deepens; hence, the PCs will have to advance further before they can see much. When they do, what they see is startling. A city wall towers above the desert, with a single gate warded by two towers. They may, however, be more interested in what's in front of the gate.

### ***The Besiegers***

The main thing that they see here is what seems to be a heavily built armored car, sitting on four large off-road tires. It's painted in plain drab brown (though that may be hard to distinguish in the darkness), and there's a swastika on the side. Perhaps reassuringly, it doesn't have any visible weapons mounted. Its engine is running, ticking over with a deep, powerful note.

What befalls next depends on how the PCs choose to approach the situation. If they want to be stealthy, they have a chance of succeeding; the scenery around here includes enough broken rocks and so on. However, they'll have to crawl most of the way, and make three rolls each to get close to the vehicle. Sterne, inside the armored car, is too preoccupied with the climax of sixty years of ritual magic to notice them unless anyone rolls a critical failure, but his ally, the Azah ibn Shaitan the Djinni, is lurking nearby in immaterial form, and may look around. If the agents are spotted, Sterne will order Azah to "Stop them interfering!" (in German).

If they try approaching openly, on foot or in vehicles, the same thing will probably happen, only more quickly. (Actually, it's *just* possible that they could pull a bluff, though it's hard to think what they could say. GMs will just have to improvise if they try.) If they hold back well, they can just watch what follows. If they're any sort of heroes at all, they should decide to intervene, or at least to observe more closely, at some point. Whatever the details, there are two potential opponents to consider.

*Azah* is a powerful Djinni; use the details on p. 00, but with ST 30, 60 Fatigue, IQ 11, and 25 hit points. In his spirit form, he is invisible to normal senses when immobile or moving slowly, but he often becomes visible in the form of a dark whirlwind when he moves at high speed. When he chooses to materialize, he takes the form of a 9' tall, ebony, humanoid figure with small horns, long nails, and glowing red eyes. However, he has no talent for shapeshifting, and too much pride ever to try; these are the only forms he ever takes. He has the Spirit Form power with the *Physical Form* and *Unlimited Lifespan* enhancements, but no *Possession* ability. When materialized, he can produce powerful winds which either stir up sand and dust over a 100 yard radius, reducing

all vision to no more than 3 yards and forcing characters to make Sense rolls to hear anything over the noise. He *loves* using *Poltergeist Effect* tricks, especially to cause damage and injury.

*Doctor Sterne* isn't just *hiding* in the armored car. Using technology provided by von Klempt, enhanced by Azah's magical powers, he has connected himself permanently to a life support system, which is installed in the armored car for power and protection. What used to be his body is now a shriveled and immobile husk within the machine, but the system has kept him alive and functional. The problem from the PCs' point of view is that he basically *is* the armored car. This vehicle's armored body has PD 4, DR 50, and is +3 to hit for size; attackers may think to target the wheels, which are PD 3, DR 10, and +1 to hit for size. Inflicting 15 hit points of damage will knock out any one wheel and immobilize the vehicle, while somehow getting 20 points through the body's DR will disable Sterne's life support system, which means that he'll die in fairly short order. Sterne will seek to avoid moving if he can – he has more important concerns just now – but if circumstances demand action, he can maneuver fast enough to avoid ranged attacks (his effective Dodge score is 3, plus PD), and try to run opponents down. Roll a quick contest of his effective Driving skill of 12 vs. the intended victim's DX (+3 if they spend the turn diving out of the way); if Sterne wins, the victim takes 1d+1 *dice* of damage and will probably be knocked aside or down; a tied contest means a glancing blow for 1d damage. The vehicle's hatches are all closed and bolted shut, although attackers who get on top of it and use explosives or tools cleverly may be able to get inside (GM's option).

(GMs with access to more complete *GURPS* vehicle combat rules can use those instead. Note that Sterne is unlikely to reach more than 20 mph – Move 10 – in the circumstances here, and that will take him a couple of turns of acceleration.)

### ***Conflicts and Consequences***

Powerful PC groups may be able to take on Azah and Sterne in straightforward combat, but lesser parties may well seem overmatched. Fortunately, there are possible countermeasures and tactical options, and more importantly, their opponents won't simply try to kill them immediately.

Firstly, Sterne doesn't order Azah to kill the PCs, just to stop them. This is initially a matter of phrasing, but he will probably decide that he prefers prisoners to corpses anyway. He is an old-fashioned enough villain that he wants someone to gloat at and explain his own brilliance to, and he hasn't even got his dull-witted guards any longer. Meanwhile, Azah secretly wants to keep at least some opponents alive, to distract Sterne from thinking too much about what will follow the completion of his spell (and he quite likes humiliating people himself).

Meanwhile, the PCs have the advantage of numbers. Azah can play havoc with any one or two of them, but if they spread out and focus on attacking Sterne, he'll have to keep shifting his focus – and probably not finish off anyone he downs. Also, he's quite vulnerable to modern weapons in physical form, and if he takes more than 8 points of damage, he will revert to spirit form and refuse to materialize again. Unfortunately, he's still quite deadly with his *Poltergeist* powers, but this limits his options.

Also, if Reginald Clay is present, or if a PC specifically asks about Djinn vulnerabilities and then makes an Occultism roll, they can improvise the design of the Seal of Solomon. Unfortunately, it will take 10 turns to draw. However, it will repel Azah, providing complete protection for anyone holding it against all his powers, including ranged attacks. Clay can also cause Azah to desist from attacking himself (but not any PCs) by using a verbal charm he's read about in his studies. This will only hold the Djinni off for three turns, and it will only work once.

One other option is to use a vehicle as a weapon – either a four wheel drive car or an aircraft. Azah can dodge or dematerialize out of the way of such threats instantly, but Sterne may be vulnerable (roll a Quick Contest of Vehicle skills if he tries to dodge.) A car will prove slightly less robust than his own vehicle, being trashed in the process but disabling one of Sterne's wheels and doing 1d damage to the man inside; being hit by a light aircraft will leave Sterne dying. The fate of anyone inside the ramming vehicle is up to the GM, but *several* dice of damage are likely.

*Approaching the City:* It's also possible that some PCs will try to get into the City at this point. However, they won't succeed. The walls are enveloped with a set of enchantments which not only make them physically indestructible, but which scramble both perceptions and directions. Anyone trying to pass them will be sent

spinning back in physical and mental confusion. Merely trying to go over them with a ladder can be dangerous. If one of Sterne's guards died in a fall when he tried and anyone trying to fly over with an aircraft or rocket pack will have to make a Pilot skill roll to avoid a subsequent crash. (Kind GMs can permit a second roll to make the crash partly controlled, allowing the flyers to survive with a few bruises and lost hit points.)

*Sterne's Ritual:* Virtually anything that genuinely threatens Sterne, let alone any damage penetrating the armored car's body, will panic him; he is desperate to complete his life's work. Hence, at this point, he will rush the rest of his ritual, burning much of his own life energy in the process. This will leave him dying (but insanely happy). If the PCs are defeated or driven back, or have held well back to watch throughout, he will complete the ritual more comfortably over a period of time.

### ***The Fall of the City***

At this point, the walls of the city shimmer, as a layer of darkness seems to fall away from them. Meanwhile, the darkness in the sky above also shimmers, and starts to break up like clouds, letting the sun through. It soon becomes clear that the walls of the city have a metallic sheen, like brass.

If he is getting his chance to gloat, Sterne will explain that he has finally succeeded in his life's work, and the City of Brass will soon surrender its secrets to him. "I know that the Reich is fallen in the outside world. Azah has been able to come and go, you see, and he brought me news. But what does that matter? Soon, infinite wealth and power will be mine! This city is older than the modern, degenerate so-called civilizations of humanity. It comes from an age of greater glories!"

If the PCs are watching this from further away, Clay can provide some explanations, or they may recall some snippets with a roll against Occultism or Humanities (Literature). The City of Brass is an old Arab legend, and it's said to have been a place of wealth and power, long lost and quite likely under a divine curse.

At this point, however, assuming that he's still around, Azah will take his whirlwind form, manifesting in front of Sterne.

*"So my three-score years of service are complete."*

*"It may still require your services, Azah ibn Shaitan."*

*"No, mortal; your commands were that I should bring you to this place, and bring you what you required for your work, and aid you in your siege of the City. Those three commands are fulfilled now, and I am free!"*

At which, with a great laugh, Azah hurls Sterne's car on its side, and flies over the wall and into the city.

## **FINAL BATTLES**

At this point, the situation has turned into a three-sided conflict. Azah has his own plans; Sterne, very possibly dying and almost certainly immobilized, is confused by the turnaround; and the PCs, probably battered and bruised, find themselves free to act. The greatest problem soon becomes apparent, however, as a great whirlwind grows above the city, surrounded by flickering lightning and echoing with demonic laughter. Whatever Azah is up to surely needs stopping.

This may well force the PCs into uneasy alliance with Sterne, who will admit with bitterness that, yes, Azah has tricked him and is probably now exploiting the power of the city for his own ends. "He was barred from both Heaven and Hell, but this place may perhaps be a gateway for him. And with its ancient power . . . He probably wants to conquer the world. Or destroy it. He was a prisoner in a block of stone for thousands of years, and he is perhaps a little bitter."

In fact, the City of Brass can serve as a near-infinite Fatigue battery for Azah. The only obvious good news is that he's clearly so busy soaking up power that he won't immediately notice any action taken by the PCs. As calling in military forces isn't an option, Azah's lightning is scrambling all radio operation for miles around, and anyway, by the time anything arrived, Azah would be far too powerful to stop. The PCs will have to see what they can muster themselves.

### ***Into the City***

There's only one way to go, it seems; inwards. Someone should guess that the key to all this may lie within the city, and now, the gates of the place, no longer sealed by the ancient magic, are hanging open. The players may think of trying to get Sterne's armored car back on its wheels; they may also talk about trying to get it open, at which point Sterne will tell them peevishly that this would kill him instantly. If they don't or can't manage this (and it would require several strong PCs and some ingenuity with improvised levers), but Sterne is talking to them, he will tell them that "the power of the City of Brass comes from its queen" and seal her from whatever is using it.

What they find inside could be an exceptionally spacious, well-built, and wealthy Middle Eastern city, save that the walls all seem to be made of some kind of brassy substance and all the population are dead. The streets are full of skeletons, dressed in fine silks which crumble to dust at a touch, and the market-stalls are protected by silken canopies which are just as quick to disintegrate. Overhead, the sun now beats down, but is partly screened by the growing whirlwind.

The PCs can wander around for a while, but it should be clear to them that they should be heading towards the palace at the center – a great white domed building, which also happens to be at the base of the whirlwind. Fortunately, the whirlwind isn't quite touching down now, so they can approach and enter. If Sterne is present, he will drive straight through the doors.

In the great hall under the dome, they see a grotesquely beautiful sight; the body of a beautiful woman, perfectly mummified, sitting on a throne of gold and gems. She has jet black hair, a dress covered in pearls, a mass of jewelry on her neck and arms, and a gold crown on her head. When the PCs come close enough, they will see that her eyes seem inhuman but almost alive; closer inspection will show that they have been replaced with mercury, sealed behind lenses. (A Fright Check may be in order here.) She is surrounded by an invisible but tangible magical force; anyone approaching her will find their hair standing on end and will sense the effect, and anyone trying to touch her will be thrown back and suffer 1d damage.

The correct action at this point is to enclose the mummified queen within a large drawing of the Seal of Solomon, thereby cutting Azah off from his power source. Clay and Sterne may both help with this, if the PCs lack the inspiration or knowledge. It will take a few minutes of desperate work, at the end of which, there will be a moment of silence and then a crack of thunder. The dome over the PCs' heads will break in several places, and a dark cloud will boil down to ground level and coalesce into a very, very angry Djinni.

Azah cannot break, or even approach, the Seal, but he can take out his frustration on the PCs. He may have some hope of making them break the Seal themselves, but it should be transparently obvious that he's not going to let anyone out of here alive if he has the chance. He's back to full Fatigue and hit points after any earlier losses, and the power he's just absorbed raises his effective DR to 12.

This is going to be a tough fight, of course, but there's only one Djinni, and the PCs have an unexpected ally. Even if the PCs left Sterne's car outside the gates and on its side, he's somehow managed to right it, and he now comes smashing through the doors, just as angry as Azah. The fight should ideally come to a climax when Sterne, screaming that Azah has stolen the power that was rightfully his own, slams into the Djinni at full speed, hurling him against the Seal of Solomon. This in turn shows why the Djinni was avoiding the thing, as Azah screams and starts to come apart.

Then the smokeless fire from Azah's wounds flows across the Seal and touches the Queen of the City of Brass, and things start to become a little messy. Lightning engulfs the area, reaching Sterne's armored car and its fuel tank catches fire.

This is the point when sensible PCs should leave. In fact, the GM should require Will rolls from anyone who declares a wish to stay. He can be quite generous about any efforts needed to help injured characters from the building, but just as the last PC gets out, a final explosion weakens the remains of the dome, which falls inwards. The PCs' last sight should be the emaciated and now burning Sterne, out of his car and running on inhuman willpower, reaching desperately for the Queen's crown – just as falling rubble crushes it and him.

## ***Destruction and Aftermath***

After which, further, lesser waves of magical force spread outwards, shaking the entire City. The PCs should be encouraged to keep moving as far as the gates, and only turn and watch once they're safely clear. Then, they may realize that the ancient magic which protected the City of Brass also preserved it – and now, thousands of years are catching up with it at once. It's crumbling to verdigris and dust. Within minutes, they're standing in the desert, looking at a ruin.

One good thing after all this is that getting home shouldn't be too great a problem, no matter how many vehicles the PCs have lost. BPRD HQ were monitoring the situation as best they could, and have chartered a helicopter from Bamako, which will arrive in a couple of hours to see what can be found and pick up any survivors.

As to the City of Brass – it's gone. Within a week, there'll just be the ruins of broken foundations, and within a year, the desert sand will have covered even them. Dr. Hoffman's follow-up team of BPRD psychics and scientists will declare that the site is fading in every sense, and archaeologists will have at best a debatable study in very early African urban cultures. This is now a closed case.

## Other Scenario Ideas

The following are scenario seeds – outline ideas which the GM can expand and adapt to fit into a campaign.

### ***The Demon Drink***

A run-down apartment block in a failing neighborhood of a major city is scheduled for demolition. However, after three attempts, the workmen are refusing to go in. They say it's haunted. Their stories of strange mists and whispering shadows seem convincing, or at least convinced. What's more, the site manager and two of his staff seem to be behaving erratically.

Actually, the problem isn't a ghost. An old alcoholic who occasionally hangs around the site is actually a ritual magician who took to the bottle when his limited ability prevented him from achieving much. He has discovered that several rooms in the apartment block were once used for ceremonies by an eccentric cult, and are still functionally sacred space, and the cult's activities attracted the attention of an ancient spirit which is willing to treat slow suicide by booze as sacrifice of self.

All this is going to kill the magician fairly soon, but not before he ruins the urban restoration project with his carefully targeted rituals from the Path of Cunning (p. 00). Or perhaps he's actually working to save homes and a functioning neighborhood from a ruthless and amoral developer; it may all be a matter of perspective. On the other hand, the spirit (which may be somehow linked to the ancient and bloody cult of Dionysus) is growing stronger with the worship and fear it is inspiring – and meaner, too. Any climactic confrontation in the apartment block is going to involve *someone* falling through a collapsing floor.

### ***Music Lover***

The PCs are assigned or hired to look into a series of problems linked to, of all things, a pop singer's tour. If the PCs are freelancers with some skill with weird problems, they are hired by the manager of teen sensation Ellana Delle to look into reports of bizarre behavior among fans, claims by the singer that she's jinxed, and even stories about a giant cat wandering around backstage. If they're BPRD agents, they are told that two different psychics, known to the Bureau to be genuine and fairly reliable, have reported sensing *something* at Ellana Delle concerts, which have also involved levels of hysteria among fans which are noteworthy even in this context.

The investigators will soon encounter a seething mass of egos, paranoia, and denial which would make a mere case of ritual black magic look easy. The youthful, well-toned, and hyperactive Ellana Delle complains that she keeps losing her voice and that none of the doctors, throat sprays, or psychotherapists are doing any good. Her backing singers have a turnover rate which is making it hard to find people able to cover the gaps in the lead

singer's range. At every concert, more and more audience members are screaming themselves into medically dangerous states of hysterical collapse. And most of her stage crew are taking to drink after seeing the giant cat.

In fact, during her recent breakthrough tour of Japan, Ellana Delle drew the attention of a Gaki (p. 00) which feeds on female screams. She and her backing singers are a pretty good source of nutrition for it, and her audience is even better. When it steals her voice, she bluffs wildly and lets her backing singers cover for her; when it steals those of audience members, they all too often try screaming louder, until they collapse. Trapping, destroying, or driving off such a spirit is the PCs's problem, especially as Shinto priests are rare outside Japan. If one of them is tough enough, falling from the lighting gantry is probably mandatory. If the plot doesn't sound horrific enough, remember that a giant cat has an even easier way to extract screams from stray teenagers.

### ***This Little Piggy***

The PCs are sent to Ireland, to investigate a series of mysterious break-ins at museums and ancient sites; Bureau analysts say the perpetrator is coming too close to things that have genuine paranormal power, too often. They find the country a little changed since Hellboy's visits there in the 1950s; it's a fairly successful European industrial nation now. That said, rural areas can still seem pretty quiet and old-fashioned.

The mysterious robber seems ruthlessly determined; one or two night watchmen or other passers-by have ended up in hospital, but no one can provide a useful description. The odd thing is, nothing has been stolen, although a lot of small objects have been moved around. (Occultism or Ritual Magic skill will detect what seem to be crude and ham-fisted attempts at ritual arrangements.) It will take a certain amount of investigation and specialized knowledge to find any sort of pattern in the crimes, and to predict where the perpetrator will strike next.

In fact, the mystery burglar is Grom (p. 00), still in his shrunken form. He has spent the last forty years in hiding in the country, but a chance encounter with a magical site has shown him that he can *smell* magic, and he is experimenting with *ad hoc* techniques to enhance and channel it. If he succeeds, he will regain his former power.

This scenario may turn into either a game of hide and seek, a titanic battle with the restored monster, or perhaps a melancholy collaboration with a party of Daoine Sidh, come to recapture one of their duller-witted brethren and to take him back into the shadows under the world's for monsters, too, belong only there, today.

((START BOX))

## Optional Rule: Player Guidance

In many roleplaying games, the players decide what their characters do, and the GM controls everything else. With this optional rule, the world becomes more of a shared work, giving the players some say over the events that happen to their characters.

If the GM permits, any player who rolls a critical success may spend one earned character point, and add some element to the world or scene.

*Example: BPRD Agent Pamela Rutledge is fighting an evil mummy. She rolls a critical success on her Brawling skill. Her player decides to offer player guidance. She says, 'We're in his tomb, so his sarcophagus should be here, right? I slam him with a left hook, and knock him over it. He's flat on his back.' The GM hasn't mentioned any sarcophagus, but agrees it makes sense. Pamela's character spends one character point, and now has a definite advantage over the mummy. In addition, a detail of the scene has been filled out, making it easier to imagine for all the players.*

Further, if the player merely rolls an ordinary success, or if the situation didn't call for a roll, he may spend two character points, and add an element.

*Example: Later, Pamela is lost in the corridors of the mummy's pyramid. Her player says, 'We know we're not the first ones to find this pyramid. There might be skeletons of previous explorers around. One of them could come to life, and show me the way out.' The GM knows that in Hellboy stories, guidance from the dead happens often, so he approves this suggestion. Pamela's player spends two character points.*



Some suggestions are more appropriate than others; GMs will have to decide on a case-by-case basis. Here are some guidelines:

The GM should *not* approve a suggestion if . . .

It contradicts something that has already been established.

It would harm, or steal the scene from, another PC.

It would short-circuit the plot.

It's not believable.

The GM doesn't like it.

Things that count in a suggestion's favor include . . .

It is imaginative.

It moves the plot forward.

The other players seem to like the idea.

It doesn't *completely* solve the PC's current problem, merely helps a little.

It saves the PC's life.

It feels like something from a *Hellboy* comic.

Sometimes a suggestion will be almost acceptable, but not quite. The player and GM can negotiate a more appropriate change in these cases. However, the GM is the final authority on whether a suggestion will be accepted. Players must accept a no if the GM decides that's the last word. If the GM wants to encourage player guidance, he should increase his bonus character points awards (p. 00) by one or two per session.

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[[[Hellboy, revised (2) first draft, by Phil Masters <phil@philm.demon.co.uk> and Jonathan Woodward <woodward@io.com>]]]

# APPENDIX A: PUBLISHED HELLBOY STORIES

Most of the published Hellboy stories have been collected into five graphic novels. Except where noted, all are entirely by Mike Mignola. There have also been two non-graphic novels, a short story anthology, and other uncollected stories.

## Seed of Destruction

Scripted by John Byrne, this is the story of Hellboy's first appearance on Earth. Its opening pages take place in 1944, and tell of the Hellboy Incident in East Bromwich, and the simultaneous ritual on Tarmagant Island. It then jumps ahead 50 years, to 1994, and tells about Professor Bruttonholm's death, and Hellboy's first encounter with Rasputin. This story introduces many of the major characters of Hellboy's world, including Dr. Manning, Liz Sherman, Abe Sapien, the Ragan Rok team, and the BPRD.

This graphic novel also includes two untitled short adventures. The first, set in 1993, chronicles Hellboy's defeat of Anubis. The second is set in Brazil in 1959, and tells about Hellboy's first encounter with Herman von Klempt, in which Hellboy defeats von Klempt and his *Kriegsaffe* #9, and buries them both in the ruins of von Klempt's lab.

## Wake the Devil

This graphic novel tells the story of one of the pivotal adventures for Hellboy and the BPRD: The infamous Giurescu investigation. It begins in 1995, when Roderick Zinco travels to Norway and meets the Ragna Rok team. It then moves to 1996, as the BPRD begins its investigation into the theft of Giurescu's corpse. The investigation ends with over half-a-dozen BPRD agents and employees either dead or badly injured, and with the Bureau not much the wiser. This is the tale in which we get to know the Ragna Rok team, and watch them die. The story also introduces Roger, Hecate, Sydney Leach, and tells us a great deal more about Rasputin's history.

## The Chained Coffin and Others

This book is a collection of shorter Hellboy adventures.

**The Corpse:** In 1959, Hellboy rescues a baby from the Daoine Sidh, by helping with the proper burial of a corpse.

**The Iron Shoes:** In 1961, Hellboy defeats an Iron Shoes goblin. We are introduced to Father Mike Nolan.

**The Baba Yaga:** Set in Russia, 1964, Hellboy tracks down the Baba Yaga, and accidentally shoots out her left eye.

**A Christmas Underground:** An unusual story set in 1989. Hellboy deals with some ghosts, a salamander, and a rat-beast.

**The Chained Coffin:** A pivotal story, set right after *Seed of Destruction*, in 1994. Hellboy returns to East Bromwich, and dreams of his parents. This is our introduction to Hellboy's father, a powerful demon.

**The Wolves of Saint August:** In late 1994, Hellboy and Kate Corrigan encounter the werewolf Grenier family. This is Corrigan's first appearance, and her first field mission.

**Almost Colossus:** Set a few days after *Wake the Devil*, in 1996, this story is about Hellboy and Kate searching for Roger, and convincing him to restore Liz Sherman's pyrotechnic abilities before she dies. Along the way, we also meet Roger's brother. This is a key story for both Roger and Liz Sherman.

## The Right Hand of Doom

This book is another collection of shorter stories.

**Pancakes:** A whimsical two-page story, set in 1947, about Hellboy's introduction to pancakes, and the subsequent despair in Hell.

**The Nature of the Beast:** One of Hellboy's earliest adventures, this 1954 story tells about Hellboy fighting the Saint Leonard Worm at the urging of the Osiris Club. This is the adventure in which Hellboy's blood produces lilies where it falls.

**King Vold:** In 1956, Hellboy meets Professor Aickman, and is betrayed by him. Aickman is appropriately punished by King Vold.

**Heads:** One of the few Hellboy stories not set in Europe or America, this 1967 adventure chronicles Hellboy's encounter with the flying cannibal heads of Japan.

**Goodbye, Mister Tod:** In 1979, Hellboy deals with an out-of-control ectoplasmic creature.

**The Vrocolac:** Set in 1982, this story tells of Hellboy's last encounter with the vampire Countess Kakosy.

**The Right Hand of Doom:** While mostly consisting of flashbacks, this 1998 story is important in that Hellboy finally accepts the burden his right hand represents. The story is about Hellboy recounting his history to Father Adrian Frost (Professor Malcolm Frost's son). Father Frost presents a piece of parchment to Hellboy, depicting his hand, and naming it the Right Hand of Doom.

**Box Full of Evil:** This 1999 story starts out with Hellboy investigating Igor Bromhead's latest caper. Unfortunately the demon Bromhead frees, Ualac, knows a great deal about Hellboy's history, and successfully takes Hellboy's invisible crown. After Hellboy defeats Ualac, he meets the demon Astaroth, who promises to hold Hellboy's crown for him.

## Conqueror Worm

This story begins in 1939, at Hunte Castle in Austria. A Nazi rocket, containing the dead Professor Doctor Oeming, is launched despite attempts to stop it. Over 60 years later, in 2001, the BPRD learn that the rocket is returning, and send Hellboy and Roger to stop it. They encounter Herman von Klempt, Inger von Klempt, and the Conqueror Worm, but prevail with aid from Lobster Johnson. They also discover some secrets about Hellboy's past, which (along with the bomb the Bureau placed in Roger) prompts Hellboy to quit the BPRD in search of answers.

## The Lost Army

Written by Christopher Golden, this novel is set in 1986, and involves an investigation by Hellboy into a missing archaeological expedition in Egypt, and ends with the discovery of an undead Persian army, and a mad wizard trying to summon an evil god. This novel also introduces Doctor Anastasia Bransfield, Hellboy's ex-girlfriend.

## The Bones of Giants

Also written by Christopher Golden, in this novel Hellboy is called in when the bones of Thor, God of Thunder, are found in Sweden. He, along with Abe Sapien and Pernilla Aickman, end up having to defeat an evil frost giant, resurrected by Ms. Aickman's father, Professor Edmund Aickman.

## Odd Jobs

This book is an anthology of stories by various horror authors, including Stephen R. Bissette, Craig Shaw Gardner, Nancy A. Collins, Rick Hautala, Jim Connolly, Poppy Z. Brite, and the team of Christopher Golden and Mike Mignola. Most of the stories are not considered canonical *Hellboy*, with the exception of "The Nuckelavee," by Golden and Mignola. Regardless, they can serve as excellent inspiration for *Hellboy* roleplaying adventures.

## Other Tales

**Hi, My Name Is Hellboy:** This brief and rare story is merely an introduction to *Hellboy*, narrated by Hellboy. It appeared in *Celebrate Diversity (Collector's Edition)* in 1994.

**Abe Sapien: Drums of the Dead:** [[[1993; need story synopsis.]]]

**Abe Sapien vs. Science:** This story appeared as a backup feature in the original *Hellboy: Box Full of Evil* comic. It has not been collected. It occurs in 1999, and involves Abe Sapien saving Roger from dissection by reviving him with electricity.

**Lobster Johnson: The Killer In My Skull:** Set in 1938, this uncollected story is about Lobster Johnson's battle against a strange foe. It was another backup feature in the *Hellboy: Box Full of Evil* comic.

**BPRD: Hollow Earth:** This 2002 three-issue comics series, set immediately after Hellboy quits the BPRD, stars Abe Sapien, Roger, Kate Corrigan, and new agent Johann Kraus, as they track down the missing Liz Sherman, and perhaps learn the origins of humanity.

In addition, Hellboy has appeared in numerous crossover stories with heroes like Batman, Starman, Ghost, the Savage Dragon, Painkiller Jane, and the Next Men.

[[[Hellboy, revised (2) first draft, by Phil Masters <phil@philm.demon.co.uk> and Jonathan Woodward <woodward@io.com>]]]

# APPENDIX B: USING OTHER GURPS BOOKS

*GURPS*, the rule system which powers the *Hellboy Sourcebook and Roleplaying Game*, actually consists of a whole line of books. While the one you're reading now is the only one you need to play this game, there are numerous others, available from any good roleplaying games shop, which can be used to widen and enhance your *Hellboy* campaign.

## THE CORE SYSTEM

The core of the system is the *GURPS Basic Set*. This defines the rules of the system, with far more detail and variation than we could squeeze into this book. It also covers rules for combat using figures on a hex map, and more detail on spell-based magic and psionics (the same rules used for psychic powers in this book).

After the *Basic Set* was originally published, supplements and additional books added to the list of options for the game. To save gamers from having to purchase a vast library if they wanted to have access to useful *GURPS* rules, Steve Jackson Games published the two *GURPS Compendiums*.

***GURPS Compendium I:*** This deals with character creation, with detailed treatment and variant rules for attributes, many more advantages, disadvantages, and skills, and additional rules for the creation of PCs of non-human races.

***GURPS Compendium II:*** Subtitled *Combat and Campaigns*, this provides more coverage of equipment, more detailed rules for combat, systems for handling battles between armies, ships, or spaceships, and treatment of weird environments, poisons, alcohol, and different types of societies.

## ADDITIONAL GENERAL-PURPOSE MATERIAL

Another set of *GURPS* books are designed to be used with all sorts of games, adding specific options and providing short cuts for particular tasks. GMs should look at these books if they want to go into detail on these subjects.

## ***GURPS Horror***

This comprehensive guide to *GURPS* horror roleplaying should be of interest to any GM looking to run a long *Hellboy* campaign, or anyone who is interested in all the varieties of horror possible in games. It also has details on plenty of frightening monsters, and useful PC templates.

## ***GURPS Magic and GURPS Grimoire***

*GURPS Magic* provides a comprehensive treatment of spell-based magic, and a whole book's worth of spells, as well as further rules and options for magic items, alchemy, rune magic, and more.. It will be invaluable for any GM looking to use a lot of spell-casting characters. *GURPS Grimoire* adds several hundred more spells.

## ***GURPS Martial Arts***

Sophisticated martial arts don't play a large part in the *Hellboy* comics, but there's no reason why some BPRD agents shouldn't be highly skilled in advanced fighting styles. For that matter, a once-human monster – an oriental vampire, say – could also turn out to be an expert in melee combat. The cinematic styles in *GURPS Martial Arts* probably don't belong in a *Hellboy* game (they just don't quite fit), but a wildly cinematic game could pit masters of kung fu against uncanny psychics and fire-breathing demons. Advanced martial artists should usually take Strong Will or Magic and Psychic Resistance to represent the ability to resist exotic attacks through mystical training.

## ***GURPS Psionics***

The powers referred to as 'psionic' in the *Hellboy RPG* are known as 'psionics' in other *GURPS* material, and *GURPS Psionics* is a full treatment of the subject. GMs who use it should probably veto or restrict some of the powers it describes (particularly teleportation), as they are either too powerful or 'out of genre' for *Hellboy* games, but others are entirely appropriate. BPRD researchers may also be working on some forms of 'psionic' technology.

## ***GURPS Spirits***

The 'spirit' rules in the *Hellboy RPG* come direct from *GURPS Spirits*, which has more details, extra options, and a lot of additional creature types which use these rules. It *also* has a longer version of the ritual magic rules used in the *Hellboy* game, making it doubly useful for GMs who want their games to involve a lot of ghost busting and ceremonial magic.

## ***GURPS Bestiary***

This book not only provides game statistics for a huge variety of natural and legendary animals, it has notes on dealing with them in games, and even rules for using animals as PCs.

## ***GURPS Vehicles***

This is as comprehensive a book on the subject of vehicles (and ranged weapons) in RPGs as anyone could wish for. It provides a design system which enables people to produce a game version of virtually any possible vehicle, from the Stone Age to the far future. In truth, most *Hellboy* games are rarely likely to require this much detail for cars, boats, and planes, but if people are interested, they have the option.

The *GURPS Vehicles Expansions 1* and *2* provide even more options for designs, and the upcoming *GURPS Vehicles Companion* will include numerous completed vehicles.

## ***Template Books: GURPS Rogues, GURPS Warriors, and GURPS Wizards***

These three books are designed to make creating PCs and major adversaries easier, by providing partially complete character templates which a player or GM can take and personalize. *Warriors* is useful for all sorts of soldiers and professional fighters, many suitable as BPRD agents. *Wizards* would probably see more use for

creating adversaries, although it has lots of ideas about types of magic-wielder. *Rogues* covers characters from the wrong side of the law, but it could also be useful for all sorts of shadowy types, trackers, spies, and so on.

## CROSSOVERS AND ADAPTABLE IDEAS

Adding extra rules and mechanics isn't the key to making a roleplaying game more varied and interesting. *Hellboy* games need varied and exotic adversaries and locales, and can borrow plot and character ideas from other settings, other story types, and other worlds. The advantage of *GURPS*, as a generic, flexible system, is that it makes it easy for players and GMs to broaden their horizons.

The following are a selection of *GURPS* books, available at the time of writing or expected very soon, which may be of interest to *Hellboy* GMs and players.

### *Horror Supplements*

Aside from *GURPS Horror* itself, there are several supplements intended to support horror games. *GURPS Blood Types* and *GURPS Undead* provide detailed game treatments of vampires and undead respectively, and could be handy sources for varied adversaries. Likewise, *GURPS Creatures of the Night* is a selection of original and highly effective horror creatures, treated purely as monsters rather than as non-human characters. Lastly, *GURPS Screampunk* is a compact discussion of the roots of the gothic genre (which *Hellboy* is a modern-day version of), while *GURPS Dark Places* will describe eerie locations ripe for investigation.

Some books cover other, very specific, horror campaign settings and ideas. For example, *GURPS Cabal* describes an imaginary world-wide supernatural conspiracy which could cause problems even for Hellboy and the BPRD. In fact, if the Cabal and the BPRD both existed, then the BPRD would most likely be a *pawn* of the Cabal, used to eliminate its lesser enemies . . . Conversely, *GURPS Black Ops* describes an agency of anti-supernatural operatives on a more spectacular and cinematic scale than the BPRD, but it also includes plenty of opponents who Hellboy would doubtless be more than ready to fight.

### *GURPS Monsters*

This may be particularly useful to *Hellboy* GMs. It is a collection of non-human adversaries and threats, each given full details as characters and at least two pages of description and history. Many of them are *exactly* the sort of adversaries who Hellboy could find himself fighting, and virtually all would be of interest to the BPRD, one way or another.

### *Historical/Mythical Books*

Many *GURPS* supplements cover the history and mythology of a particular culture and region. These can be very useful in *Hellboy* games, as most of them describe myths and monsters which would make interesting problems and opponents in the present day.

*GURPS Celtic Myth* may be especially appropriate, because it covers the myths which are represented in Hellboy's world by the Daoine Sidh. Any GM looking to use that particular race of beings at length should look at it. Other useful books in this line include *GURPS Imperial Rome*, *GURPS Arabian Nights* (for the Lands of the Djinn), *GURPS Middle Ages 1*, *GURPS Russia* (for Baba Yaga's homeland), *GURPS Japan*, and the upcoming *GURPS India*.

*GURPS Atlantis* is almost entirely about myths rather than history (and also includes a detailed treatment of how to adventure underwater, if needed). Some *Hellboy* stories seem to imply that lost lands are more than just legends.

### *20th Century History*

Three books may be useful for games set during the historical period covered by *Hellboy* stories, from the 1930s on. *GURPS Cliffhangers* covers the 1920s and '30s, *GURPS WWII* the eponymous conflict, and *GURPS Atomic Horror* the 1950s. Each could be especially useful in achieving the right *atmosphere* for their respective

eras; melodramatic pulp action, gritty world at war sagas, and giant monsters and flying saucers, respectively. (The specific campaign background of *GURPS Atomic Horror* doesn't fit with the *Hellboy* back story, but parts of it can be adapted.)

In addition, *GURPS Who's Who 1* and *2* describe a large collection of historical characters from many periods in *GURPS* terms. They may be of particular interest in 20<sup>th</sup> century historical games because PCs might have a chance to meet some of the more recent characters they describe. Those who apparently died before *Hellboy*'s time may even pop up as undead.

### ***GURPS High-Tech and GURPS Modern Firepower***

These two books go into considerable detail regarding weapons technology, from the Renaissance to the modern day. Gamers who are interested in the exact details of the guns which their characters use can find all they'll need here.

### ***20th Century Adventure Styles***

If gamers want to play up the action, adventure, and investigation side of *Hellboy* games, rather than the supernatural horror, there are at least three *GURPS* supplements to which they could turn for inspiration. *GURPS Cops* describes the sort of mainstream law enforcers who'll be first on the scene at many supernatural incidents. *GURPS Espionage* deals with the techniques of spy and counter-spy which are sometimes needed in complex investigations. Lastly, *GURPS Special Ops* covers the high-action world of special forces soldiers, who might well become involved with major occult problems in remote areas.

### ***Conspiracies***

Conspiracies are a relatively small part of the *Hellboy* world, but they are a natural fit with horror gaming and anyway, some would say that both the BPRD and Project Ragna Rok are themselves very dangerous conspiracies. *GURPS Illuminati* provides book-length coverage of conspiratorial roleplaying, while *GURPS Warehouse 23* describes the (hopefully) imaginary storehouse where the toys and tools of a strange and conspiracy-laden world are kept. Many individual items from the latter book could be dropped straight into a *Hellboy* scenario, and might startle even long-time BPRD agents.

### ***Others***

Numerous other *GURPS* books could have at least passing interest here. For example, *GURPS Villains* provides a set of mostly human enemies, some of them supernatural and horrific, while the two *GURPS Ultra-Tech* books and *GURPS Bio-Tech* deal with the sort of highly advanced technology which the likes of Professor Doctor von Klempt would love to misuse. *Hellboy* GMs should browse the shelves of their local games shop, and see what grabs them (hopefully not literally).