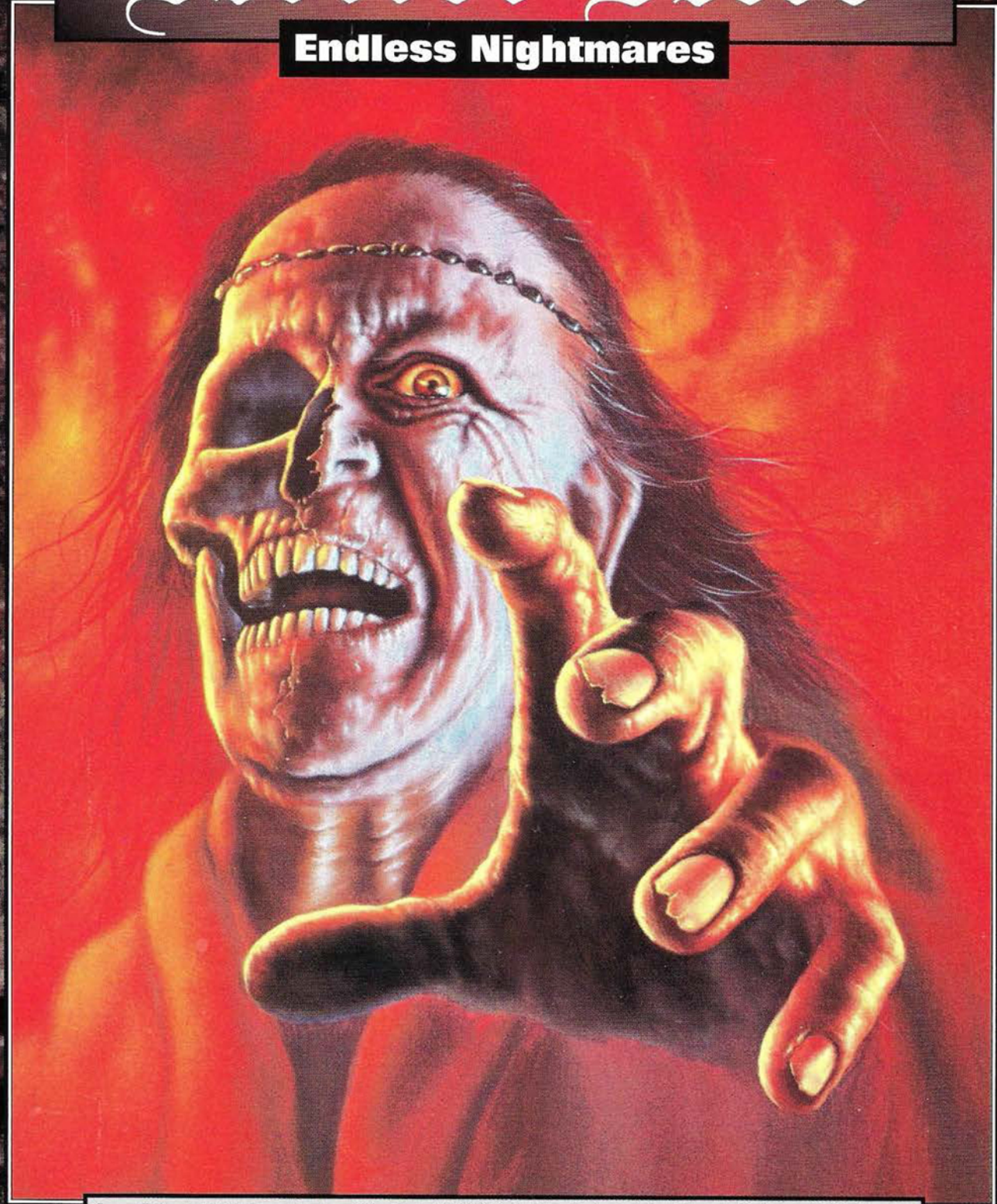A Genre Book for the HERO System™

Horror Hero™

Endless Nightmares

by Alan Dickerson, Robert O'Neal, John Tucker, & David Utter

HORROR HERO™

ENDLESS NIGHTMARES™

Authors: Alan Dickerson, Robert O'Neal, John Tucker & David Utter

Additional Material:
George MacDonald and Steve Peterson

Editor/Developer: Bruce Harlick

Cover Art: Jim Warren

Interior Illustrations: Storn Cook, Alan Dickerson, Louis Frank, Fredd Gorham, Stephan Peregrine, Giorgia Ponticelli, Scott Ruggles, Greg Smith

Project Specific Contributions —
Pagemaking: Blackhawk Typesetting;
Paste-Up: Gera Miles, Mike Reynolds;
Cover Graphics: Terry K. Amthor;
Art Direction: Jessica Ney-Grimm;
Production Direction: John W. Curtis III;
Editorial Contributions: Coleman Charlton, Ray Greer, George MacDonald, Steve Peterson

ICE Staff — *Sales Manager:* Deane Begiebing;
Managing Editor: Coleman Charlton;
President: Peter Fenlon; *CEO:* Bruce Neidlinger;
Editing, Development & Production Staff: Monte Cook, John Curtis, Bruce Harlick, Jessica Ney-Grimm;
Sales, Customer Service & Operations Staff: Heike Kubasch, Dave Platnick;
Shipping Staff: Dave Morris, Daniel Williams.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

AN INTRODUCTION TO HORROR

Ruggels

So. You have come.

Tonight you will enter the many worlds of Horror Hero. It is I, One-eye, your monocular Host with No Name. I am your tour guide through the horrors of the past century on Earth. I was there. I watched it all happen. I saw eldritch horror unfold in the dark streets of yesteryear...

Delaware, 1888: Both policemen bent over the young woman's body as steam appeared in the cold night air over her mortal wounds. Inspector Graeme looked down the alley, staring off at a point seemingly beyond the horizon. With a sudden turn, Graeme startled Patrolman Johnson and walked to the street.

"He followed her out of the inn, Grover. She was at the back of the group; her friends were in a hurry to get to their homes and none of them saw him stop her. He engaged her in conversation here, pulled her into the alley and killed her near this wall."

"But Inspector, if she was killed here, what happened to the blood? Wouldn't these wounds give off a lot of blood?" Graeme did not answer. A man in a long coat standing across the street had his attention...

After the turn of the century those awful Pulp magazines told lurid tales of terror which spanned the world. Little did the eager readers of those tales suspect that real horror was occurring across the globe, as the last dark corners of the Earth were probed by "civilized" men...

Haiti, 1933: Exploding with a tremendous sound, the tunnel was closed with several tons of dirt and rock. Patrick Mitchell pulled himself from the ground with tremendous effort; every muscle and bone felt torn or smashed. The stone! What happened to the stone?

Adrenaline took over now. The explosion had not killed him, but losing the stone would be akin to dying. Where was it? His flashlight beam obscured by the cloud of dust, Patrick began to search the ground with his hands frantically.

Then he heard The Sound. No mistake, falling rock does not make That Sound. Patrick slowly aimed the flashlight down the tunnel opening to the west. It was coming. Patrick turned to the southeast passage and started running. "When the Ictaxlian finds the stone," Patrick thought, "it will never stop until it finds me..."

And so it went, until the thermonuclear forces of Chaos rent the sorcerous fabric already stretched to the breaking point by would-be world conquerors. A new enemy surfaced after the war — Science. You will never hear about it now, but for a while your little world fell prey to the children of the atom and the cold grip of intelligences from beyond....

Ohio, 1956: The helicopter was still ten feet off the ground when General Nebula leaped out. In seconds he was in position at the mouth of the cave and waiting for the others to catch up. "You're sure this is where the kids went?" he hissed, and the field team assured him it was. No need to ask, really — he could smell a Robot lair a mile away. "Let's go!"

Forty feet inside the rough stone gave way to polished metal, and the hum of machinery could be heard. Twenty feet after that the tunnel opened up into a cavernous chamber. Alien technology lined the walls, and a dark gray saucer hovered over a gaping pit in the floor. All around the room human slaves — teenagers — toiled at the machines. Suddenly a reverberating clang came from the tunnel behind the General, and a hatch opened up on the saucer. Darn it! It was a trap!

From within the saucer a mechanical voice intoned, "Welcome human-leader-called-Nebula. Throw down your primitive weapons and surrender."

L. FRANK 12-93
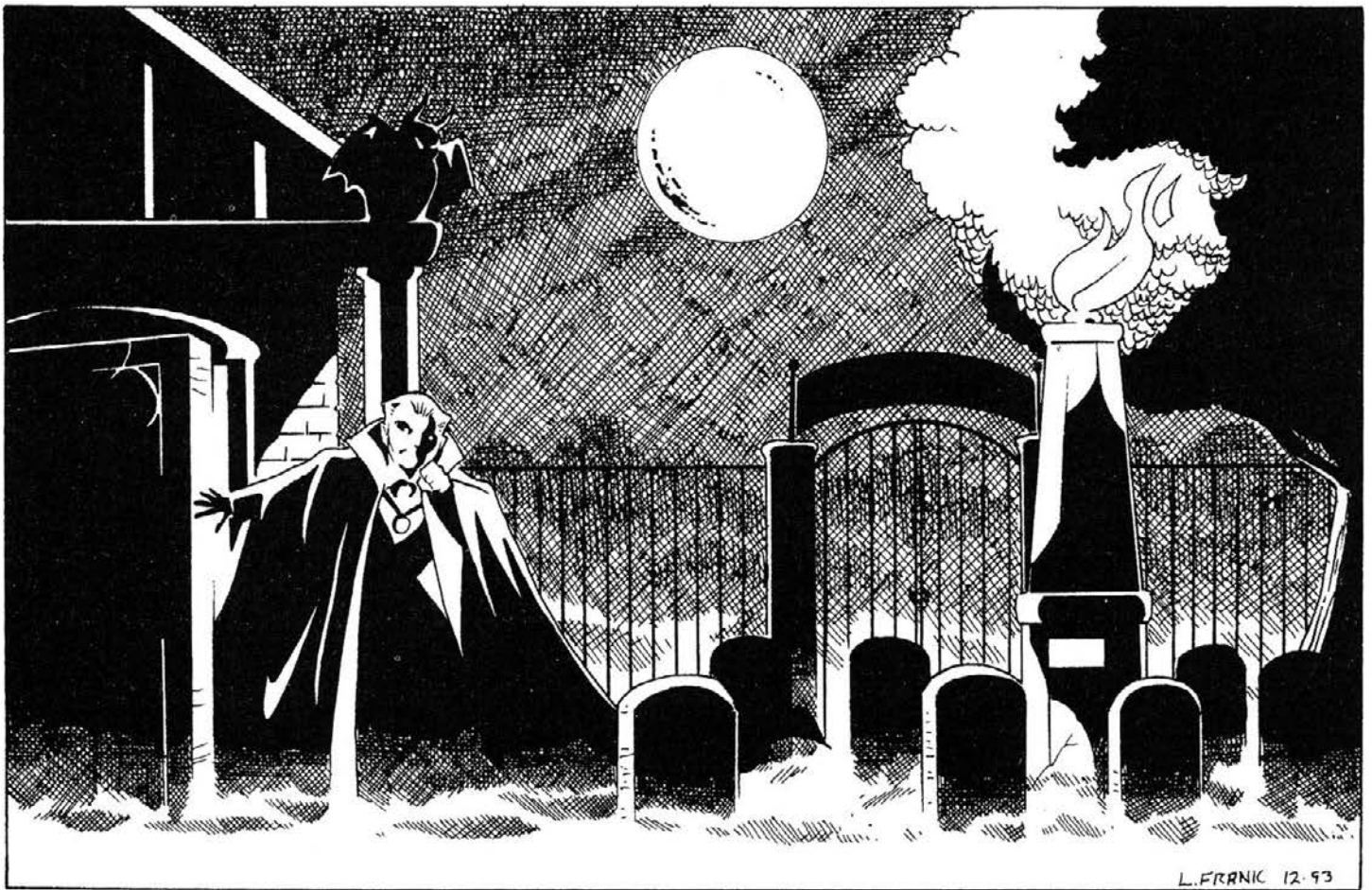
"Never, you lousy alien! You'll never get us!"

"Scanning threat. ..'Us', General?"

Boy, the team was quiet. Nebula turned and his awful suspicion was confirmed. Glassy eyes, slack face, guns pointed at him — they'd been brain-changed, all right. This was going to be tougher than he thought...

But you protest — That is ancient history, and of little concern to me. Where is the horror now? That, my young friends, is a question you will regret the answer to...

Somewhere in America, 1992: Blake scoffed. "There's no way that that's *the* bullet. If your theory is true then they would have recovered it."

The Texan only shrugged. "This ain't the one they picked up off Connally's stretcher. Our people got there first. Just watch."

The two mannequins in the convertible had photographs taped to their heads, which the Texan explained was necessary. He loaded the bolt-action rifle and pointed it at the car.

"You going to aim that thing?"

"Nope. Don't need to." Barnes pulled the trigger and plaster flew off the dummies. "Take a gander at that there."

Sure enough, there were seven wounds. The magic bullet had hit the Connally dummy twice and the other dummy five times, changing direction three times. Blake picked it out of the car door and found it to be in pristine condition. Suddenly the room seemed very cold. He was holding in his hand the bullet that killed Kennedy.

His reverie was interrupted by a strangled cry from the Texan. Three swarthy men in suits stood in the corner of the gallery and Barnes was on the floor. The air rippled around the three figures and Blake swore in disgust.

"Wereboars. Damn." Their disguises gone, Blake saw three hairy monsters gnashing their tusks and growling, "Our masters want their property back, human. They also want you dead. Let us begin, shall we?"

But you do not seek real horrors such as I have witnessed. You seek to create horror through the art of Aleanumerology, the magic of dice. So be it. I, too, have studied this art and trust my counsel will enlighten you. I will provide guidance, admonitions, warnings and the odd word to the wise. But first, a final caution — with this book you will enter regions of Hero System roleplaying you only dreamed could exist. From the gas-lit streets of historic America to the neon jungles of today, Horror Hero strips away the veneer of normality and exposes the terror within!

Here you will find information enabling you to run exciting scenarios of horror in any Hero System campaign. If your heroes are fighters or thinkers, if your genre is the Roaring Twenties or the saucer haunted Fifties, if your players want to face a different threat, or if you just need to throw something nasty and evil at their bare throats, you hold in your hands the book you need. But beware! Your campaign may never be the same again!

Or you may wish to start a new all-horror campaign. Included here is information on four distinct horror genres spanning the century, dozens of monsters researched from sources across the globe and beyond, organizations plotting agendas that spell doom for humanity, new package deals

enabling players to recreate their favorite Horror Hero, background notes for each era, new wrinkles on magic and powers, more scenarios than you can sprinkle holy water at, and much, much more!

In Horror Hero, the research has been done for you, and the monsters lie in wait. All you need to do is add your unsuspecting players; a sinister laugh is optional. And remember:

> **IF YOU CAN'T BE A HERO,**
> **RUN FOR IT!**

WHAT'S INSIDE

Here is a brief summary of what is included in *Horror Hero* and how it is organized.

GENRE BOOK

The first half of *Horror Hero* explains how the GM and players can use the *Hero System* for horror roleplaying. First of all is an overview section, describing the horror genre and its components. Next is the rules section (Defining The Genre), where we describe how to use the *Hero System* rules (and some new rules) to create horror roleplaying. This includes rules for magic and psychic abilities in *Horror Hero*. The fourth section describes how to create settings for *Horror Hero*, and how to use *Horror Hero* in existing settings. The Characters section describes in detail how to create and play *Horror Hero* characters in a variety of settings. The Stories section describes how to GM *Horror Hero*; it includes guidelines on creating and running scenarios, campaign rationales, and more. Finally, the Sourcebook section provides some examples of magic systems, spells and items for *Horror Hero*.

CAMPAIGN BOOK

The second half of *Horror Hero* contains three different campaign settings, each designed to simulate a different type of horror. Each era contains a brief Player's guide describing the setting and containing information on skills and technology that are currently available. Next is a GM's guide that explains how to set and run a campaign during the time frame. Then a campaign setting for the era is presented. Each campaign details an organization indicative of the era, with the organization history, current activities, sample magic and NPCs, monsters and lairs. Then a PC organization with sample PCs is presented. Finally, each era contains a ready to run scenario. These are presented in the most appropriate era. but can (and should) be used in any campaign.

The campaign settings are The Shadow of The Civil War (gothic/eldritch horror in historic America), Beating It To A Pulp (world-spanning adventure horror in the pulp era), and The Awful Truth (urban legend and paranoid horror in today's world).

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Horror Hero is a combination genre and campaign book designed for use with the *Hero System* rules. It contains material describing ways of creating and running horror-themed role playing games. *Horror Hero* does not contain the rules needed to play the game; creating characters, using skills and conducting combat are described in the *Hero System Rulesbook*, available separately.

We recommend that you read all the way through *Horror Hero*, of course. However, we do have some specific recommendations about reading this book.

IF YOU HAVE NEVER PLAYED HERO SYSTEM GAMES BEFORE

As explained, this book will help you create exciting Horror role playing games using the *Hero System*, but it won't teach you how to actually play them. If you don't already have the *Hero System* Rule Book, you should buy a copy right away. Once you have the *Hero System Rulesbook*, you should familiarize yourself with the following sections: Character Creation, Character Skills, and the Combat rules (you and your players will find scenarios run smoother if you practice the combat system for an hour or so before you commence the campaign). After you have mastered these areas, read the rest of the *Hero System* book.

The Game Master (GM) should read the entire *Horror Hero* book, paying particular attention to Defining The Rules. The GM must then select which campaign to run (or create a brand new campaign, which requires a lot more work). We recommend that novice GMs begin by using a sample scenario from one of the campaigns; this is the easiest way to get started.

Players should read all of the Genre portion on *Horror Hero*, paying particular attention to the Characters section. Additionally, the players should read the Player's Guide section of the campaign that the GM has chosen to run (but no further!). The players can use the sample heroes included with the campaign, or they can construct their own characters. If the players are constructing their own characters, the GM must provide the campaign ground rules for the players (see Defining The Rules).

IF YOU HAVE PLAYED HERO SYSTEM GAMES BEFORE

The material in *Horror Hero* may be added to an existing *Hero System* campaign or it may be used as the basis of an all-new campaign. The GM who wants to add horror scenarios to an existing campaign can ignore most of the Campaign section, but the creatures, NPCs and scenarios may be useful for almost any campaign with a little modification. If you want to start up a *Horror Hero* campaign using one of the campaigns included in the book, then of course you should read through that entire section of the Campaign book as well as the entire Genre book. Players should read the Player's Guide to that campaign, as well as the Characters section of the Genre book.

All roleplayers know how deflating it is when a player knows all about a villain's weaknesses because he read the rulesbook or scenario; this situation is magnified in a horror game. The definitions of horror and terror are, after all, fear of the *unknown*. Players should never read the scenarios, organization and monster entries or the descriptions of enchanted items. If they do, the GM is justified in charging experience points for appropriate knowledge skills if the players use that information during a game!

A FINAL NOTE FROM THE AUTHORS

Tales of horror are the oldest known to man. From Cro-Magnon cave drawings to the sophisticated movies of today, horror has explored the emotion of fear, the dread of painful death and the fear that an individual has no control over his own destiny.

Horror can occur in any roleplaying game, because it is based solely on an emotion that has always been with us. The fiends of the night are reflections of ourselves, and our triumph over them are victories over the darkness in our souls.

This is why horror roleplaying is such fun and so satisfying. Those who cannot identify with costumed superheroes or muscle-bound barbarians can still connect with the ordinary mortal who thrusts back the darkness, if only for a little while. Horror is the roleplaying equivalent of a whistle in the dark, or a nervous laugh — the authors hope that you have as much fun exploring it as we had creating it.

OVERVIEW

This section gives you an overview of the horror genre, and a look at some of the classic types of horror and how they apply to roleplaying games. Additionally, we'll look at some of the appropriate settings, characters, and story types that are part of the horror genre. Subsequent sections of this book go into more detail on these topics.

THE HORROR GENRE

What is a horror story? The essence, of course, is terror. The trappings aren't important; whether the terror occurs in a spaceship stalked by a ravenous alien creature or in a vampire-haunted Carpathian castle, it's still a horror story. The fact that horror stories may be set in fantasy or science fiction or westerns or any other time and place is unimportant. The root of this genre, a terrible gnarled root that plunges straight to the depths of Hell, is terror.

Terror takes many forms. It can be the refined mental fear that grips you when you read the classic story *The Monkey's Paw*, or Poe's *The Telltale Heart*. There's nothing overtly scary on stage in these stories; that cold chill down your spine is generated entirely by your overactive imagination.

A more common sort of terror is that feeling you get when you see a monster, or some horrible sight like a mangled body. This time the source of the emotion is more obvious — that grisly sight in front of your eyes is extending its razor-like claws, and you fear for your life. This source of terror can verge into disgust in its extreme state, as when you view that truly ugly triumph of Hollywood special effects making a disgusting mess out of a very lifelike human replica. Yuck.

Roleplaying games, being interactive stories, require effort on the part of both the GM and the players to generate horror. The GM must set up the proper mood through his choices of setting, characters, and stories, while the players must respond in ways consistent with the mood. This still leaves everyone a wide range of choices. We'll try to provide you with some specifics on how to accomplish this.

SUB-GENRES

Horror comes in different flavors. These sub-genres can give you some variation in your horror campaign. The four sample campaigns presented in *Horror Hero* also show you some different flavors of horror.

CLASSIC

This is the core of the horror genre, the "gothic" horror story that takes many forms and shapes but follows the same pattern under its shroud.

In the classic horror story, the protagonists gradually become aware that something is Not Right. This can be a mysterious disappearance or three, unusual noises or events, or perhaps violent death in strange circumstances. This opening leads (sooner or later) to actual confrontations with the Monster. The Monster can take many forms; it may be an organization of evil cultists, a vampire, a haunted house, a psychotic killer, or a voracious alien. In any case, the protagonists struggle to stay alive and to determine the nature of the Monster. Once the Monster has been unmasked, this leads to a Solution, where the protagonists have determined a way to eliminate the Monster. Sometimes the Solution is easy, but the implementation is hard (sure, all we have to do is knock out the psychotic killer, but we have no weapons and all the lights are out!). In other cases, there appears to be no Solution whatever (how are we gonna stop this thing?), but then something always turns up at the last moment. Finally, there is the Final Confrontation with the Monster, wherein the Solution is implemented and the Monster is defeated.

HUMOROUS HORROR

Yes, horror can be mixed with humor sometimes, though it's a fine line to tread. Normally this attempt ends up in one camp or the other. The excellent movie *Ghostbusters* had its horror elements, but was basically a comedy. *American Werewolf In London*, for all its comedic interludes with the rotting corpse played by Griffin Dunne, was essentially a horror film.

In roleplaying, you may find this sub-genre appearing frequently, as players attempt to relieve their tension with humorous remarks. Of course, the GM will usually make things even more deadly after everyone has had a good laugh... so beware. For the GM who wants to make humor a regular part of the horror game, be advised that this is very difficult to achieve. Still, the humorous and bumbling team of monster hunters can be an amusing campaign.

PSYCHOLOGICAL

This is horror that occurs mostly in the mind, with a minimum of physical fuss and bother. Of course, this means it's not all that suited to a roleplaying situation, where the players expect to face threats they can handle with direct action. So psychological horror should be used as an extra flavoring, a technique that the GM uses to increase the tension and the effects of other types of horror.

SLASHER

This is horror that focuses on the blood and guts aspect of horror; in some circles it's known as splatterpunk. The "dead teenager" movies such as the *Friday the 13th* series are a good example of this. Unfortunately for roleplaying, this genre tends to kill off most of the characters by the end of the story. Slasher horror is short on subtlety, and long on

inventive methods of sudden death. It's really not suited to long-term roleplaying action, though an occasional sojourn into splatterpunk can work.

The standard slasher story features a group of characters stalked by an evil creature (human or non-human, supernatural or natural). Usually the characters are in some remote location, and they are cut off from help or escape. One by one, the attacker eliminates them. The survivors gradually discover the nature of their attacker and look for ways to defeat him. The final confrontation takes place between a handful of survivors (one to three, usually wounded) and the creature. Often the demise of the creature is left uncertain, paving the way for future sequels.

Slasher horror works best in roleplaying by giving the players a set of characters to play for the evening; that way they don't have any preconceptions about who will live and who will die (of course, usually it's the NPCs who die). This can be somewhat dull for those players whose characters expire early on; the GM should let those players handle NPCs or assist in combat in order to keep their interest up.

SETTINGS

Settings for horror can be in any time or place, but some are more effective than others. The traditional settings for horror help the atmosphere along, and make it easier for the GM to generate the proper emotions in the players.

Horror seems to work best in the past or in the present, not in the future. For a horror campaign, technology can offer too many possible solutions to problems. Science fiction settings are thus more difficult to manage for repeated horror adventures.

Even present-day settings can offer some of that problem, as players will attempt to find technologies that can help them ("Can I use this frequency analyzer to detect ghosts?"). The Gm must be prepared to deal with technology as used against the opponents. Perhaps technology doesn't work at all, or the players are in a situation where they don't have access to advanced technology.

Settings in the past make it easier to terrorize the characters, but at the same time they require more effort on the part of the GM to create the details of a time period largely unfamiliar to the players. Somehow, though, it's often easier to justify the presence of magic and monsters in a time period before the present day, when such things seem out of place in our silicon civilization.

CHARACTERS

Characters designed for horror roleplaying situations are much like other adventurers. They need a mix of capabilities, so that they can be useful in different situations. More specifically, while some characters may be designed for action roles, some or all characters should have skills that can help them deal with the all-important non-combat situations in horror. Knowledge of the occult forces and opponents they will be facing can be critical to survival. Of course, some of this knowledge will be acquired in the course of play, but related Knowledge Skills will always be useful.

More unusual abilities such as psychic powers or magic may be available, depending on the campaign. While a character who is expert in one of these areas can be useful, beware of the dangers of over specialization. If your character is too narrowly focused, the player may find himself bored for long stretches during the adventure when there's nothing for his character to do.

Perhaps most important of all when designing a character is to consider the other characters that form your group. A balanced mix of capabilities among the group is useful; and it's important not to step on someone else's role. The GM should be sure to have an enabling device handy for the group; this explains why they are together and why they stay together. Such an enabling device may be a group that the characters all belong to, or someone who hires them all to perform a task. There may be more than one enabling device, but the GM must ensure that the enabling devices don't work at cross-purposes.

STORIES

Generally, *Horror Hero* stories follow the basics of the genre or the sub-genre in which they are set, as discussed in the previous section. There are some general principles about successful *Horror Hero* stories that you should know.

The GM must decide when to allow the heroes to eliminate the threats and when to allow the threats to continue. Sometimes the heroes will succeed in slaying the monster, but then the GM has to know where the next threat is coming from. Some menaces are institutional (such as a secret society), and the heroes can never eliminate them entirely. Or perhaps there's a never-ending supply of vampires to keep the Fearless Vampire Hunters busy. It's important, however, to give the players a sense of true victory even if they know the threat will return. They should accomplish something of value: saving some lives, making an area safe, making it more difficult for the threat in the future.

Eliminating the threat completely is a very satisfying reward for the players. Of course, the GM should have a new threat ready so that the campaign doesn't come to a halt. But don't introduce it right away; let the players savor their victory first. A victory is a welcome relief after the terror and tension of the story.

NPCs are very important tools for the GM to use in adventures. Aside from the normal usages of NPCs to add flavor and information to an adventure, in a horror scenario NPCs are vitally important. The NPCs provide a way to bring horror to the characters without the need to slay or maim a character. Of course, for this technique to have maximum effect the GM has to have built up the NPC as someone important to the player-characters. The more time that is spent on this process, the more impact the NPC's troubles will have on the players. If you introduce an NPC and then have them slain ten minutes later, this may cause some consternation. But if you have an NPC that's been in the game for several adventures suddenly die horribly, the players should feel this intensely.

DEFINING THE GENRE

This section suggests ways to use the *Hero System* rules in a horror campaign to create the desired effect. Also, new rules for the *Hero System* are presented here, as well as magic and psychic powers designed especially for *Horror Hero*.

TONE

Obviously the horror genre is unified in tone by its very nature, unlike many other genres. Horror tends to be dark and grim, characterized by a fear of the unknown and a feeling that the capabilities of the opponents are greater than the heroes. Of course, for roleplaying purposes the heroes usually overcome these problems, but still this atmosphere is very important to the flavor of horror.

Given that this is the correct tone for horror roleplaying, this guides the choice of *Hero System* rules to use in setting up your horror campaign. In order to bring home the effects of horror to the players, rules should be selected that have potentially devastating and long-lasting effects. This raises the stakes for the players and puts them under greater tension, which contributes to the atmosphere of terror. Conversely, rules that tend to minimize the effects of damage should be left out.

We have introduced some new rules that deal with the long-term psychological effects of horror and tension on the characters. Used judiciously, these can add just the right horrific flavor to the ordinary *Hero System* rules.

DEFINING THE RULES

This section describes the rules that we recommend using in *Horror Hero*. Of course, each GM is free to decide which *Hero System* rules to use, and to create any house rules necessary to suit the individual gaming group. We recommend that you consider which rules to use carefully, and that it's often useful to have a slightly different subset of the *Hero System* rules used for a different campaign. This keeps all your *Hero System* games from becoming to similar in style, and keeps the players on their toes adapting to new circumstances.

EXISTING RULES

Horror Hero campaigns generally use the *Hero System* rules concerned with heroic level campaigns, and leave out rules designed for superheroic campaigns (such as Knockback). The following rules list discusses specific *Hero System* rules that should be used in *Horror Hero*.

RULES LIST

The following rules should be used in *Horror Hero* campaigns. Of course, optional rules can be left out at the GM's discretion, and should be avoided when there are a large number of players or complicated combats occur.

Horror Hero Standard Rules
Standard and Optional Combat Maneuvers
Hit Location, Wounding and Bleeding
New Stress rules
New PRE Attack rules

Do not use:
Knockback
Endurance
Pushing
Old PRE Attack rules

You can generally ignore the Endurance rules unless there's extensive use of hand-to-hand combat or a special situation arises during play. In most modern or near-modern *Horror Hero* campaigns, characters will be using firearms instead of muscle-powered weapons. Thus, keeping track of Endurance cost isn't necessary.

The Pushing rules can be used in special circumstances (when the GM feels they will help the drama), but characters should not depend on the availability of Pushed STR (or anything else). This is horror, after all, and the characters should know fear...

CHARACTER RULES

This section describes the rules basis used by character in *Horror Hero*.

POINT BASE

Horror Hero characters should be built at the heroic level, with a base of 75 points plus up to 75 points in Disadvantages. This gives players enough points to become quite good at one or two things, and have generally good Characteristics. Most characters should try to strike a balance between buying Skills for combat use and for non-combat use.

Effective *Horror Hero* campaigns can also be run at the Competent Normal level of 50 points plus up to 50 points in Disadvantages. This may be difficult for players used to a higher power level, but it can be helpful in creating an atmosphere of terror. A character built on a total of 100 points certainly won't feel that he can handle any monster he might face, that's for sure.

L.FRANK 12·93-·

LIMITS

Horror Hero characters should use the Characteristic Maxima as defined in the rules, and thus cannot use the Normal Characteristic Maxima Character Disadvantage. Generally, characters who wish to buy up a Characteristic beyond the maximum should only do so for one Characteristic (such as INT or STR). This keeps characters from becoming too powerful in multiple areas.

It's usually best to restrict starting characters to no more than a total OCV of 8 or 9 from DEX and combat Skill Levels combined. Characters with a 9 OCV are quite powerful against normals. Later on, characters can be allowed to exceed this limit if the GM allows.

NEW RULES

This section presents some new rules for the *Hero System* that are helpful in running horror campaigns. These rules can be used, where appropriate, in other *Hero System* games, if the GM allows. These rules are, of course, optional.

SPIRIT RULES

These rules cover a wide range of subjects that all deal with spirits. First, the nature of a spirit in the *Hero System* is defined. Next, new powers and advantages for dealing with spirits are described. The next section deals with playing and gamemastering spirits, and describes how to handle a number of common situations dealing with spirits. The next section is all about how to create spirits, along with some objects that deal with spirits.

DEFINING SPIRITS

What constitutes a spirit? Basically, a spirit exists on the spirit plane as an invisible and intangible entity. The spirit plane is another dimension of reality subject to its own peculiar laws (more on that later). All living creatures with an EGO have a spirit which is a part of them until they die. However, with the Astral Projection power, a character may free his spirit to wander on the spirit plane while his body remains in a comatose state. There are also spirits that exist independent of a body; these may be the spirits of dead people (ghosts), or supernatural creatures such as demons. A character's spirit may be removed from his body against his will, transferred to another body, or even destroyed.

Spirits have INT, DEX, EGO, PRE, and SPD; they do not and can not have STR, CON, BODY, COM, PD, ED, REC, END, or STUN. Spirits are completely intangible; this is similar to being Desolid, but with different special effects. Powers bought with Affects Desolid will not affect spirits; Desolid characters cannot perceive or affect spirits and vice-versa. Spirits are completely invisible to all normal senses and detects; specific senses and detects that can find spirits are listed later in this section. Spirits can have powers that affect other spirits or they may buy (at extra cost) powers that affect the real world.

Spirits are affected by any Powers bought with the +½ Advantage Affects Spirits and the +½ Advantage Based on EGO vs. Spirits (a total of +1 Advantage). Mental Powers (generally used as psychic powers in *Horror Hero*) may affect spirits by buying the powers with a +½ Advantage Affects Spirits (Mental Powers are, of course, already based on EGO). In addition, spirits are affected by Shift Spirit, Consume Spirit, and Spirit Summoning. Only certain special senses and detects can locate and identify spirits. Not all

powers can affect spirits, even when bought with the right Advantages; spirits have no physical form, so any powers that affect the physical form (such as Energy Blast, Killing Attack, Entangle, and so on) have no effect on a spirit.

Spirits are found either floating freely on the spirit plane or in *containers*; a container is merely a physical object that can hold a spirit (a container may be a living being). For instance, every living being that possesses an EGO has a spirit as well as its physical form. (Nonliving objects become containers through a special process; see Spirit Containers.) Normally, these spirits are always bound to the living form which holds them, but the Shift Spirit power can free these spirits. A specially prepared object, such as a djinn bottle, can also be a container. Some spirits are bound to places or objects (like a haunted house); such a place is considered to be a container for the spirit. (In fact, the entire spirit plane itself can be considered to be a container, albeit one that is huge; effectively the size of the world or even the physical universe.)

Spirits can be anywhere they want to be within the confines of their container at the speed of thought (in other words, it takes merely a half phase action to be anywhere). However, leaving or entering a container is more difficult; you must use the Shift Spirit power to accomplish this. Shift Spiriting can be done to yourself or to others. So to have your spirit leave your body, you use Shift Spirit (see Astral Projection). A spirit on the spirit plane (such as a ghost or a demon) must use Shift Spirit in order to enter a body (this is called *Possession*). If you wanted to swap minds with someone else, you'd have to use Shift Spirit in several stages: first to take your spirit from your body, then to put your spirit into the other body, then to take the spirit out of the other body, and finally to put the new spirit into your body.

NEW POWERS AND POWER ADVANTAGES

There are several new Powers and Advantages that are used to deal with spirits.

SHIFT SPIRIT

This power allows the user to move his spirit into or out of a container. Shifting a spirit is accomplished by removing the spirit's EGO from its current container (similar to a Drain) and placing it onto the spirit plane, or by taking a spirit from the spirit plane and placing it into a container. Spirits can never be moved directly from one container to another; they must always move to or from the spirit plane first. So if you want to move your spirit out of your body into another body, you must first use Shift Spirit to move your spirit to the spirit plane, then use Shift Spirit again to move your spirit into the new body.

Before you use Shift Spirit, you must designate the target of the attack and the result of the attack. For instance, you may want to shift your own spirit from your body to the spirit plane. Or a demon may want to shift its spirit from the spirit plane into a person (possession). Both of these actions would use Shift Spirit. Shift Spirit can also be used on another entity; for instance, a wizard may take someone's spirit out of their body and put it onto the spirit plane.

The user buys 1d6 of Shift Spirit for every 20 points; Shift Spirit requires an EGO-based Attack Roll but has no range. Once you have successfully made the Attack Roll on the target spirit, roll the dice and total them to determine the effect. The effect is treated as an EGO Drain, except that the target's EGO score is only used as a marker; for any purpose other than this power, the target's EGO is not affected.

In order to Shift a spirit, the target's EGO must be "drained" to the negative value of the target's beginning level. Thus, for a character with a standard EGO of 10, this must be reduced by Shift Spirit to a value of -10 before the spirit is shifted.

The "drained" EGO returns at the standard rate of 5 active points per turn. This time period may be stretched out; each +¼ Advantage moves the return rate one step further on the Time table.

The target of a Shift Spirit has no way of resisting this process except through Power Defense (bought with Affects Spirits) or an appropriate Suppress, preventing the Shift Spirit from taking full effect.

Example: *Artemus Magus wants to cast a 3d6 Shift Spirit spell upon his faithful servant Rogi, who is tied to the examining table for this experiment. Since the spell has no range, Artemus must touch Rogi to make the attack. Once physical contact is made (a Grab roll is pretty easy in this circumstance), Artemus must make the EGO Attack Roll. Artemus has an EGO of 18 while poor Rogi has an EGO of 10, so Artemus easily makes his Attack Roll. Rogi has no Power Defense (Affects Spirits), so he has no defense at all against this attack. Artemus rolls 3d6 and scores a 13, so Rogi loses 6 points of EGO for the purposes of Shifting his spirit. Rogi's EGO is still 10 for the purpose of making EGO Rolls or resisting further Shift Spirit attacks, but Artemus must only subtract 14 more points of EGO from Rogi in order to free Rogi's spirit from his body. Artemus successfully attacks twice more this turn, rolling a 9 for the effect of the second attack ("draining" 4 more points of EGO) and a 12 for the third attack ("draining" 6 more points of EGO). Rogi has now lost a total of 16 EGO, so his spirit has almost been shifted out of his body. But now it's the end of the turn, so Rogi gets back 5 Character points worth of EGO, so after the end of the turn Rogi has only lost 14 points of EGO. Artemus must attack again until Rogi reaches -20 EGO, at which point Rogi's spirit has been freed from his body.*

Shift Spirit is not ranged, so you must be in physical contact with the target before you can use this power. If you are attempting to use this power on a spirit that's in a physical container, then you must make a standard DEX-based Attack Roll to grab the container. You may now make your EGO-based Attack Roll to Shift the spirit. Spirits within the same container are considered to be in contact (the spirit plane is not considered a container for this purpose).

The only way you can use the standard Shift Spirit on a free-floating spirit (that is, a spirit that's not in a container) is if the spirit cooperates, or if you have controlled the spirit through Mind Control (telling it to stay put) or if you have confined the spirit to a virtual container (using Power Defense; see Blocking Spirits). A spirit trying to use Shift Spirit on another spirit that's in a container merely has to manifest in the same place as the container; this does not require an Attack Roll (the spirit still has to do the EGO-based Attack Roll, though).

Adding the Ranged Advantage to Shift Spirit is extremely useful; this eliminates the need for any sort of DEX-based Attack Roll to grab a container. As long as you can see or perceive the target spirit, you can use the ranged Shift Spirit on it. Thus, you could do a Mind Scan to locate a target spirit and then use Ranged Shift Spirit to move that spirit to some other spot.

The recipient of a Shift Spirit may already have a spirit, in which case there may be a conflict between the two spirits (see Spirit Combat).

ASTRAL PROJECTION

This is the process of the spirit leaving the body and going out on its own, while the body remains behind. This can be accomplished by using the standard Shift Spirit power on your own spirit. Or, if you want to lower the cost, Astral Projection can be purchased using Shift Spirit with the -1 Limitation Self Only. While you are Astral Projecting, your body and spirit are separated. The spirit has the INT, EGO, DEX, PRE, and SPD, while your body has all remaining Characteristics.

As with any spirit, a character's spirit form is completely invisible and intangible. The character's spirit can use any powers or abilities it may possess, subject to the restrictions of the spirit form. Obviously, your Stealth Skill or your Lockpicking Skill aren't very useful (though if you had bought Telekinesis at +2 Affects Real World, then your Lockpicking might be handy). Powers can be used as long as they don't require END (they must use Charges, an END Reserve or have No END Cost), but these powers won't affect the real world unless bought with the +2 Advantage Affects Real World. Powers aren't usable if their Limitations prevent a spirit form from employing them (such as a Power with Gestures or Incantations Limitations).

Spirits have a natural affinity for the body that they were created in, if that body is still living. Thus, you can get into your own body automatically without using Shift Spirit (unless someone has placed a barrier on your body) if your spirit can get into contact with your body. (See the rules for spirit contact in the Shift Spirit writeup.) Note that unless you have bought some senses that can be used while in spirit form, you'll have a very hard time finding your body again. Astral Projection is not for the novice!

If for some reason your spirit can't get back, your body will eventually die (from starvation) unless it obtains advanced medical or magical treatment that can keep the body fed. You may also want to prevent wandering spirits from entering your conveniently unoccupied body while you are gone; see Blocking Spirits for information on how to do this.

The END cost for Astral Projection is borne by the body, since your spirit is in the body when you use this power. Any powers used while in spirit form must use spirit form END Reserves (if any), not your body's END. Or those powers can be bought to No END Cost or on Charges.

CONSUME SPIRIT

This power allows the user to remove a spirit from its container or from the spirit plane and convert it into usable Character Points. This, of course, destroys the spirit in the process, which means that this is a power the GM should use rarely. The base cost of Consume Spirit is 1d6 for 30 points; this has no range and requires an EGO-based Attack Roll.

Consume Spirit is used in generally the same manner as Shift Spirit; once you are in physical contact with the spirit, you make an EGO-based Attack Roll. If that is successful, roll the dice and total them to find the number of active points of EGO that are taken from the target. With Consume Spirit, those active points can then be used by the character in any way, just like the Transfer power. You must designate how those points will be used when the Consume Spirit power is purchased.

As with the transfer power, both the target and the user have a return rate for the points that are Consumed. Each rate may be moved down the Time table for a +¼ Advantage. Once the target's EGO reaches negative the starting value, the target's spirit is completely consumed and he gets no more recovery of the transferred EGO.

A character whose spirit is Consumed is utterly and completely dead, and cannot be resurrected. The GM may well decide that Consume Spirit is too nasty a power to allow in his campaign for this very reason.

If the Consume Spirit is interrupted before the process is complete, then the target can recover completely from its effects (using the recovery rate specified when you buy the Consume Spirit power). If you elect to merely toss away the points gained instead of using them, that's a -½ Limitation to Consume Spirit.

As with Shift Spirit, adding the Ranged Advantage to Consume Spirit is extremely useful; this eliminates the need for any sort of DEX-based Attack Roll to grab a container. As long as you can see or perceive the target spirit, you can use the ranged Consume Spirit on it.

SPIRIT SUMMONING

Essentially, summoning a spirit is a combination of other powers. First, you must find the desired spirit, and then bring it to you by communicating with it or compelling it. Finally, if you wish to make the spirit serve you, you must command it or make a deal with it. Seances are a particularly common type of Spirit Summoning, with some extra Limitations. The person conducting the seance is called a medium. The medium goes into a trance, in which state the medium is very open to spirits. The trance state is defined as intense Concentration (-1 Limitation), where the medium is DCV 0 for the duration of the seance, and is unaware of the surroundings. Additionally, the medium often requires extra time to get into the trance state (up to one hour, depending on the ability of the medium).

The fact that an evil spirit can be called up may be considered Side Effects (-1 Limitation): if the roll isn't made, the medium calls up the wrong spirit (sometimes an evil spirit that may try to deceive the players, possess the medium, or worse).

Finding the spirit requires Mind Scan with the +½ Advantage Affects Spirits (this can be bought with the -1 Limitation, Spirits Only). You don't define an area per se; the modifiers are different. Use the Time table for modifiers to searching for a spirit that's not in the immediate vicinity (i.e., it's currently attacking or manifesting in some way). The baseline is the last time you were in contact with the spirit, or the last time it was alive (if formerly alive), whichever is less. Take a -2 to the Mind Scan roll for every time increment that's gone by since, starting with 1 minute as -0. For instance, if you are searching for the spirit of someone who died a year ago, you would take a -16 modifier.

If you're not searching for the spirit of a dead person, you can use modifiers based on the size of the class as determined by the GM. If the GM says there are 1 billion similar demons, then your modifier is -18. You may need to buy your Mind Scan as Transdimensional (see the *Hero System Rulebook*) in order to search for some types of spirits, at the GM's discretion. For instance, demons may be found only in a particular hell, or the spirit of a dead comrade may be in Limbo. The modifier would still be based on the size of the class; if there are 10,000 demons in the particular hell you are searching, the modifier is -8.

Once a successful Mind Scan is achieved, then you can bring the spirit to you. If the spirit is cooperating, it's easy: Travel on the spirit plane is instantaneous, and the spirit has a way to "home in" on you through the Mind Scan, so the spirit is automatically right there with you next phase. If, on the other hand, the spirit is not cooperating, then you must use persuasion (communicating via Telepathy) or compulsion (Mind Control) to compel the spirit to come to you. Or you can (after the Mind Scan lock-on is achieved) simply use a Shift Spirit to put the spirit into a handy container.

Modifiers to the Mind Scan roll: +1 to +3 for appropriate conditions (quiet, darkened room, magical spot), -1 to -3 for bad conditions (noisy, bright lights, skeptics present).
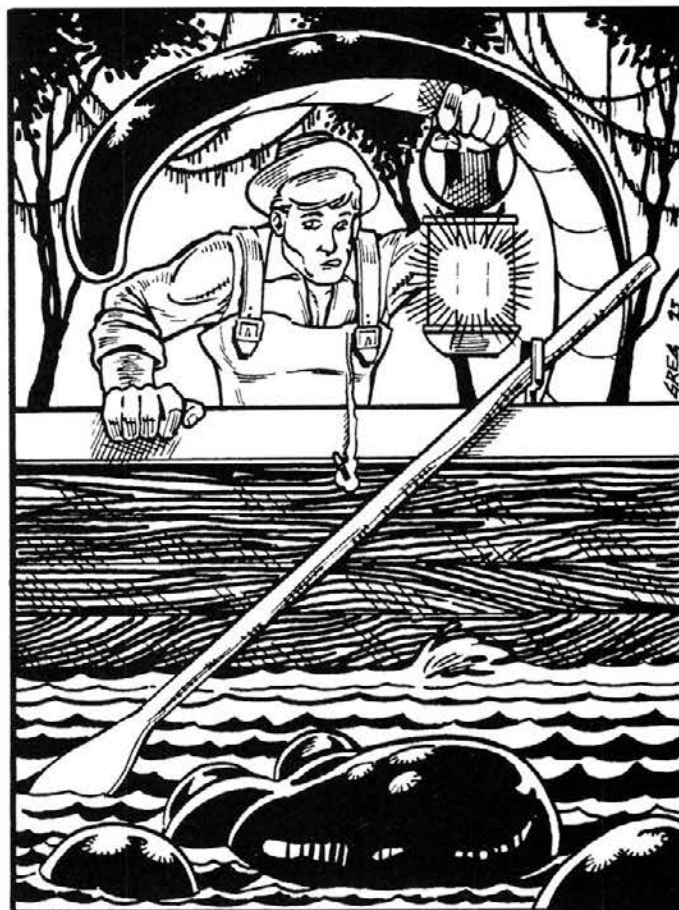
Of course, if you're summoning an evil spirit, you would be wise to take precautions in the event that it answers your summons. You'd better be ready to use Shift Spirit to put it into a safe place, or otherwise control it or prevent it from harming you.

SPIRIT SENSES

There are several senses and detects that can be used to detect spirits. The basic sensory mechanism on the spirit plane is very primitive without buying some additional sensory ability. Spirits without other senses cannot sense the real world in any way, and they can only sense other spirits when they are in communication or combat with the other spirit. Otherwise, there is no sensory input whatsoever.

Spirits may buy these senses for use on the spirit plane, or some senses may be bought by characters trying to see the spirit plane. Senses that are bought Only While In Spirit Form have a -½ Limitation if you are a living being that spends most of the time in real form. The senses may also have the Linked Limitation; if they do, they may not use the sense when someone else is using Shift Spirit on them. The Limitation Only In Real Form is worth at most a -¼ (unless the character is usually a spirit!).

ASTRAL VISION

This allows the character to see entities on the astral plane, namely spirits. Only spirits that are "nearby" can be seen; it's up to the GM to define the meaning of nearby (generally, spirits that are bound to a physical area in the vicinity, or that are manifesting in the vicinity). For people in the real world using this power, you are limited in some ways by normal eyesight: You can't see through walls with Astral Vision, so you couldn't see a spirit that was in the next room. (Yes, this does get rather strange when, to the spirit, everywhere in the spirit plane is instantly accessible; but the spirit's attention is probably drawn to specific spots, and wherever its attention is, that's where the spirit is.) Spirits that are inside of containers (such as bodies, a jar, a sword, etc.) cannot be seen with Astral Vision. Astral Vision costs 10 points, either for spirits or for characters.

AURA VISION

See the writeup under Psychic Powers elsewhere in this book for more details. Aura Vision does not allow you to see spirits by themselves (unless you also have Astral Vision), but if a spirit is in a container then you can see its aura. Also, someone who is possessed by a spirit will have a highly unusual aura (usually, it's primarily the aura of the dominant spirit, but there's always some unusual traces that indicate a second spirit in the body). Aura Vision costs 10 points.

CLAIRSENTIENCE

Spirits may buy this at +20 points in order to perceive the real world. Or characters may buy this at +20 points in order to perceive the spirit plane. Clairsentience costs 40 points to perceive the spirit plane (or the real world if you're a spirit). Spirits can also buy other senses as the basis for Clairsentience; for instance, a spirit might use Radar as the basis for its Clairsentience, and it would perceive everything as shadowy forms with no great detail.

DETECT SPIRIT

This general power can be purchased with a number of different Advantages. Its base cost is 3 points, like any standard Detect. It is more useful to buy this as an Area Effect of some sort, and possibly Discriminatory as well, and maybe with Range, too. A Discriminatory Detect Spirit would give you details about the type of spirit, and perhaps some indication of its powers.

NORMAL SENSES

This allows a spirit to use a sense in the real world as normal characters do. This is subject to the same limitations as normal senses (such as not being able to see through a wall or in the dark). The standard human senses (sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell) may be bought for 10 points apiece. This is assuming a base 5 points for the cost of the sense and adding the +2 Advantage: Affects Real World, and the Limitation Only Usable Against Real World (-½). The spirit may buy other Enhanced Senses in this fashion. For instance, buying Radar Sense would cost 30 points (15 points at a +2 Advantage, -½ Limitation). A Normal Sense costs 10 points.

SENSITIVE

This Psychic Power (described in the Psychic Powers section) allows the user to sense the presence of spirits with a successful PER Roll. Sometimes this power is purchased with the Discriminatory ability; that allows the user to get some idea of the spirit's nature, intent, or abilities (in general terms, and only with a good roll). Sensitive costs 5 points.

PLAYING AND GAMEMASTERING SPIRITS

This section discusses how spirits are dealt with in a gaming situation, both by the player and by the GM.

Generally, spirits are used as opponents in a game. An entire adventure can be built around a single ghost or evil spirit. Since spirits tend to be very difficult for the heroes to handle, it's usually best to have only one or two spirits for the heroes to deal with. Of course, if spirits are rarely encountered in a game, then it's unlikely that any of the heroes will have abilities that can deal with the spirits. So it may become necessary to bring in a helpful NPC at certain stages of an adventure. Better still, the GM should try to devise alternate methods for the players to solve the problems presented by the spirit. For instance, finding the body that the ghost used to inhabit and giving it a proper burial, thus freeing the ghost.

THE SPIRIT PLANE

Essentially, the spirit plane is another dimension that is contiguous with every point in the real world. But the spirit plane has some very unusual properties; it is a realm of thought and mind, not physical forms. Physical actions have no effect on the spirit plane; there are no physical objects as such, and spirits have no physical forms on the spirit plane to affect. So powers like Energy Blast have no meaning on the spirit plane; since spirits have no ED or STUN or BODY, they cannot be affected by an energy blast.

The only powers that have meaning on the spirit plane are those powers that can affect the Characteristics that spirits possess. Adjustment Powers can affect spirits, so can Men-

tal Powers (except EGO Blast). Flash can have meaning if it is applied to a sense that a spirit possesses. But powers like Entangle and Teleport are meaningless on the spirit plane.

All spirits must buy powers at +2 Advantage to affect the real world; real people must buy powers at +½ to affect the spirit world (and an additional +½ Advantage to make them EGO-based). When you leave your body, you can still use your powers (unless limitations like Gestures make this impossible); but they must be bought at +2 to affect the real world. Once you're a spirit, your powers will affect spirits without extra cost (assuming the powers have meaning; Entangles have no meaning on the spirit plane, for instance).

Movement on the spirit plane is instantaneous, since the spirit plane is a realm of pure thought and it is coexistent with every point on the physical plane. Spirits can be anywhere they want to be on the spirit plane, subject to other limitations the spirit may have. Spirits may (with proper skills) appear in other dimensions, planes, or realities, such as various heavens or hells. Desolid characters are not present on the spirit plane.

Some spirits may inhabit other planes as well (hells, elemental planes, etc.). The GM may require you to buy the Transdimensional Advantage on your various Spirit Powers to reach those places. Generally, each such dimension is considered as a separate container; spirits must use Shift Spirit to leave their dimension and then use Shift Spirit again to enter another dimension. For that purpose, we assume that there is some intra-universal dimension that contains all others; this is where you go when you Shift out of your current dimension.

Spirits may communicate with one another by directly transferring thoughts; this is treated just as if the two spirits were having a conversation in normal speech. Actually reading a spirit's thoughts require the use of Telepathy. Spirits can only communicate when they can sense each other; there's no way to "shout" on the spirit plane.

MOVEMENT ON THE SPIRIT PLANE

Spirits can move instantaneously to any point in the spirit plane, and thus to any point they are familiar with in the real world, unless they are confined in a spirit container (or inhabiting a body, which is the same thing). Thus, spirits are usually located where their attention is: if they are looking at something or if they are manifesting themselves, that's where they are. Spirits can, however, stay in one "spot" while manifesting or sensing somewhere else, if they have the right abilities (powers usable at range). Spirits can't teleport into objects (or use teleport on a spirit at all); they must use Shift Spirit to put themselves into a container. Spirits can't cross an area protected by Power Defense (see Blocking Spirits).

SPIRIT COMBAT

Spirits can't hurt one another normally, since they have no BODY or STUN. Of course, they can use Shift Spirit on one another to force the target into a specific spot. More likely is the use of a Drain or Transfer of some sort to render the opposing spirit powerless, or a Mind Control to control another spirit. Spirits can also erect defenses against other spirit powers, using Power Defense, Mental Defense or Suppress.

All targeting rolls against spirits must be done based on EGO Combat Value (ECV). All powers that affect spirits from the real world must be bought with +½ Affects Spirits, and must be ECV-based (Based on ECV versus Spirits is only a +½ Advantage). Exceptions are Shift Spirit and Spirit Consumption, which already affect spirits. Mental Powers are already based on ECV.

Spirits attacking spirits need not buy Affects Spirits on their powers. Spirits that are occupying living bodies are subject to any and all powers, just as the original occupant of the body was. Another way of saying this is that spirits on the same plane need no special Advantage to attack one another; but if they are on different planes, they do need some sort of Advantage.

MENTAL POWERS AND SPIRITS

Mental Powers can affect spirits by purchasing the additional +½ Affects Spirits Advantage. Spirits can buy Mental Powers that affect the real world with a +2 Advantage. A spirit on the spirit plane can use Mental Powers against another spirit on the spirit plane at no additional cost; similarly, a spirit Possessing a living body can use Mental Powers or have them used against him at no extra cost.

Spirits are completely undetectable by normal senses, and Mental Powers can be used on spirits only after a line-of-sight is established. Therefore, you have to buy some targeting sense (see Spirit Senses) to be able to use Mental Powers on spirits. (This is true whether you're in the real world trying to attack a spirit, or whether you're a spirit trying to attack a spirit.) Of course, spirits can move instantly, so you have to be looking in the right place for them. And remember that your senses may be subject to certain limitations; with standard Astral Vision, for instance, you won't be able to see a spirit that's behind a wall.

A spirit in a living body is different than a spirit in a nonliving container. Being in a container means that you are still on the spirit plane, but confined to a physical location. Thus, the rules about which powers can affect you apply as to any other spirit.

A spirit using a body as a Focus (animating a corpse, for instance) can be targeted by Mental Powers only if they have the +½ Advantage Affects Spirits. But you can easily establish line-of-sight in this case merely by using your normal sight, since the spirit is contained in an easily visible Focus.

When a spirit is in a living body AND it's the dominant spirit, that spirit can be reached by normal Mental Powers (those powers don't need to be bought with the Affects Spirits Advantage). Also, the dominant spirit in a body can be affected by any other powers, just as a normal character would be (see Possession). The non-dominant spirit in a body is one level harder to affect with mental powers, provided that you know it's in there. If it's not in there, you have to be able to detect it first! And the dominant spirit will know about any attempt to use Mental Powers on it or any other spirits in that body. In fact, you must make your Attack Roll against the ECV of the dominant spirit in order to reach the other spirit in the body. However, the effects of your Mental Power work against the EGO of the spirit you are trying to reach.

Example: *The night-demon Calagar has possessed Rogi and is in control of Rogi's body. Artemus Magus attempts to contact Rogi via Telepathy and assure him that everything will be fine once he performs an exorcism. Normally, reaching Rogi for this little chat would only require that Artemus make an ECV Attack Roll against Rogi's EGO of 10. But since Rogi is dominated by Calagar's spirit, Artemus must make his ECV Roll*

against Calagar's EGO of 20. Artemus succeeds (just barely) and tries to send his message to Rogi. Normally, this would only require that Artemus roll greater than Rogi's EGO. But since Rogi is dominated by Calagar's spirit, Artemus must roll greater than Rogi's EGO +10 to send his message. Rogi is pleased to know that Artemus is working on the problem.

BLOCKING SPIRITS

Normal Power Defense does not protect against Shift Spirit or Consume Spirit; you must buy Power Defense with the +½ Advantage Affects Spirits. This defense works in one direction only; the direction is defined when you buy the Power Defense. Power Defense that acts in both directions against Shift Spirit or Consume Spirit is bought with an additional +½ Advantage.

The Power Defense you buy subtracts from the amount of active points of Shift Spirit or Spirit Consumption. Thus, if you have 5 points of Power Defense that Affects Spirits (which costs 7 points), then a Shift Spirit that does 9 points of effect would actually only do 4 points (Shifting 2 points of EGO, since EGO costs 2 points per point).

Example: *Artemus buys Power Defense (with +½ Affects Spirits) for himself, to protect against possible possession by demons (an occupational hazard in Artemus' line of work). Artemus defines this Power Defense as working against Shift Spirits and Spirit Consumption coming into his body, but not going out. After all, Artemus doesn't want to make his Astral Projection ability more difficult to perform. Though Artemus might consider buying Personal Immunity to his Power Defense, so that he won't have to overcome it when he wants to get back into his body when he's finished Astral Projecting.*

Next, Artemus decides to devise a spell to protect his sanctum from incursions by unwanted spirits, or to prevent spirits from leaving without Artemus' permission. He buys Power Defense with the +½ Advantage Affects Spirits, another +½ Advantage Two-way Defense, and Area Effect at +1 so he can cover his entire sanctum. With the Two-way Advantage, the Power Defense works against spirits attempting to Shift into his sanctum or out of his sanctum.

If you only want the Power Defense you buy to work against spirit powers, that's a -1 Limitation to the cost.

There is no need to have a physical object holding the Power Defense; you can confine a spirit with 1 hex Area Effect Power Defense that Affects Spirits. Though you do have to target the spirit with an ECV-based Attack Roll, which means that you also have to buy it Based on ECV. And don't forget you have to be able to see the spirit to target it.

Of course, merely confining a spirit's movement doesn't mean that you have restricted the spirit's other powers. Even though a spirit may not be able to leave, it can still use any of its other abilities unless you take steps to prevent that. You can block Mental Powers by buying Mental Defense; you can block all other powers with Suppress. If you want to make things easier, buy Suppress at 3 points per unit instead of rolling dice to determine the amount (see the Nonrandom Output writeup elsewhere in this Almanac). Thus the Suppress will have a standard level (such as, for instance, 35 points), which will make it easier to determine how much power it can hold on a regular basis.

POSSESSION

This is a classic situation in horror fiction, whereby a spirit (usually a demon) enters into an already occupied body. To determine control, all spirits in the body must make an EGO Roll with modifiers. An INT Roll is a complementary skill, so tricky spirits can get an advantage in this battle. Spirits can buy Combat Skill Levels with their EGO Roll; this gives the spirit a +1 for 2 points. Or spirits can buy the skill KS: Possession, which works as a complementary skill.

Other modifiers: +2 for being in your own body, -1 to -3 for unfamiliar type of body (e.g., a dog instead of a human), -1 to -3 for confusion (if you don't really know what's happening to you or you don't believe it).

All spirits make EGO Rolls; the spirit that makes the EGO Roll by the greatest amount wins, and has successfully wrested control of the body from the other spirits. Ties mean that the spirit originally controlling the body still controls it.

Once the results of this EGO Roll are known, the losing spirit can't force another EGO Roll again until the situation changes in some way. If the host body is knocked out, then there's another chance to have a contest of wills when the body wakes up. It's up to the GM to decide what constitutes enough of a change to allow for a new contest of wills.

The dominated spirit can still use the host's senses unless the dominated spirit failed its EGO Roll in the domination contest. In that case, the dominated spirit has no sensory input unless the dominant spirit grants it that input.
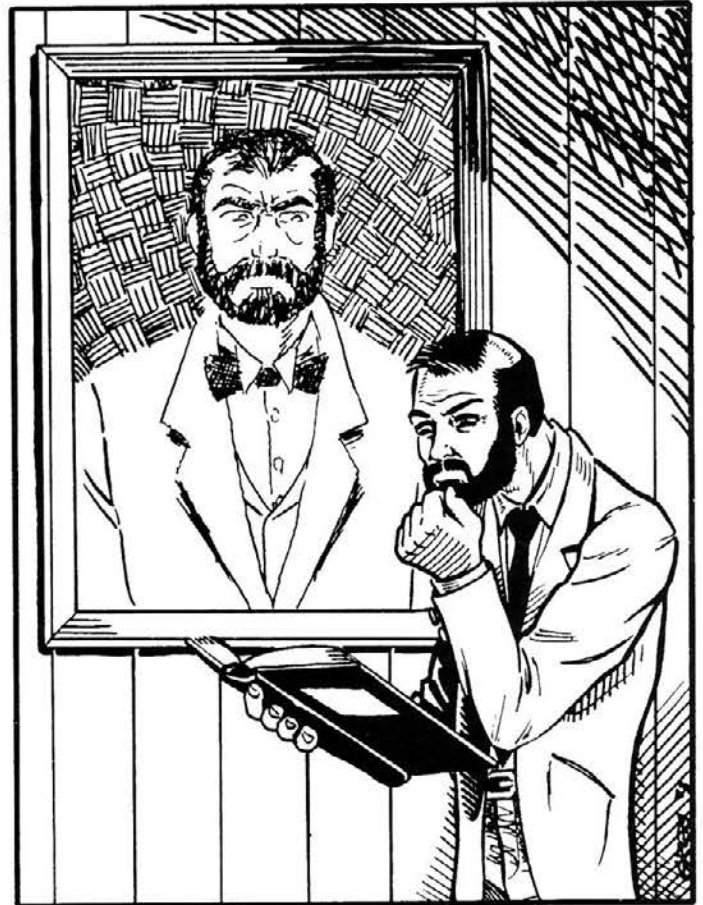
The dominated spirit can always converse with the dominant spirit. This is one way that the dominated spirit has a chance to break out; by finding the right thing to say that will shake up the dominant spirit enough to force a new contest of wills.

The dominated spirit is prevented from using the body in any way, but other than that it is not subservient to the dominant spirit. If the dominant spirit wants to order around the dominated spirit, Mind Control must be used.

A spirit in a living body is now considered part of the real world, and is no longer on the physical plane. Thus the spirit can now be affected by Mental Powers without those powers having the +½ Advantage Affects Spirits. The spirit can also use its own Mental Powers without needing the +2 Advantage Affects Real World.

The spirit can use any of its own powers plus any of the innate powers or abilities of the host body. A spirit wouldn't be able to cast any of its host body's magic spells, because casting those spells requires the knowledge of the body's mind. Of course, a really powerful spirit might use Telepathy to pry those secrets out of its host body's mind.

When the body is knocked out, so is the controlling spirit. The dominated spirit is awake, but cannot do anything with the unconscious body. However, the dominated spirit is able to use any of its own powers (not the body's powers), free of control.

The possessed body uses either the spirit's or the host's SPD and DEX, whichever is higher.

SPIRITS & THE UNDEAD

A body of any kind is a potential spirit container; this is why spirits often choose to animate dead bodies. Spirits in recently dead or well-preserved bodies (those that still have most of the flesh attached, or mummies) may animate the body as if the body was alive. The spirit still has no STUN, END, REC or CON score, though, but the body does have a STR and BODY, and it can have PD and ED (bought as Armor). The spirit can make the body walk, talk, fight, etc. as usual. The GM may rule that the DEX and SPD scores of an undead body are lower than normal, due to the somewhat rotten condition of the body.

The body cannot heal any damage done to it; it *is* dead, after all. In fact, really rotting bodies may have less BODY than they did in their live state, at the GM's discretion. Once twice the total BODY is done, that body can no longer be animated by a spirit (without using TK). Undead usually have an extra PRE bonus for their horrendous appearance.

The difference between this ability to animate a dead body without paying points and using a dead body as a Focus for Telekinesis is this: the TK costs points, but you also continue to function even if the body is dismembered. Thus, lopping off a hand merely means that the hand now crawls on its own towards you. You have to sever such a body into even smaller pieces before it becomes ineffective.

Spirits can be freed from dead bodies by using Shift Spirit or by destroying the body completely (usually by fire).

A spirit using a dead body as a vehicle in this manner can be targeted by standard mental Powers (they don't need the +½ Advantage Affects Spirits), as well as by Adjustment Powers without the +½ Advantage Affects Spirits.

If you're building dead bodies for spirits: buy STR, BODY, movement, defenses (if any) at +2 Affects Real World, -½ OIF Dead Body. Essentially, all the abilities of the dead body

would cost twice as much as normal cost. The dead body is considered an Inaccessible Focus because it can't easily be taken away from the spirit; you have to dismember it or destroy it in order to remove it from the spirit's possession. A simple Grab maneuver won't do the trick.

EXORCISM

The classic way to deal with cases of Possession is to cast out the invading spirit using an Exorcism of some sort. In *Hero System* terms, an Exorcism is simply a Shift Spirit that can be used to pry a spirit out of a possessed body. Of course, if the spirit has Shift Spirit, it can jump right back in if it wants unless you prevent that from happening somehow.

You must use Transdimensional Shift Spirit (a +½ Advantage) to get rid of such spirits, putting it back into its proper dimension or plane of existence (which counts as a container). Or you can destroy the spirit entirely if the GM allows you to use Consume Spirit on it. But in either case, you must be able to restrain the spirit somehow while you do the Transdimensional Shift Spirit on it.

CREATING SPIRITS

Spirits are intangible and invisible to the real world (treat this as Desolidification and Invisibility to all normal senses with no fringe effect). Because of their nature, spirits have no physical Characteristics and are not affected by any physical attacks.

Spirits start with INT 10, EGO 10, DEX 10, PRE 10, SPD 2. There are no standard senses or other standard abilities for a spirit; spirits have no movement and no Everyman Skills. Spirits can start with any number of base points the GM deems appropriate, though for most purposes you can start with 100 base points and add Disadvantages to go up from there. Given the cost of spirit abilities, though, powerful spirits will likely need very large Bonuses in order to balance their points. Balancing the point cost isn't the most important thing, though; what's important is determining the powers the spirit has and the amount of power each one has, so that heroes can attempt to do something about those powers when faced with them.

Spirits may possess Skills, Talents, Perks (if appropriate) and Powers. Spirits may not buy Elemental Controls, and they shouldn't use other Power Frameworks unless they are allowed in the campaign. Skills, Talents, and Perks are purchased with the normal cost structures. Powers may also be bought at the normal cost, but then they would only affect other spirits, and they would have no effect on the real world.

SPIRIT POWERS

Spirits must buy all powers at +2 in order to affect the real world. However, if a spirit has entered a living container, it may use any powers it has against the real world even without having paid the +2 Advantage. Spirits in a living container are also subject to all normal powers and abilities and effects, just as if they were an ordinary person. See Possession for more details.

Since spirits have no END, all spirit powers must be bought with charges, No END Cost, or from an END Reserve. Non-physical powers (especially magic) can function in spirit form, but only on other spirits. For instance, you could use an INT Drain against other spirits, but an Energy Blast would have no meaning on the spirit plane.

SPIRIT POWER ADVANTAGES

Generally, all the usual Advantages listed in the *Hero System* can apply to powers that spirits buy. An additional Advantage is required for spirits that wish to use their powers to affect the real world: +2 Advantage Affects Real World. For heroes that want to be able to affect the spirit plane, one or two Advantages are necessary. First of all, powers that affect the spirit plane must be ECV-based. In other words, powers other than Mental Powers must be bought with the Advantage Based on ECV. Usually, this Advantage is a +1 Advantage; but in the case of spirits it's only a +½ Advantage, because of the additional difficulties in targeting spirits. (You must establish a line-of-sight contact, as with any ECV-based power, but to do this with spirits you must have one of the Spirit Senses.)

Additionally, all powers that can affect spirits from the real world must be bought with the +½ Advantage Affects Spirits. So most powers that heroes would buy to use on spirits would be bought at a total of +1 Advantage or more. One more note: spirits do not need to buy any Advantages on their powers if all they want to do is use those powers on other spirits in the spirit plane. It's only when you are on the spirit plane trying to affect the real world, or in the real world trying to affect the spirit plane, that you need to buy an Advantage.

SPIRIT POWER LIMITATIONS

Any of the existing Power Limitations are acceptable for spirits to use, subject to the GM's approval. There are several new Limitations that are of special interest to spirits. Spirits may buy powers with the Limitation Only While In Spirit Plane (-½), which means that they cannot use their powers while Possessing a body. This Limitation might be worth more or less, depending on the amount of time the spirit spends in Possession (i.e., the amount of time the spirit spends in the real world). A spirit that never Possesses anyone would not get any bonus for this Limitation.

Conversely, a spirit that spends almost all of its time in someone else's body would get a -1 Limitation. A real person who takes this Limitation (such as a wizard who wants to buy powers usable only when Astral Projecting) would get a -1 Limitation. Also, powers may be bought Linked to Astral Projection (-½), and also with Usable Only While In Spirit Form (-1). If you have the Linked limitation, you can't use the powers unless you are using your Astral Projection. This could be a problem if you are cast out of your body by someone else.

Spirits may also take powers with the Limitation Only Usable In This Location (-0 to -1). Spirits that are Bound to a particular location might only get a -¼ Limitation or even no bonus, depending on how likely it is that the spirit might be taken away from its location. (Even though a spirit is Bound to a spot, someone might come along and forcibly remove it.) Spirits that can roam freely might get more of a bonus, unless it's very likely that they'll be found in a particular spot.

Spirits may also buy powers usable Only While In Real World (-0 to -2). This is the inverse of the previous Limitation; spirits can only use such a power when they are Possessing someone. Obviously, a spirit without the ability to Possess someone would take a -2 Limitation here (on the off-chance that someone else might put the spirit into a body). A spirit that's in the real world much of the time would get a bonus of only -½ or even no bonus at all.

For spirits that have powers that could be used to affect both the spirit plane and the real world (i.e., powers that have meaning on the spirit plane and are bought at +2 Affects Real World), if the power only affects real world targets they can use the Limitation Only Usable Against Real World (-½). Conversely, the Limitation Only Usable Against Spirit Plane is worth a -1 Limitation.

SPIRIT DISADVANTAGES

Disadvantages that have been reinterpreted or redefined especially for spirits are listed here. Spirits should only use those Disadvantages listed here; other Disadvantages are not available for spirits (unless the GM makes an exception). These Spirit Disadvantages are presented as a helpful guide when creating spirits, so that the GM can balance the power of the spirit with some compensating problems.

Berserk

Spirits can certainly take this Disadvantage, but of course they are unlikely to have friends handy to help snap them out it.

Bound/Repelled

This Disadvantage means that the spirit is bound to a specific spot or item, and may not leave that spot. Or, conversely, you can use the same point structure to reflect the way a spirit is Repelled by holy objects or other things. Being Bound may be a Psychological Limitation, a Physical Limitation, or a combination of both. Why should you get two Disadvantages for the same circumstance? Because the Disadvantages have different game effects. The Psychological Limitation means that the spirit doesn't want to perform the action (such as leaving or entering holy ground), but some external force can make the spirit do so (or an extraordinary situation allows the spirit to make an EGO Roll at great penalties). A Physical Limitation means that the spirit is unable to cross into holy ground, and no external force can make that happen (unless the Physical Limitation is itself Suppressed). Remember, though that such a Physical Limitation cannot be advantageous, or it ceases to be a Disadvantage.

There are also some additional modifiers to consider beyond the standard ones for these Disadvantages.

A Psychological Limitation binding a spirit often occurs as a result of the circumstances of the death of the spirit's body. As part of this Disadvantage, the GM should define a set of circumstances that will dissolve the bonds and free the spirit. For instance, if a person is murdered violently and their body is not given a proper burial according to their customs, their spirit may be bound to the spot until the murderers are brought to justice or until their body is properly buried with full rites.

Psychological Limitation: Bound is worth 25 points (Very Common, Total).

Being Bound physically means that while the spirit may want to leave, it is prevented from doing so. This may be because the spirit lacks the Shift Spirit power, or because there is sufficient Power Defense (or Suppress) on the area to prevent the spirit from using its Shift Spirit power.

The spirit may be removed from the place where it is bound by a Shift Spirit. The spirit is automatically freed when the place or item it is Bound to is destroyed. As part of this Disadvantage, the GM should define a set of circumstances that will dissolve the Bonds and free the spirit.

Physical Limitation: Bound is worth 25 points (All The Time, Fully) as a base, with the following modifiers:

Bound Location Is:	Points
Small (item)	+5
Fragile (1 DEF)	+5
Large (estate)	-5

So a spirit that is Bound both physically and psychologically to a small, fragile item gets a 60 point Disadvantage. A large area is less limiting to the spirit, so if the spirit is bound to such an area (like the grounds of an estate, or a certain valley) this is a -5 (or even -10) modifier to the Disadvantage.

Being Repelled by a particular environment or circumstance can be treated in the same fashion as Bound, pointwise.

Some examples of being Repelled:

Repelled by garlic: Physical Limitation 15 points (Frequently, Greatly Impairing)

Repelled by holy places: Physical Limitation 20 points (Frequently, Fully) and Psychological Limitation 20 points (Common, Total).

Dependence

Some spirits may have a Dependence, usually on something unsavory like human blood or souls. Or a vampire may be dependent on sleeping in its native soil every day. Since spirits don't take STUN damage, read each die for the amount of BODY and treat that as an equivalent amount of Consume Spirit directed against the spirit's EGO. Each BODY done results in one EGO lost by the Spirit as a Consume Spirit; the recovery rate for this lost EGO is 5 Character points per day. Because of this, each 1d6 of Dependence is worth 10 points, beginning with the first 1d6. The amount of dice taken in the Dependence can be more than 3; each additional die is worth 10 points.

Example: *A wraith requires the consumption of souls to sustain its undead form of life. While it can subsist on a meager diet of animal souls, it really prefers the much juicier portions afforded by the occasional adventurer. If the wraith isn't fed for a while, it grows steadily weaker. Dependence: must consume souls frequently (Consume Spirit), Very Common (5 points), occurs once per day (-25 points), 6d6 (60 points); total 40 points.*

Hunted and Watched

Spirits can be Hunted or Watched, but this is generally not meaningful if the spirit has taken the Bound Disadvantage. Only a free-moving spirit should be allowed to have this Disadvantage. And any Hunters should be able to do something about the spirit; this Disadvantage isn't meaningful if the Hunters can't harm the spirit somehow.

Psychological Limitation

Spirits can certainly have these; in fact, it's very common among spirits to have a number of severe psychological problems. The most common problems are covered separately in the Bound and Repelled Disadvantages listed here. Among other common problems, a spirit might well have an unusual fixation on certain things (a severe hatred of soldiers since it was slain by a soldier, for instance). Or a spirit might be unusually stupid and easily tricked (as are many djinni). Spirits can often be immensely overconfident, not unreasonable since they can be immensely powerful. Spirits are often capricious or whimsical, too. In short, spirits are at least as wacky as the normal beings you're likely to meet, and often more so.

Physical Limitation

The obvious physical problems that a spirit has (like lacking the ability to manipulate or sense the real world) isn't worth any points, since it's built into the basic nature of a spirit. The only specific physical limitations that spirits can have are covered separately under Bound and Repelled.

Susceptibility

Spirits often have Susceptibility to certain conditions. While some spirits may avoid holy symbols or holy places (see Bound/Repelled), if forced into contact with them spirits may take damage. Since spirits don't take STUN damage, read each die for the amount of BODY and treat that as an equivalent amount of Consume Spirit directed against the spirit's EGO. Each BODY done results in one EGO lost by the Spirit as a Consume Spirit; the recovery rate for this lost EGO is 5 Character points per day. Because of this, each 1d6 of Susceptibility is worth 10 points, beginning with the first 1d6. The amount of dice taken in the Susceptibility can be more than 3; each additional die is worth 10 points.

Examples:

Vulnerable to holy symbols: 3d6 Susceptibility, Common, per segment: 55 points.

Die when container is destroyed: 10d6 Susceptibility, Common, per phase: 120 points.

Sunlight: 5d6 Susceptibility, per phase, Very Common: 75 points.

Unluck

Spirits can be just as unlucky as living beings.

Vulnerability

Since spirits cannot take damage in the ordinary sense, this is actually a variant on the standard Vulnerability Disadvantage. A spirit (or any character, for that matter) that takes damage from an attack or an effect that wouldn't normally be damaging gets a bonus according to the following table. This is used instead of Susceptibility when the attack or effect uses dice (such as a Flash or a Drain); Susceptibility is used when the effect has no dice rating of its own (such as sunlight or green argonite).

Remember, an Uncommon attack is worth 5 points, a Common attack is worth 10 points, and a Very Common attack is worth 15 points as a base. The following table serves to modify those values when you are Vulnerable to an attack that normally doesn't cause damage.

Modifier	Bonus
Takes STUN damage	x2
Takes BODY damage	x3
Takes x1½ damage	+x1
Takes x2 damage	+x2

Example: *If you want to take STUN damage from Fire attacks (ruled a Common attack), that would be worth 20 points (10 points x 2). If you take BODY and STUN from Fire Attacks, that's 30 points. If you took x1½ the damage rolled on the Fire attack as STUN and BODY, that would be worth 40 points.*

This could apply to any power at all, from Mind Control to Change Environment. If the effect you want is not damage, use the active points of the attack to determine how much effect to use.

In the case of spirits with this Vulnerability, BODY damage from attacks (or any other power, for that matter) is treated as an equivalent amount of Consume Spirit directed against the spirit's EGO. For instance, a spirit that takes BODY damage from magic weapons (a Common attack in a *Fantasy Hero* campaign) would get a 30 point bonus. (Spirits are particularly vulnerable to this sort of attack, since they are not able to buy any defense against it.) Each BODY done by an attack results in one EGO lost by the Spirit as a Consume Spirit; the recovery rate for this lost EGO is 5 Character points per day. Thus, if you slash a spirit that has Vulnerability to Magic Weapons with a magic sword and do 7 BODY, it loses 7 EGO. Of course the first line in the bonus table about STUN damage does not apply to spirits (since STUN does not affect spirits).

Some common examples of this Vulnerability for spirits in a horror campaign:

Vulnerability	Points
Magic weapons (normal damage)	30
Magic weapons (1 ½x damage)	40
Magic weapons (2x damage)	50
Dispel magic (2x damage)	25
Fire attacks (2x damage)	75

BUILDING SPIRITS IN A FOCUS

Spirits that enter a living container in the course of play don't have to pay points for any abilities the container has. Similarly, spirits that enter a recently dead body get to use its basic capabilities (like STR and movement) without paying for them. If you want to create a spirit that occupies a physical form, though, you have to pay points for the privilege. Spirits can be created from scratch as occupying a body of some sort, whether it's a corpse, a skeleton, or a clockwork mechanism. The spirit's Characteristics are purchased normally, but the spirit can buy additional Characteristics and powers through the body, which is treated as an Obvious, Inaccessible Focus. Spirits built this way can buy (if desired) STR, BODY, PD, ED, END, REC, and COM; but any these that are purchased must be bought from a starting value of 0. Spirits built this way still cannot purchase CON or STUN (since neither have meaning for a nonliving body).

While this "spirit in a Focus" resembles an ordinary character at a casual glance, there are important differences. First of all, because of the nature of the spirit, it takes no Stun damage at all and it doesn't get Stunned. You don't need to buy Life Support for the spirit; the Focus is not really alive in the traditional sense, and thus does not need to breathe, eat, sleep, or other annoying functions. Those can be taken as Character Disadvantages, if you like. On the other side of the equation, any physical Characteristics desired must be bought from a 0 starting value. The spirit in a Focus has no base movement and no senses to begin with; all must be purchased.

All physical Characteristics and all attacks should be bought at a +2 Advantage Affects Real World, with a -½ OIF Limitation. Essentially, most things are purchased at double cost under this rule. Skills, Perks, and Talents are purchased at the normal cost, however. Spirits in a Focus are subject to Flash attacks (assuming they've bought some senses, since they start with none) and Entangles. Normal Adjustment Powers will work only against those Characteristics bought through the OIF. Mental Powers and Adjustment Powers that work against spirit Characteristics must be bought with the usual Affects Spirit Advantage (and ECV-based, in the case of Adjustment Powers) in order to affect the spirit. However, you at least get the line-of-sight for free; no special senses are necessary to find the spirit, since it's always in its container.

The Focus Limitation as used here is interpreted differently than the standard Focus Limitation. The body as Focus does not gain any defenses automatically, and is not subject to the "take BODY, lose a power" rule. However, the Focus can lose abilities when damage is taken, according to the special effects. For instance, if you lop off the body's hands, it can no longer use any weapons (or cast any spells that require gestures). If you remove the body's head, it is still "alive" and can still think, but it cannot control its body. (If you want severed parts to continue functioning after they are severed, buy Telekinesis, OIF Body.)

The body Focus does not bleed, but neither does it heal any damage. Damage can be repaired by using Adjustment Powers or with appropriate skills. So it's entirely possible to completely destroy the Focus.

Additionally, since the body is an OIF, you must define some way that it can be rendered inactive. An example might be holy attacks or symbols used against undead.

SPIRIT CONTAINERS

While any living thing with an EGO can hold a spirit, nonliving objects cannot unless they have been specially prepared. Creating a container that can hold a spirit is done with a cosmetic Transform; the cost is dependent on the amount of BODY in the object, which is relatively cheap. It does provide an explanation for why spirits tend to be put into small objects as opposed to bigger ones (aside from the portability issue). A container can be "uncontainerized" by casting another cosmetic Transform on it (though this is a different Transform than the first one, and therefore must be bought separately or the Transform should be bought with a +¼ Advantage).

Fortifying a container is another matter. Containing the spirit (preventing it from using Shift Spirit) and preventing it from using its powers are two different things. To prevent a spirit from entering or leaving a container, buy Power Defense with the +½ Advantage Affects Spirits; this will work to prevent the movement of a spirit in one direction only (either in or out of the container). If you want to restrict the movement of a spirit in both directions, then you must buy an additional +½ Advantage (Bidirectional) on the Power Defense. (This could be made cheaper by saying the Power Defense only applies to Shift Spirit, and not to Consume Spirit; this is a -½ Limitation.) Note that this is not an absolute prevention against the movement of a spirit; the Power Defense merely subtracts form the Shift Spirit that is performed. So a sufficiently large Shift Spirit power wouldn't be stopped by a Power Defense, merely slowed down.

Blocking the powers of the spirit in the container is a different matter, and that depends on the specific powers of the spirit. It's often not enough to put a malevolent spirit into a jar; you also want to keep it from using all those nasty powers it has that can affect the real world. To block mental powers, use Mental Defense. Note that this will reduce but not necessarily eliminate the effect of such powers (a very nice touch in keeping with many stories). To block other powers, use Suppress, adding the proper Advantage so that it can work against all spirit powers (+2 Advantage). Of course, you'll want to buy the Suppress as a Continuous power at no END cost, so it's working all the time. You may want to define the Suppress as having a nonrandom output of 3 points per 1d6, so that you're not concerned about power fluctuations that might allow something untoward to occur.

As you can see, a full-fledged spirit container with the ability to block the movement and powers of a spirit could be quite expensive, even if you buy it as an Independent Focus.

SHOCK AND STRESS

Shock is a sudden change in situation that startles a character; in the *Hero System* Presence attacks are used to represent the effects of a shocking turn of events. The effect of a Presence attack is determined by how much the attack exceeds a character's Presence or Ego, whichever is greater. For simplicity, the greater of those two Characteristics (PRE and EGO) is called the Psychological Resistance. The section on Normal Presence Attacks following describes how characters may react under both shock and stress.

Stress, on the other hand, is a constant situation; in some ways it's like a low-level continuous PRE Attack. The effects of stress are based on the situation and the experience of the character. The general stressfulness of a situation is measured by the Stress Level. Stress Level is normally generated by a General Presence Attack based on the situation and environment. See the General Stress section for how General Presence attacks and Stress Level affect characters.

A character's loss of capabilities due to stress is reflected in a value called Long Term Stress. A character accumulates Long Term Stress by being in stressful situations and undergoing great psychological shocks. Long Term Stress reduces a character's Psychological Resistance; subtract a character's Long Term Stress value from his Presence and EGO scores to get the current effective Presence and EGO values. These reduced Presence and EGO values are used in all Skill Rolls, Characteristic Rolls, Presence Attacks, and Mental Combat calculations. The other effects of long term stress are described in the Long Term Stress section later in this section.

A character can reduce his Long Term Stress by getting a Psychological Recovery. This Psychological Recovery is equal to the character's base PRE/5 + EGO/5. The time it takes a character to take a Psychological Recovery is based on how much Long Term Stress he has accumulated.

WHEN TO USE WHICH SYSTEMS

Between the effects of Normal Presence Attacks, General Presence Attacks, Stress Level and Long Term Stress the Game Master has many ways of simulating the effects of stress on characters. These systems can cause Combat Effects, Skill Effects and Indirect Effects, as well as Temporary and Long Term Psychological Limitations. Not all of the systems need to be used at all times.

In simple cases, Normal Presence Attacks, General Presence Attacks and Stress Level will convey the tension of a horror situation without a lot of bookkeeping. The Game Master can restrict the modifiers stress causes to Skill Modifiers and Indirect Effects to streamline the system. The Game Master may give characters Temporary Psychological Limitations as a result of a particularly horrible situation at the climax of the adventure.

In cases where the Game Master wants the characters to feel the long term psychological degradation of continuous stress, the Game Master may use the Long Term Stress system by itself. Characters will quickly recognize that their mounting Long Term Stress scores reflect a real loss in the health and control over a character. The Game Master can apply Indirect Effects plus Temporary and Long Term Psychological Limitations to make the effects of this stress crystal clear.

Only when the environment is unusually bizarre, unexplainable, and dangerous, should all of these systems be used together. Characters who do not have substantial EGO and Presence characteristics and familiarity with their bizarre surroundings will be in big trouble. They can be quickly reduced to gibbering ineffectiveness. The Game Master should only use all of the systems together in specific situations, where the psychological sacrifices the characters make are in keeping with the scale of their goals.

SOURCES OF STRESS

Stress can be caused by three different elements: fear of the unknown, lack of control and danger. Maximum stress is caused when all three elements are present.

First, stress can come from lack of knowledge about how an environment is supposed to work. If a character in an ancient house spots paintings that drip blood or fresh earth over old graves, he doesn't know what is happening at first. Similarly, a character in a strange culture might find that he doesn't know the local customs and doesn't realize when he has insulted someone important until it is too late.

Second, stress can come when a character has lost control of his environment. A character working his way through a haunted house, where knives fly from walls and evil mystic forces defy logic, is not in control of his environment. In the same way, if a character in a strange culture suddenly loses his translator, he can no longer communicate and is no longer in control of his environment.

Finally, stress can come when a character is in danger of bodily harm or death (or the dreaded Fate Worse Than Death, which comes in many varieties), or when others that the character cares about are threatened. The energy-draining undead creature is a threat to everyone within the haunted house. The threat can also be to a character's position, status, or relationships. Thus, the character in a strange culture realizes that the constabulary bearing down on him, guns drawn, are a threat to his position.

The fear of not knowing, fear of not controlling, and fear of dire consequences all conspire to put a character under stress. Much of a horror story is based on creating such dramatic tension or stress. The Game Master can use all of these fears as tools to create a properly stressful horror atmosphere. What follows are some game mechanics that help the Game Master reflect the effects of stress on the capabilities and actions of the characters.

SOME THINGS MAN WAS NOT MEANT TO KNOW

The GM may decide that some environments or experiences are always stressful. These are things that are so bizarre or terrifying that a character can never completely explain or grow accustom to them. These things might include otherworldly monsters, alien science so advanced it is like magic, or changing environments so complex that they defy rational analysis. In these cases, the GM has decided that no matter what skills or experience the character has, the character is under stress.

NORMAL PRESENCE ATTACKS

There are many possible modifiers to Presence Attacks in a horror situation. Dealing with the unknown provides unlimited possibilities for shock and surprise.

EXPANDED PRESENCE ATTACK MODIFIERS

This chart replaces the one on page 170 of the 4th Edition *Hero System* Rules. It includes all of the modifiers listed there and expands on many new modifiers. If a situation has a range of two or three modifiers, the names of the various levels is listed in parenthesis after the description. If a situation has a range of four or more modifiers, the names of the least and most effective modifier is listed in parenthesis after the description.

Expanded Presence Attack Modifiers:

Modifier	Situation
-1d6	During Combat
-1d6 to -3d6	Attacker's Presence Attack command runs counter to existing mood
-2d6 to +2d6	Attacker's Reputation (Laughable to Overwhelming)
-2d6 to +2d6	Setting (Very Inappropriate to Very Appropriate)
-1d6 to +3d6	Attacker's position of relative power to Target (Disadvantaged to Complete Conquest)
+1d6 to +3d6	Attacker surprises Target (Minor, Major, Total)
+1d6 to +3d6	Attacker's Soliloquy (Good, Excellent, Incredible)
+1d6 to +3d6	Attacker's Violent Action (Regular, Extremely, Incredibly)
+1d6 to +3d6	Attacker exhibits an ability (Effective, Spectacular, Overwhelming)
+1d6 to +3d6	Attacker Exhibits an unexpected ability (Unanticipated, Shocking, Outrageous)
+1d6 to +3d6	Attacker Exhibits an unexplained ability or violent action (Unusual, Weird, Bizarre)
+1d6	Target's Current attack shown to be ineffective
+2d6	Several of Target's attacks have been ineffective
+3d6	All of Target's rational forms of attack have been ineffective
+2d6 to +4d6	Target in retreat (Partial, Full)
-1d6	per Repeated Attack
+1d6	per Stress Level if the attack reinforces the stress (if used)
-1d6	per Stress Level if the attack resists the stress (if used)

SPECIFIC PRESENCE ATTACKS: GIVING A COMMAND

Presence Attacks are often used to give commands. Some commands, like "run in fear", are inherent in the attack. Others contain specific spoken instructions. These commands divide into Easy Commands and Normal Commands. The Normal Commands divide again into Short Commands and Long Commands.

A character is more likely to do easy commands than normal ones. A character is also more likely to do short commands than long ones. A character is also more likely to resist a command if he has the support of another character. When a character is alone, he has only his own willpower to resist a command. When another character is spending time and effort giving him moral support, he is more likely to resist a command. The Expanded Presence Attack chart reflects the difference between these various commands.

Easy Commands tend to reinforce a character's natural instincts and tendencies. They include many short, simple, one word commands like, "Run," "Freeze" or "Look." These easy commands tend to be things a character can begin instantly. The natural tendency of a character overcome by fear is to run away or freeze. The natural tendency of a character who is uncertain of his surroundings is to look around to see if he is missing something. These Easy Commands do not incapacitate a target for long, but they may provide an opening when a character is covered by enemy weapons or an enemy is about to deliver a killing blow.

Normal Commands tend to be more complex. They require a character to act intelligently, not just out of instinct. These commands are often variance of "Obey Me." The command might be to tell a character to drop an item or weapon, attack someone, or do a specific task.

A Short Command is normally only one or more phases. It's long enough for a single attack or move. It's long enough to complete a short term task. It's not long enough to do complex long term tasks.

A Long Command is often full turn or more. It's long enough for a combat to be completed. It's long enough for a character to complete a complex task. It is often long enough for an enemy to make a clean getaway.

Expanded Short Term Presence Effects for Commands:

Presence Attack is greater than or equal to	Effect of Commands on Target
Target's Psychological Resistance	Will move to follow Easy Commands, but may reconsider the action before completing it.
Target's Psychological Resistance +10	Will follow Easy Commands for a short time unless target makes an EGO Roll or target is supported by a fellow character. Will move to follow other commands, but may reconsider.
Target's Psychological Resistance +20	Will follow all commands for a short time unless target makes an EGO Roll or target is supported by a fellow character. Will follow Easy commands for a long time unless the target makes an EGO Roll or the target is supported by a fellow character.
Target's Psychological Resistance +30	Will follow all commands for a short time. After a short time, target may make an Ego Roll to try to regain control
Target's Psychological Resistance +40 or more	Will follow all commands for a long time. After a long time, the target may make an EGO Roll to try to regain control

A character can sometimes resist the effects of a Presence Attack with an Ego Roll, -1 per 10 points of the Presence Attack. If the character successfully makes the EGO Roll, but does not make the roll with the negative modifiers the character may overcome the attack enough to avoid the command by freezing or running. The Game Master has the final say about how well a character resists a Presence Attack.

If the Presence Attack equals or exceeds the character's Psychological Resistance, the character automatically moves to follow the command for an instant. If the character retains enough control to reconsider the action, he may stop before executing the action and do something else. But, the character has been affected by the attack. He has begun to lose control of his actions, and then regains control just in time.

GENERAL PRESENCE ATTACKS

Normal Presence Attacks are delivered by a character using a Presence value; General Presence Attacks come from the atmosphere of a situation. They are not based on any Presence value, but on generally how the characters understand and control their situation. The more bizarre and uncontrollable a situation is, the greater the General Presence Attack.

General Presence Attacks help establish future modifiers to Presence Attacks and other rolls. They can also help the players understand just how unusual a situation is.

A General Presence Attack can represent many kinds of stress. Being in an unusual culture can be stressful. If that culture makes living your life difficult, or even dangerous, it is even more stressful. As a character becomes wiser in the ways of a culture, the stress, and therefore the size of the General Presence Attack, will go down. Many kinds of jobs can be stressful. The more dehumanizing and dangerous a job is, the more stressful it tends to be. Of course, as a character gets more knowledgeable about a job, the stress, and therefore the size of the General Presence Attack, will go down.

A General Presence Attack often starts with very few dice as unusual things begin to happen. As more and more unusual, dangerous, or unexplainable things happen, larger and larger General Presence Attacks are appropriate. By the climax of an adventure the level of horror, and the size of the General Presence Attack, should be near their maximum. The General Presence Attack Examples Table lists various situations and the appropriate dice of General Presence Attack.

GENERAL PRESENCE ATTACK EFFECTS TABLE

Presence Attack is greater than or equal to	Effect of Commands on Target
Target's Psychological Resistance	Target is affected by the stress. If the character does not understand the situation they may take stress modifiers.
Target's Psychological Resistance +10	Target is very much affected by the stress. Character will consider attempting to avoid or escape from the stress
Target's Psychological Resistance +20	Target is overcome by stress. Character will act irrationally to avoid or escape stress unless supported by others
Target's Psychological Resistance +30 or more	Target is broken by stress. Character will act irrationally to avoid or escape stress.

To make a General Presence Attack, roll the appropriate number of dice as listed in the examples chart. Tell the players the type of stress they are under (fear, horror, danger, deadline pressure, etc.) and announce the total. The GM may allow characters with specific skills or familiarities with the situation to ignore the attack or to reduce the effect of the attack (at the GM's option). Other characters should compare the attack to the General Presence Attack Effects Table and react accordingly.

GENERAL PRESENCE ATTACK EXAMPLES TABLE

Presence Attack	The Situation is:
2d6	*Spooky:* things are not quite right, but you can't put your finger on it. An annoying culture. A stressful job at deadline time (Newspaper, or Overnight Shipping Firm.)
4d6	*Wrong:* You know something is wrong, but you don't understand it. You're being watched. You know an enemy is out there. A difficult culture. A very stressful job, where people are treated like machines (post office, or an assembly line.)
6d6	*Threatening:* What is wrong is now a known threat, but it is still not understood. This is often the situation after the first unexplained attack. A dangerous culture. A stressful and dangerous job, where a mistake can cause injury or death (coal mine, fire station, or police beat.)
8d6	*Dangerous:* What is wrong is threatening, not understood, and the danger is imminent. The stalker is in sight
10d6	*Terrifying:* normal means don't seem to stop the enemy. The enemy has been shown to be bizarre and dangerous. The characters may be physically or mentally injured.
12d6	*Overwhelming:* the characters have tried everything, but nothing seems to stop the enemy. The enemy is shown to be bizarre, dangerous, and seemingly unstoppable
14+d6	*Nightmarish:* nothing seems to make any sense. The situation is inescapable, bizarre, and overwhelmingly dangerous. It violates all rationality.

PSYCHOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS, SHOCK AND STRESS

Psychological Limitations are important modifiers to the effects of Stress and Shock on a character. Psychological Limitations divide into several types. Codes of Conduct or Hatreds tend to resist the effect of Presence Attacks. For example, a character with a hatred of supernatural creatures could have a chance to resist the fear caused by a demonic Presence Attack. Fear tends to reinforce the effect of Presence Attacks. A character with a fear of spiders might have to grapple with a giant man-spider. Compulsions can resist or reinforce the effect of Presence Attacks. A compulsively clean character might have to wade through a pool of eldritch slime to save a friend.

Psychological Limitations that reinforce stress effects tend to enhance the effects of smaller Presence Attacks. If a Presence Attack exceeds a character's Psychological Resistance, then it acts as if it has exceeded his Psychological Resistance by +10. However, an attack that exceeds a character's Psychological Resistance by +10 or more is treated normally. If the effect of the Psychological Limitation is greater than the effect of the Presence Attack, then use the effect of the Psychological Limitation. For example, a character who is Totally Afraid of Spiders takes the Total effect when he is targeted by a spider's Presence Attack, even if the attack only just exceeds his Psychological Resistance.

Psychological Limitations that resist Stress Effects often mask a hidden fear. They tend to make the character more brittle; he's tougher against low-level attacks, but more affected by stronger attacks. The character may ignore an attack that just exceeds his Psychological Resistance, and the effect of an attack that exceeds a character's Psychological Resistance by +10 is reduced by one level. However, under greater shock, the character's hidden fears emerge. The effect of an attack that exceeds a character's Psychological Resistance by +20 or more is increased by one level. Also, because of the great shock and stress, the character tends to reverse the effect of his Psychological Limitation. For example: a character would break his code of conduct or flee from that which he hates instead of attacking it.

A very large shock like this tends to be a shattering experience for a character with a hatred or code of conduct. A character may receive a Temporary or Long Term Psychological Limitation after such an experience. See the section on Temporary and Long Term Psychological Limitations for their effects.

ESCAPING STRESS

Not all situations are stressful for all characters. If a character knows something about a situation then he may not have the fear of not knowing or of not controlling. Thus, a character with appropriate Knowledge Skills or Professional Skills may avoid stress that affects others without those skills.

A character may also have experience in situations that are not indicated by specific skills. If a character has been through a situation before, or has seen a creature before, he may understand it enough to avoid the effects of stress. For green troops, combat can be a very stressful situation because it is both dangerous and unfamiliar. For veteran troops, combat may be just as dangerous, but it may not be as stressful because they know what they are getting into. Of course, this can work the other way, too: a lack of knowledge about an environment may cause a character to think it's not dangerous at all, and thus he experiences no stress. Meanwhile, the veteran who understands exactly what can happen may be under severe stress. It's up to the GM to decide which set of circumstances and stress results are appropriate.

A character may also come up with an explanation of a situation that fits within his world view. The character decides that a local fraternity has been pulling a prank, and explains away the unusual things in the haunted house. Because the character believes he understands his situations, he is not under stress while he explores the house. But he's in for a big shock when he finally meets the undead creature.

Finally, a character could be unaware of the unusual occurrences and threats around him. A character who is unaware of these elements may escape the stress, but will be very vulnerable when the threats rear their ugly head!

Normally, a character starts a scenario under little or no stress, becomes aware of more and more unusual things and gets more and more stressed as the scenario goes on. However, if a character finds a way to explain the unknown, or defeats his enemy, the stress may go away.

REDUCING THE EFFECTS OF STRESS

The most direct way for a character to reduce the effects of stress is to maximize his Presence and EGO values. Stress effects tend to reduce the Skill and Characteristic Rolls based on Presence and EGO. High scores tend to reduce the game effect of these penalties. A character whose roll goes from 13 or less to 11 or less is much better off than a character whose roll has gone from 11 or less to 9 or less.

Some other abilities are less useful. The EGO Defense Power does not change stress effects, it only helps defend against mental attacks. The Resistance Talent is only useful against interrogation and questioning; its cost is too low to help a character against stress effects.

In many cases, however, skill and experience are the best ways to reduce the effects of stress. For example, the combat veteran is less effected by combat stress than the green trooper. Thus, after a particularly bizarre adventure the GM may wish to give out specific knowledge skills as assigned experience to represent the character's experience with the unknown.

Knowledge skills can reduce the fear of not knowing. Experience in a situation can reduce the fear of being out of control. Knowing effective tactics can reduce the fear of dire consequences. If a character has the appropriate skills and experience, the GM may reduce the effects of General Presence Attacks, Stress Level, and Long Term Stress by one or more levels. However, there are always some situations so bizarre or terrifying, that all characters take full stress effects regardless of their skill and experience.

STRESS LEVEL

The Stress Level is a measure of game modifiers on all characters affected by a stressful situation. Remember that based on knowledge and experience, a situation may be stressful for some characters and not for others.

The Stress Level is normally equal to the value of the last General Presence Attack divided by 10 and rounded down. The Game Master may modify this value based on the situation, or define his own Stress Level based on other criteria.

In general, for each level of stress add +1d6 to any Presence Attacks that reinforce that stress and subtract -1d6 to any Presence Attack that resists the stress. For example, in a horror situation that is Stress Level 3, all fear based Presence Attacks would be +3d6, but all Presence attacks to rally the troops to resist the fear would be -3d6. Presence Attacks that neither reinforce nor resist the prevailing stress are not affected.

If the Game Master is not using the Long Term Stress rules, he may utilize the Stress Level as a Skill modifier. All Presence and EGO based Skill and Characteristic Rolls would take a penalty of -1 per Stress Level. This represents the debilitating effects of stress on interpersonal communications and strength of will.

If the Game Master feels that continuous stress has degraded the character's ability to perform other tasks, he can apply a penalty to all Skill Rolls. If the degradation is far along, all Characteristic Rolls could be affected. If the effects of stress have begun to overwhelm the characters, even their OCV and DCV could be penalized. Generally, these abilities take a penalty of -1 per 2 Levels of Stress, rounded down. The Game Master may apply the Stress Level penalty to none, some, or all of these abilities.

THE EFFECTS OF STRESS

Characters under great stress can be affected in a number of way. Combat effects may include changes to a character's combat characteristics. Skill effects may result in penalties to a character's Skill and Characteristic Rolls. Indirect effects include changes in the character's decision making. Temporary or Long Term Psychological Limitations may change the character's behavior.

COMBAT EFFECTS

Stress can change a character's combat characteristics. A powerful Presence Attack can cause a character to freeze and loose one or more actions. Under extreme stress, the Game Master can apply modifiers to a character's OCV and DCV when attacking targets that are horrific or bizarre. However, players tend to hate it when their combat capabilities are degraded. The Game Master may find that players respond better to indirect psychological effects then to direct combat penalties. These indirect effects are often as or more effective in creating a sensation of tension and horror.

SKILL EFFECTS

Stress often reduces a character's ability to deal with people and pressure situations. The GM can apply penalties to Presence and Ego Rolls to represent stress. Presence Based Skills may also be degraded. Under extreme stress, all Skill and Characteristic Rolls may have penalties.

INDIRECT EFFECTS

Stress most often is represented by its indirect effects on the choices a character makes. These choices can be in or out of combat. Generally, stress leads a character to make less than optimal choices. Sometimes, stress leads a character to do something that seems outright silly from the outside, but makes perfect sense in the stress of the moment.

The stress of a situation often makes a character avoid the sources of that stress. A character may not attack the most dangerous monster in the room because of its overwhelming stench of evil. A character may not move towards the creeping undead because of the unknown dangers it may hold. And a character may not show bravado or make a Presence Attack toward the slimy alien creature, because of its bizarre, otherworldly appearance. In each case, a completely rational character might want to attack, approach, or deal with the most dangerous enemy, but the stress of the situation can causes the character to make other choices.

A character may rationalize his choices, even after making a poor decision because of stress, A comrade asks, "why didn't you attack the giant swamp monster when you had the chance?" The character replies, "I didn't want the monster's minions to attack us from behind!" The answer seems logical, but it is just hiding the character's deeply held fear of the unknown.

Players should do their best to roleplay the indirect effects of stress; the GM shouldn't force these on the characters. Some gentle reminders or suggestions, though, are in order. As players get into the spirit of horror roleplaying, they'll see the value of having their irrational actions due to stress adding to the overall atmosphere and thus, adding to the fun of horror roleplaying.

TEMPORARY AND LONG TERM PSYCHOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS

Tremendous stress and shock can make a character act irrationally, even after the stress is removed and shock is far in the past. One way to show this when characters acquire Temporary or Long Term Psychological Limitations. Characters can receive these limitations after undergoing a tremendous shock while in a stressful situation. This occurs when a character gets hit by a powerful Presence Attack while under a high stress level.

Characters gets no Character Points for these Limitations, and can work them off in the course of the game without spending Experience Points. Temporary and Long Term Psychological Limitations represent a character's fixation on what shocks or frightens him.

L.FRANK 11-93

Both Psychological Limitations and Presence Attacks can cause a character to lose some control of their actions and perhaps to act irrationally. The Game Master may force the player to perform a specific action that fits his Psychological Limitation or the level of the Presence Attack. Remember that a character with a Psychological Limitation or under the influence of a Presence Attack is not completely sane. They are acting based on fears and influences beyond the rational world.

The intensity of the Temporary or Long Term Psychological Limitation can be based on the severity of the worst Presence attack against the character. A Presence Attack that exceeds a character's Psychological Resistance by +20 tends to cause a Moderate intensity limitation. A Presence Attack that exceeds a character's Psychological Resistance by +30 tends to cause a Strong intensity limitation. A Presence Attack that exceeds a character's Psychological Resistance by +40 or more tends to cause a Total intensity limitation.

Temporary or Long Term Psychological Limitations act just like normal Psychological Limitations, except that they are very narrowly targeted. Moderate intensity limitations decide the character's choice of actions and his reaction to situations. Strong intensity limitations can make the character take irrational actions, but the character can resist the effects with a successful EGO Roll. Total intensity limitations make the character totally useless or irrational in the specific situation.

Temporary or Long Term Psychological Limitations are generally narrowly targeted against the specific creature, item or situation that shocked the character. The most common type of limitation is the fear of what caused the shock. However, a player and Game Master may decide that a hatred or compulsion would fit the situation better. Each Temporary or Long Term Psychological Limitation should be customized to fit the character, the situation, and the shock.

Temporary or Long Term Psychological Limitations are an interesting way for the Game Master to bring home the psychological cost of adventuring in the unknown. A character who shows fear, or loses control in a particular situation has a lot of hooks for generating interesting role playing. The Game Master and players can examine how a character feels about coming face to face with his own fears and limitations. These fears can also generate interesting role playing situations as the group reacts to the character's changing psychology. Both the Game Master and the players should look upon these transient limitations as ways of generating new story possibilities, not as some sort of punishment or penalty.

TEMPORARY PSYCHOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS

Temporary Psychological Limitations are generally acquired when a character gets a great shock under a stressful situation. Thus, when a character is in a stressful situation and is affected by a Presence Attack that exceeds his Psychological Resistance by +20 or more, he may acquire a Temporary Psychological Limitation. The Game Master will decide when a character is under the influence of a Temporary Psychological Limitation and what the object and severity of that limitation is.

Characters generally recover from Temporary Psychological Limitations once they are removed from the stressful environment for a period of time. The basic recovery period is often equal to the time the character spent under stress. Each recovery period the intensity of the limitation is reduced one level. A character is back to normal after he has recovered from a Moderate intensity limitation. Very restful conditions, counseling, or other conditions that relieve stress can halve the character's recovery period. New or additional stress can double the recovery period or halt the character's recovery all together.

LONG TERM PSYCHOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS

Long Term Psychological Limitations are more serious that temporary ones. A character normally receives a Long Term Psychological Limitation after stress has overcome his Psychological Resistance, while he is under great stress and after he receives a tremendous shock. A character's Psychological Resistance is overcome when the buildup of Long Term Stress exceeds the greater of the character's Presence or EGO. See the section on Long Term Stress for more details on how this can happen.

Recovering from Long Term Psychological Limitations can be lengthy and challenging for a character. Characters must be removed from the stressful situation before they can begin to recover from Long Term Psychological Limitations. Characters must recover their Psychological Reserves before they can begin to recover from Long Term Psychological Limitations. To do this, they must reduce their Long Term Stress to zero.

Once a character has reduced his Long Term Stress to zero, he may begin reducing the intensity of his Long Term Psychological Limitations. The basic recovery period is often equal to the period required for a Psychological Recovery as detailed in the section on Long Term Stress. Each recovery period the intensity of the limitation is reduced one level. A character is back to normal after he has recovered from a Moderate intensity limitation.

The Game Master may decide that recover from a Strong or Total intensity limitation takes more than just time. It may take a psychological breakthrough. A character that is carrying around a lot of guilt, fear, and hatred may have to come to grips with his weaknesses before he can recover. A psychological breakthrough is a perfect opportunity for intense role playing, and a useful vehicle for a character's self discovery.

Often a psychological breakthrough will require a character to face his problems head on. It may require the character to confront the enemy that caused the initial problem. Unfortunately, the possibilities for additional stress, and increased psychological limitations can make such confrontations both physically and emotionally dangerous. It is up to the Game Master to decide if a character has had a sufficient psychological breakthrough to begin recovering from an intense Long Term Psychological Limitation.

Some characters may never have the psychological breakthrough necessary to recover from some limitations. They become another psychological casualty of the battle to understand the unknown.

LONG TERM STRESS

Long Term Stress is a value that represents how much an individual character has been effected by constant exposure to intense stress. It is individual to each character. Different characters in the same situation may have different Long Term Stress values because of their Psychological Resistance, their skills and knowledge, and the luck of the dice.

The Long Term Stress value is subtracted directly from a character's effective Presence and EGO scores for all purposes. This includes: Presence Attacks, Characteristic Rolls, Skill Rolls and EGO Based Combat. If a character began with a Presence of 10, and has accumulated 5 points of Long Term Stress, he is 5 points more vulnerable to Presence Attacks gets one less die of effect on Presence Attacks, and has all Presence Based Skill and Characteristic Rolls reduced by 1. When a character's Long Term Stress value exceeds his Psychological Resistance, he is vulnerable to receiving Long Term Psychological Limitations.

Characters accumulate Long Term Stress in two ways. First, they accumulate Long Term Stress by spending time in a stressful situation. Second, they accumulate Long Term Stress by receiving a tremendous shock while under stress.

The greater the stress, the faster the character accumulates Long Term Stress. The type of stress corresponds to a period of time on the time chart. At the end of each time period, each character affected by the stress accumulates ½d6 in Long Term Stress. The Long Term Stress Table details the type of stress and the time period.

LONG TERM STRESS TABLE

Time Period	The Situation is:
1 week	*Spooky:* things are not quite right, but you can't put your finger on it. An annoying culture. A stressful job at deadline time (Newspaper, or Overnight Shipping Firm.)
1 day	*Wrong:* You know something is wrong, but you don't understand it. You're being watched. You know an enemy is out there. A difficult culture. A very stressful job, where people are treated like machines (post office, or an assembly line.)
5 hours	*Threatening:* What is wrong is now a known threat, but it is still not understood. This is often the situation after the first unexplained attack. A dangerous culture. A stressful and dangerous job, where a mistake can cause injury or death (coal mine, fire station, or police beat.)
1 hour	*Dangerous:* What is wrong is threatening, not understood, and the danger is immanent. The stalker is in sight
5 minutes	*Terrifying:* normal means don't seem to stop the enemy. The enemy has been shown to be bizarre and dangerous. The characters may be physically or mentally injured.
1 minute	*Overwhelming:* the character's have tried everything, but nothing seems to stop the enemy. The enemy is shown to be bizarre, dangerous, and seemingly unstoppable
1 Turn	*Nightmarish:* nothing seems to make any sense. The situation is inescapable, bizarre, and overwhelmingly dangerous. It violates all rationality.

The Game Master may also use the x5 time table from page 140 of the *Hero System* Rules or the revised Time Table from page 13 of the *Hero System* Almanac. In either case, start with Nightmarish Situation at ½d6 per 1 turn and proceed to longer periods from there.

A character may also accumulate Long Term Stress by being affected by a shock while under stress. Generally, a character's Long Term Stress is increased by ½d6 for every level of Presence Attack that has affected them. Each Level of Presence Attack can only affect a character once. So, if a character is under stress and takes a Presence Attack that just exceeds his Psychological Resistance, he adds ½d6 to his Long Term Stress. Additional Presence Attacks that just exceed his Psychological Resistance have no affect on his Long Term Stress value. But, if he takes a great shock and receives a Presence Attack that exceeds his Psychological Resistance by +20, then he adds 2x ½d6 to his Long Term Stress (½d6 for exceeding +10 and ½d6 for exceeding +20.)

One result of this system is that no matter what order a character takes Presence Attacks in, the total amount of Long Term Stress Lost is based on the worst Presence Attack the character has suffered. One character can take four Presence attacks, each 10 points more powerful than the last, climaxing with an attack that exceeds his Psychological Resistance by +30, and he will add a four separate ½d6 rolls to his Long Term Stress. Another character can take one big Presence Attack that exceeds his Psychological Resistance by +30, and he will add a total of four times ½d6 rolls to his Long Term Stress.
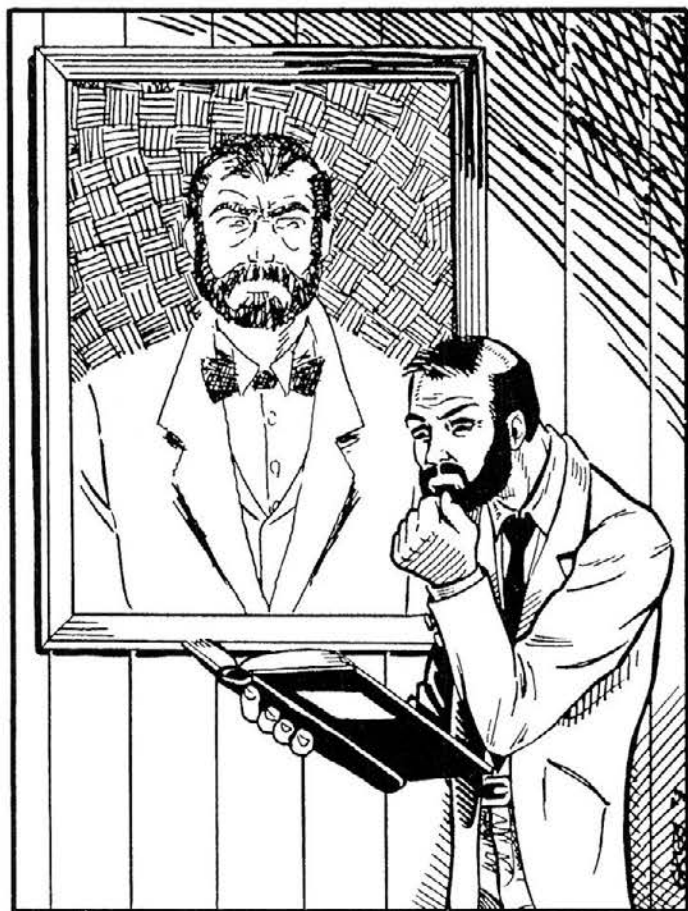
The Game Master may extend the Presence chart so that a character adds Long Term Stress for Presence Attacks if the character's Psychological Resources are exceeded by +40, +50, +60, etc. A character whose Psychological Resistance is exceeded by +60 is probably in deep psychological trouble.

RECOVERING LONG TERM STRESS

A character can reduce his Long Term Stress by taking a Psychological Recovery. This Psychological Recovery is equal to the character's base level PER/5 + EGO/5. At the end of each recovery period, the character reduces his Long Term Stress value by an amount equal to his Psychological Recovery.

The time it takes a character to receive a Psychological Recovery is based on how much Long Term Stress he has accumulated and the circumstances of his rest. If the character has accumulated a lot of Long Term Stress, recovery can be a lengthy process.

A character reduces his Long Term Stress by his Psychological Recovery every day when active but out of stress. If the character's Long Term Stress equals or exceeds his Psychological Resistance, then it takes one more level on the time chart per recovery. For every +10 points the character's Long Term Stress exceeds his Psychological Resistance it takes an additional level on the time chart per recovery. If the character is resting, and not active, then it takes one level less on the time chart per recovery. If the character is resting in a very soothing place and under the care of a professional councilor, then it takes one less level on the time chart per recovery. The Game Master may modify the recovery time up or down to fit the character, situation, and campaign.

LONG TERM STRESS VS. AID, DRAIN, AND TRANSFER EFFECTS

Long Term Stress reduces the character's current effective Presence and EGO. Aid adds to the character's current effective Characteristic. So long as the character's Aided Characteristic is greater than his effective Characteristic without Aid, then it drains away normally. Like an impairing or disabling wound, Long Term Stress is not healed by Aid or Transfer. Drain and Transfer act against a character's effective Presence and EGO. All Drains and Transfers return normally up to the effective value of the Characteristic. For example, a character has a base Presence of 10 and has accumulated 4 points of Long Term Stress. His effective Presence is 10 - 4 = 6. A Presence Aid adds +12 to his Presence value. The character's effective PRE is now 10 - 4 + 12 = 18. After the Aid effect has worn off, the character's effective PRE returns to 10 - 4 = 6.

The Game Master should be very careful not to apply too many Long Term Stress rolls to characters. The Game Master may quickly find that his campaign is running out of active characters. Characters with low Presence and EGO values are especially vulnerable to the effects of Long Term Stress.

One way to reduce the impact of Long Term Stress is to give characters a free Psychological Recovery just after they remove themselves from the stressful situation. This is a reasonable reflection of the relief a character may feel after surviving a long nightmarish ordeal. The Game Master should be careful that players not use this rule to recover the majority of their Long Term Stress faster than normal however. If a character with some accumulated Long Term Stress enters into a stressful situation, they should not recover more when they leave the stress, then they accumulated while in the stress. In other words, adding one point of Long Term Stress, and recovering 8 points afterwards is a no-no.

The Game Master should also remember that characters will become more accustomed to many bizarre situations over time. They may be under less or no stress the second time they encounter a specific eldritch monster.

The Game Master can give out assigned experience points to represent the characters growing knowledge of bizarre creatures and situations. A 1 Point Knowledge Skill, Familiarity with a specific creature, item or situation on an 8- will nicely represent this experience.

Generally it takes a knowledge of a specific thing or a group of things to avoid stress. Very general Knowledge Skills, such as Magical Situations, or Undead Monsters, are probably too broad to save a character from stress. Each creature or situation is an individual and should be encountered and understood individually. Each one creates its own type of stress. Each type of stress must be conquered psychologically.

And some creatures, items, and situations, are so bizarre that they may never be understood or psychologically conquered. A character that encounters them is always under stress. In those cases, the character must try to work within the limitations of his fears, and find a way to survive despite them.

THE CAMPAIGN EFFECTS OF LONG TERM STRESS

When using only the Stress Level system, characters return to normal fairly quickly. But, a character who has accumulated a lot of Long Term Stress and Long Term Psychological Limitations can be effectively out of a campaign for quite some time. The Game Master must take these lasting effects into account by pacing his scenarios to give a character a chance to get psychologically well.

The time it takes to recover from Long Term Stress and Long Term Psychological Limitations need not be a problem if the Game Master does not keep a strict timeline of campaign time. Simply estimate the time it will take a character to recover and say that much time passes between adventures. Or, hold that character out of the next arc of adventures to represent the time it takes him to recover.

DEFINING HORROR MAGIC: THAT FOUL SORCERY...

INTRODUCTION

Beware, seekers. Now you venture into my dark domain. Here lurks madness and damnation; here is the certain doom of the foolish. The authors of this poor tract call the manipulation of occult forces 'Magic'. I do not care for such a benign label — call it sorcery. Call it wizardry, legerdemain, witchcraft, voodooism. It is not a toy for success. It is the engine that drives the driver. It is the great uncontrolled, and it is to be feared. Look what it did to me...

So be it then. If you must continue, listen: Magic in horror allows characters to compete against the genre's more dangerous creatures, and to acquire otherwise unobtainable knowledge. Spells in horror are unlike those in conventional fantasy — seek no marvelous wonders here. The magic systems presented here are called Ritual Magic, Ceremonial Magic, Alchemy and Wielder Magic. These styles of spellcasting are characterized by intricate preparation, grave danger, and generally subtle effects. The practitioner of horror magic runs a constant risk of corruption by the forces he seeks to control; true masters of magic are very rare. You have been warned.

This section should be studied carefully before game play begins. The GM should decide whether or not to include magic and whether or not PC spellcasters should be allowed. A campaign can be full of evil sorcerers and occult artifacts, or a campaign can be run without the presence of magic at all (example: a modern day PC group that hunts down dangerous perpetrators of horrifying crimes).

THE HORROR HERO COSMOLOGY

Crazed adherents of an ancient god scuttle ships along the Atlantic seaboard...Ritual magicians call up demons from Hell to do their foul bidding...The rich and famous are possessed by phantoms from beyond...Insidious cults manipulate history...Saucer-borne invaders abduct screaming victims...How did the world get this way?

Herein are described all the mysteries of Creation — the source of magic, the nature of good and evil, and what happens when we die. This section is an amalgamation of myth, guesswork and fiction designed as a framework for all the diverse elements in this book. It is definitely, positively, absolutely *not* a statement of personal belief, nor should it be considered in any way a challenge to any religious or scientific belief. *We made it up* — it is only a game device. With that out of the way, here's the *Horror Hero* Cosmology — the story of the *Universe*, of *Life*, *Magic*, the *Afterlife* and a brief history of the *Earth*.

First, whether by accident or design, the *Universe* comes into existence. Simultaneously all along the corridors of possibility every conceivable variation on the model appears. The universes float like planets inside a great void. This is where the missing matter that puzzles physicists is hidden, and is also the astral plane so popular with mystics. The Void is the key to many mysteries in *Horror Hero*; we'll return to it momentarily.

The pure white light of creation cast a shadow, a dark multiverse known to the wise men of many cultures. Each universe has its own shadow. This is the basis of Duality, a universal law that is embedded into every aspect of science and mysticism (themselves an example of it). Newton grasped the concept, and his version was, "For every action (state of being) there is an equal reaction (state of being)." By this axiom we have creation / destruction, life / death, good / evil, God / Devil, female / male, light / dark, yin / yang, etc. The history of the universe, the world, mankind and *Horror Hero* is little but an illustration of these two forces conflicting at various levels of existence.

Life is matter animated by energy. Life exists throughout the multiverse and the Void in every conceivable form. All life is linked at the quantum level ("Every man's death diminishes me"). Sentience, however, is pure energy. Each universe has a limited amount of energy to invest in new life — when its quota is filled it will pull life energy from the Void, where it has taken strange configurations. Life born of Void energy is slightly different; this is how evolution occurs. A being born of Void energy retains an intuitive link with that realm. Sorcerers, psychics, mystics, madmen and monsters are the result.

The more a world or universe is geared toward the positive, the more Void energy is used and the more enlightened it becomes. More destructive worlds merely recycle the same old energy, and Entropy is the result.

Energy and matter in the Void is susceptible to wishes or commands from the universes, especially when they come from life born of the Void. This is how *Magic* works. A wizard uses a ritual whereby his mind (consciousness) is fine tuned to reach into the Void and pluck out energy or matter of a certain configuration. A Magic Wielder carries void energy within himself. Enchanted objects are items in which Void energy/matter is stored or through which it is channeled.

The *Afterlife* of a being depends on the makeup of their animating energy. This has many names — we'll use the term 'soul.' The Void is far from empty. Within it is contained all the afterlives that man has dreamed of or had prepared for him (this is a chicken or egg question that we'll dodge). A variety of destinations awaits a soul after death. It may be

trapped in a place associated with its life. It may recycle into life through reincarnation or simply dissipate and become part of the universe. If it believed in a destination, a heaven or hell, then it will enter the Void and join others of similar belief in a place prepared for it. The destinations in the Void are populated by natives of those realms who have either influenced or been influenced by the beliefs of humanity. These beings are subject to the Law of Duality and are known as gods and devils. These beings are sometimes capable of traveling into the material universes through their own power or via a summoning spell. The inhabitants of the Void, once introduced to human affairs, often develop agendas and scheme for greater power.

Finally, here is a brief history of *Earth* as it applies to *Horror Hero*. Our planet, in its approximately 4500 million year existence, has been host to a multitude of civilizations. Each considered itself the pinnacle of creation and the rightful heir to the universe. Some of these pre-human races migrated to the stars. Some destroyed themselves or were conquered by others. The planet has been colonized from space in the past and some believe that man himself is descended from extraterrestrial stock. Catastrophic wars and natural disasters have periodically cleared the Earth to allow the development of new life forms. Some pre-human races still cling to existence in hidden lairs on earth or in the stars. Who knows what secrets are buried? What strange lifeforms lie dormant awaiting resurrection? When will former inhabitants of Earth return from their voyaging to claim what is rightfully theirs?

Note that when this book mentions the Land of the Dead, the Afterlife, Heaven or Hell it is referring to the Void. Also note that when interdimensional travel is mentioned it means that something has left its own universe or the Void and traveled through the Void to our own universe. Travel of this type weakens or tears the barrier between the Void and the universe and sometimes unwanted visitors take advantage of the opportunity to come through. This is the primary reason that magic is generally considered a foolish and dangerous practice — You never know what you'll meet!

That's all. Have fun with the cosmology. Tinker around with it if you like or disregard it. It's only here to provide a rationale for the diverse elements in this book.

MAGIC SPECIAL EFFECTS

Magic can be considered as a group of special effects, while psychic powers are an entirely different group. Thus a Suppress spell against all magic would not work against psychic powers. Additionally, the innate magical abilities of monsters (such as Flight) are considered a separate special effect; again, a Suppress All Magic spell would not work. Magic spells cast by monsters are, however, part of magic special effects.

SETTING THE BALANCE

Generally, magic should be restricted so that it doesn't become the dominant element in the *Horror Hero* campaign (unless that's what you want). Restrictions on active points are one method. Perhaps better is to require a Magic Skill Roll at -1 per 10 active points, or even -1 per 5 active points, then restrict the number of skill levels the character can buy. This creates an effective cap on the power limit of spells, but then powerful spells can still be acquired and attempted even if the chance of success is low. (The GM may provide bonuses for certain circumstances in order to make such powerful spells more useful when they're really needed for the purposes of the story).

POWERS AND TALENTS AS MAGIC

The effects of magic are simulated by using Talents, Powers, and Power Advantages and Limitations. Using this method almost any spell may be constructed.

GMs should establish at the beginning of a campaign which Talents, Powers, and Power Advantages and Limitations will be available for players.

The STOP Talents and Powers should be carefully considered, as they can seriously unbalance a campaign when used as magic.

MAGIC IN HORROR ROLEPLAYING GAMES

You wish to continue? Horror magic is the darkest form of magic; it is a door that, when open, creates a consuming vortex and draws in all it touches. There is seldom anyone who "dabbles" in magic, just as there is seldom anyone who dabbles in mixing up explosives. To dabble in magic is to invite madness, but to master magic is to master the universe. Just be aware that this poor universe is only the innermost sphere...

RUGGELS

In horror, manipulative magic is very uncommon. Very few students of magic will ever possess a truly effective spell. The spells are difficult to learn, time consuming to cast, and dangerous to those who fail to control the magic. Death is often the least painful consequence.

It should be noted that characters who study magic are giving up a part of themselves to higher forces. These higher forces sometimes require extraordinary sacrifices both physically and spiritually for the power that is received.

Once a character chooses the path of magic, there is no turning back.

BUYING MAGIC

Rules, they say. Be aware, seeker of horror, that in sorcery there are no rules. There are only conditions to be met. Only men write rules. Nature and the supernatural abide by the conditions of existence. Need I spell it out? This is but one way to present the dark arts. This is a way that functions in the author's poor world. You may ignore it and create your own. I will not visit your home late at night to see if you are following these rules, honest...

As the reader has no doubt gathered by now, gaining and using sorcerous powers in the world of *Horror Hero* is not easy. The material in this section might not make characters' lives any simpler, but players and GMs may find it useful. Here can be found the standard *Horror Hero* Magic Limitations, guidelines for creating new magics, and tips for converting Powers into spells.

STANDARD HORROR MAGIC — THE RULES

STANDARD LIMITATIONS

Horror Magic should always have some inherent limitations besides the restricting of the actual magic knowledge. Concentration, Extra Time, Focus (for items used in the casting), Gestures, Incantations, and Increased END Cost are all recommended Limitations for a spell. Side Effects, although not an absolute must, should be included in most spells. The GM, at his discretion, may require a sum of Limitations to be taken with any spell. Also, the GM may require other Limitations of his choosing to be taken with a spell. All Ritual spells must have a minimum -2 in Limitations.

Example: *Anton is running a late 1880's horror campaign and John would like his character to be a ritualist. Anton decides that John can have Ritual Magic, but all his spells must take the following Limitations: "Requires A Skill Roll," "Side Effects," "Concentration," "Increased END Cost," "Focus," and "Extra Time — One Hour."*

NO SPELLS ARE PERSISTENT

A spell based on a Persistent power is not automatically persistent itself. *Horror Hero* spells and *Hero System* powers are related only as a gaming convenience — special effects, Limitations, and end results may be wildly different. Bear in mind — this magic system is designed *not* to be user friendly. A spell will cease to function when a sorcerer sleeps or falls unconscious (q.v. Turning Off Spells), and must be recast upon awakening. Thus, no *Horror Hero* spells are persistent. Any spell based on a Persistent power receives a -½ Power Limitation: Costs END.

Of course the Advantage Reduced Endurance can be used to by a spell's END cost down to 0, but even these spells must be recast after a period of unconsciousness. (Note: GMs are advised to disallow PCs the option of buying attack and defense spells with this Advantage.)

SPELLS MUST FIT GM's LIMITS

The GM in a horror campaign that includes magic-using PCs should take special care that things do not get out of hand. Unless limits are set on sorcerer's abilities, non-spellcasters may feel like second string players. Inter-character conflict is fun, inter-player conflict is not.

It is recommended that limits be placed on the active points of attack, defense, and information gathering spells in a horror campaign. Especially powerful spells can be cast occasionally, as lives may depend on it, but the penalty for failure should be higher (q.v. Limitations, Side Effect). Failing that, perhaps *deus ex machina* spells could be built with the Limitation "Limited Use — can only be cast once ever by the same person."

MAGIC AVAILABILITY

Using the recommendations in this section will keep magic from dominating the game. True magic has never had any great exposure and never seems to work if there are more than a scant handful of people available to witness the event. In a campaign, the presence of player-characters, the demented spellcaster, and a group of followers fanatically devoted to the caster's cause can constitute a "scant handful."

The rationale for keeping magic a secret from the general populace is twofold. First, if the good residents of a town were to observe someone conjuring demons forth from the Netherworld, they may seek to deprive the wizard of his life. Second, public exposure of the art cheapens it and lessens its effect. True magic just does not have the same effect on PCs if they are used to seeing it regularly.

GM: The major villain chuckles with glee from inside his magic circle...

Bob: I draw my gun and shoot him. He's got to be at least half DCV if he's seated, right? The last three were, after all.

Lesson: keep magic mysterious and rare. Players will appreciate greater power more if it only appears in the hands of a capable magician on occasion.

PC MAGIC USERS

How does this section apply to PCs? First and foremost, spellcasters are extremely rare — unless the event is rationalized in the plot of the campaign (all PCs being Fortunatii Operatii agents, for example), one is plenty. Second, PC spellcasters must take steps to conceal their abilities. They will find themselves dead or dissected if they do not.

The *Horror Hero* Campaign contains the premise that benevolent secret societies are actively collecting magical tomes and items. These groups are willing to resort to harsh measures to prevent free agents and evil doers from using their abilities; the groups are wide ranging and benefit from centuries of experience. PC spellcasters, then, have three choices: do not use magic, belong to an organization (and follow orders) or be a free agent and live life on the edge.

LEARNING SPELLS

Obviously, PC spellcasters have to find their spells somewhere. So how is this done? The easiest way is to assume that the PC had many spells at the beginning of the campaign, but had not yet deciphered all of them. As he adventures and gains experience, he can simply decipher (i.e., purchase with experience points) additional spells. The biggest drawback to this approach is the lost opportunities for roleplaying the arduous task of finding new spells.

Looting the dwellings of slain wizards, while smacking of dungeon-crawling, is still an accepted way of gaining new spells. Beware, though — such troves are rarely taken without cost.

Finally a wizard may decide to devise unique spells of his making. The amount of time this takes is entirely up to the GM, who may disallow the practice by deeming it too time-consuming. This does not prohibit PCs from including spells of their devising in their beginning spell list, or from having one "almost done" at the onset of the campaign.

NPC WIZARDS

In horror, life is not fair for the good guys. This section is a reminder to the GM that game balance, the grail of game designers, is fair game for exploitation in horror. NPC wizards, pulling the strings from off-screen as they usually do, should not be expected to play by the rules except when in direct conflict with the PCs. In other words, don't roll dice for spell failure, side effects, etc., when nobody is around to see it. Remember, players will not be afraid of an evil sorcerer who continually blows himself up. So cheat, cheat, cheat.

SKILLS

The occult practitioners of *Horror Hero* have access to several skills that are closely related to the buying and casting of magic spells. Not all the skills of use to magicians are exotic and mysterious. Professional Skill: Artist can be a complementary skill for drawing diagrams. Cryptography works for deciphering the obligatory moldy tomes and Languages for reading those tomes in the first place.

MAGIC SKILL

This is a must for every spellcaster in the *Horror Hero* Magic System. No spell can be cast without it. The Magic Skill roll defines a sorcerer's ability to channel magical power and the way the power is manifested.

Magic depends upon the caster's force of will. For that reason, the Magic Skill in *Horror Hero* is an EGO-Based skill, *not* an INT-Based skill. Magic Skill costs 3 points, +1 to the Skill Roll per 2 points.

KNOWLEDGE SKILL

Occult based knowledge skills add immeasurably to the character of a sorcerer, and a GM should always require a few to be bought. KS: (Type of) Magic is a must, and KS: Spell Components is highly recommended. Knowledge Skills of a general sorcerous nature include KS: Magical Lore, (In)Famous Magicians, Items of Power, Cabals, Diagrams and others.

Knowledge Skills based on specific magic systems include Alchemy, Demonology, Candlelight Rituals, Divination Systems, Witchcraft, Shamanistic Magic and others.

Science, history, religion, and folklore also have their uses.

POWERS AS SPELLS TABLE				
Power Name	**Primitive Society**	**Eldritch Era**	**Pulp Era**	**Modern Era**
Absorption	Unc	Unc	Unc	Unc
Aid	Com	Com	Com	Com
Armor	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Change Environment	Com	Com	Com	Com
Characteristics	Com	Com	Com	Com
Clairsentience*	Com	Com	Com	Com
Clinging	Unc	Unc	Unc	Unc
Damage Reduction	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Damage Resistance	Unc	Com	Com	Com
Darkness	Com	Com	Com	Com
Density Increase	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Desolidification	Unc	Unc	Unc	Unc
Dispel*	Com	Com	Com	Com
Drain	Com	Com	Com	Com
Duplication	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Ego Attack	Com	Com	Com	Com
END Reserve	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Energy Blast	Unc	Unc	Unc	Com
Enhanced Senses	Com	Com	Com	Com
Entangle	Com	Com	Com	Com
Extra Limbs	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Extradimensional Movement	Unc	Unc	Unc	Unc
Faster than Light	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Flash Defense	N/A	Unc	Unc	Unc
Flash	Unc	Com	Unc	Unc
Flight	Unc	Unc	Unc	Unc
Force Field*	Unc	Com	Com	Com
Force Wall*	Unc	Com	Com	Com
Gliding	Unc	Unc	Unc	Unc
Growth	N/A	N/A	Unc	N/A
Hand Attack	Unc	Unc	Com	Com
Hand Killing Attack	Unc	Unc	Com	Unc
Images	Com	Com	Com	Com
Instant Change	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Invisibility	Unc	Unc	Unc	Unc
Knockback Resistance	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Lack of Weakness	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Life Support	Com	Com	Com	Com
Mental Defense	Com	Com	Com	Com
Mental Illusions	Com	Unc	Com	Unc
Mind Control	Com	Com	Com	Com
Mind Link	Com	Com	Com	Com
Mind Scan	Com	Com	Com	Com
Missile Deflection/Reflection	Com	Unc	Com	Com
Multiform*	Com	Com	Com	Com
Power Defense	Com	Com	Com	Com
Ranged Killing Attack	Unc	Unc	Com	Unc
Regeneration	Com	Unc	Com	Unc
Running	Com	Unc	Unc	Unc
Shapeshift	Unc	Unc	Unc	Unc

POWERS AS SPELLS TABLE				
Power Name	**Primitive Society**	**Eldritch Era**	**Pulp Era**	**Modern Era**
Shrinking	N/A	N/A	Unc	N/A
Skills	Unc	Unc	Unc	Com
Stretching	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Summon*	Com	Com	Com	Com
Superleap	Unc	N/A	Unc	N/A
Suppress*	Com	Com	Com	Com
Swimming	Unc	N/A	Unc	N/A
Swinging	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Telekinesis	Com	Com	Com	Com
Telepathy	Com	Com	Com	Com
Teleportation	Unc	Unc	Unc	Unc
Transfer	Com	Com	Com	Com
Transform*	Com	Com	Com	Com
Tunneling	N/A	N/A	Unc	Unc

POWERS AND TALENTS

Most spells in this book are built using Powers. The appended table of Powers shows which ones are recommended for each era. Also included are the recommended Powers (Spells) for Shamans (Primitive Ritual / Ceremonialists).

On the table, common Powers are traditional, accepted parts of the genre. Uncommon Powers may be inappropriate for some eras; the GM will decide whether to allow these powers or not. Powers noted as Not Available should not be used in the *Horror Hero* genre.

Special Powers or Talents used as spells must be purchased with the "Costs END" Limitation.

POWERS AS SPELLS

The table on the following pages shows the availability of powers in the Eldritch, Pulp, and Modern Eras. The Fifties era is not included as magic is not available in that time. The column Primitive Societies can be used for witch doctors, shamans, witches, and other nature oriented magic users.

Note: *Powers followed by an * have a more detailed entry following the table.*

CLAIRSENTIENCE

Clairsentience can be used to simulate both the psychic Power and (when bought with a Focus) innumerable Divination spells. These include Crystalomancy (crystal balls), tea leaf reading and Haruspication (entrail divining), etc. Each Divination must be bought separately, with a different Focus and a different goal (finding a person, treasure, etc.)

DISPEL

In *Horror Hero*, Dispel serves two purposes. A Dispel can be bought that applies to certain spells, such as Hellfire (an Energy Blast) or Raise Zombie (a Transform). The traditional use of this spell in horror is as an Exorcism. Each Exorcism must be bought for a specific class of creature (Phantom, Oracle Demon, etc.) and applied as a Dispel versus Summon (specific class).

FORCE SHIELD AND FORCE WALL

Force Wall is the most common of these two closely related powers. Force Walls can be built with a variety of Special Effects (shimmering force, ring of flame), Limitations (only in graveyards, Vampires only) and Foci (a magic circle, line of salt or blood). Force Fields are usually invisible and built without Foci, but may have any number of Limitations.

MULTIFORM

This is a classic spell power; occult lore is steeped in tales of shamans, witches and sorcerers who use it to assume a favorite animal form. When bought with the advantages 0 END and Usable on Others this spell is used by Werewolf coven leaders and Mkodo Leopard Men to transform their followers.

SUMMON

When built as a spell, this Power is used to summon plagues of frogs, locusts and other mundane animals, but it finds its greatest use by demonologists.

SUPPRESS

All-purpose Suppress spells do not exist in the Ritual Magic system. Each suppress must be tailored to a specific spell (Energy Blast, Summon, etc.)

TRANSFORM

This power is loaded with possibilities for misuse and should be carefully monitored. It is suggested that transforms be bought with a specific effect in mind; for example, the venerable "person to toad" spell. The Advantages "Change target into limited class of objects" and "Change target into anything" are not recommended for *Horror Hero*.

TALENTS

Magic also can be used to duplicate Talents. As with powers, the duplication of a Talent's effects is the aim of the sorcerer. All spells built from Talents are subject to the same Limitations as any spell. All require a Magic Skill roll and cost END, they can be Usable By Others; none are persistent.

USING POWER MODIFIERS

Magic spells can be further enhanced with the use of Power Modifiers. All spells must have Limitations totaling at least -2.

ADVANTAGES

Affects Desolidified: Vengeful spirits can be affected with this modifier. *Contradiction*

Area Effect: This modifier can be used to expand the effect of Energy Blasts or Ranged Killing Attacks. Telekinesis also can use this modifier to affect an entire room, and Mind Control can affect an entire crowd of people at once.

Armor Piercing: This Advantage can increase the effectiveness of powers against a creature with a strong Physical or Energy Defense.

Attack Versus Limited Defense: As a STOP power, the GM has to approve any use of this modifier on powers.

Autofire: This Advantage should be very rare, perhaps presenting itself only in an era where autofire weapons are commonplace.

Based on ECV: This should not be allowed, as it would take away from the special effects of psychic abilities.

Continuous: Not recommended for the horror genre.

Damage Shield: A mystic circle of fire, for example, would have this Advantage.

Delayed Effect: This important Advantage allows wizards to keep spells prepared at all times.

Difficult To Dispel: This Advantage is rare, as its presence in a Summon spell would make the creature more difficult to dispatch with standard Dispel rituals.

Double Knockback: This would apply only to powers with a physical manifestation. It probably would not occur often in a heroic campaign.

Explosion: Fireballs and other spells have this Advantage.

Hardened: Since the only time this would be useful is when someone has an attack with an Armor Piercing attack, it should occur only as frequently as that Advantage.

Hole In The Middle: Area affecting, non-damaging spells like darkness can have this Advantage to render the center of the field useful while those outside the middle are affected by the power; i.e., a Darkness field versus Hearing would keep nosy monsters from eavesdropping on battle plans.

Increased Maximum Range: Not available.

Increased STUN Multiplier: On rare occasions, this Advantage can be added to a spell to create a painful and damaging attack.

Indirect: This can be an impressive looking spell effect; i.e., a wizard could cast a spell into a sealed building to affect the occupants.

Invisible Power Effects: Magic spells should look impressive, so the use of this Advantage is not recommended.

No Normal Defense: A spell that would render a foe senseless rather than killing him can be created with this Advantage.

No Range Penalty: This is not recommended.

Penetrating: See Armor Piercing.

TALENTS AS SPELLS TABLE				
Talent Name	Primitive Society	Eldritch Era	Pulp Era	Modern Era
Absolute Time Sense	Com	Unc	Unc	Unc
Ambidexterity	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Bump of Direction	Com	Unc	Unc	Unc
Combat Sense	Unc	Unc	Unc	Unc
Cramming	N/A	Com	Com	Com
Danger Sense	Unc	Unc	Unc	Unc
Defense Maneuver	Unc	Unc	Unc	Unc
Double Jointed	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Eidetic Memory	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Fast Draw	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Find Weakness	N/A	Unc	Unc	Unc
Immunity	Com	Unc	Com	Com
Lightning Calculator	N/A	Unc	Unc	Com
Lightsleep	Unc	Unc	Unc	Unc
Luck	Unc	Unc	Unc	Unc
Perfect Pitch	Com	Unc	Unc	Unc
Resistance	Unc	Unc	Unc	Unc
Simulate Death	Unc	Unc	Unc	Unc
Speed Reading	N/A	Com	Com	Com
Universal Translator	Unc	Unc	Unc	Unc

Personal Immunity: This Advantage should be used if the Explosion or Area Effect Advantage is present.

Ranged: This modifier is needed for Drains and Transfers that the ritualist wishes to cast from a distance.

Reduced Endurance: Not allowed. *Contradicts pg. 27*

Sticky: Appropriate to Entangles, the Sticky is a perfect Advantage in the horror genre.

Time Delay: This would allow the caster to cast a Summon spell, then cast a spell to bind the creature that would activate just as the Time Delay was expiring.

Trigger: Mystic traps could have this Advantage to foil would-be looters of treasure. Note that the Advantage does not have to be a directly-damaging spell; a Summon (Guardian) could take the form of virtually any horrible creature that would appear to oppose grave robbers.

Usable Against Others: This Advantage should be restricted to NPCs with strange abilities to affect characters with powers that alter the body (Growth, Shrinking) or its movement (Flight, Extradimensional Movement.)

Usable By Others: A caster could give a follower a spell to use against his enemies. This is recommended for NPCs.

Uncontrolled: Not allowed.

Variable Advantage: Not allowed.

Variable Special Effect: Not allowed.

LIMITATIONS

Ablative: Appropriate for mystical fields that wear away under continued assaults.

Activation: Since a Magic Skill roll is required for all spellcasting, this Limitation is not recommended.

Always On: Not applicable.

Charges: This can further limit the number of times a spell can be cast daily, in addition to the already present Costs END Limitation.

Concentrate and Extra Time: Both Limitations are very appropriate to the genre.

Focus: Most rituals require some type of Focus or multiple Foci.

Gestures and Incantations: Both Limitations are very common to the genre.

Increased END Cost: All ritual spells cost END, and this Limitation is good for simulating the "drain" on the caster when using a powerful spell. It should be one of the required Limitations on any spell that is more powerful than what the caster would normally possess.

Independent: Not applicable.

Limited Power: This category is available on a case basis, except "Costs END," which is required.

Linked: This can be used to link two powers with similar special effects, like an Ego Drain linked to an Ego Attack that makes a target weaker physically as well as mentally.

Mental Powers based on CON: An alchemist could use this Limitation to create potions that affect the mind, like love potions or other mind control potions.

No Knockback: Most magical attack powers will have this Limitation, to represent the way magical energy affects a target without having any tangible physical manifestation.

No Conscious Control: Not appropriate for ritual magics.

Only In Hero ID: Not allowed.

Reduced By Range: This would represent spells that fade in power quickly as they move away from the caster.

Reduced Penetration: This is rarely used in the genre.

Requires a Skill Roll: Spellcasting requires that the caster have a Magic Skill roll based on 9+(EGO/5).

Side Effects: Horror magic is not friendly at all. A failed spell should have dangerous repercussions to any caster.

Variable Limitations: Not applicable.

Visible: Can be used to make the presentation of powers that do not have a physical effect more interesting.

POWER FRAMEWORKS

While Elemental Controls, Multipowers, and Power Pools are not recommended at all for PCs, this does not apply to villains and other NPCs. Power pools for some NPCs make that NPC more impressive and better simulate their actual abilities.

POINTS TO CONSIDER

CONSISTENCY

Horror magic, no matter which era is played, should be consistent. A GM should establish at the beginning of a campaign all restrictions, standard Limitations, standard Advantages, and any magics not allowed to Player Characters.

This has a twofold effect. First, it makes the GM's life much easier to know that two separate casters are not going to follow two sets of rules and produce two sets of paperwork. The second is that players will find it easier to create characters and spells if the system is consistent. No more "Hey-how come her character has three more spells than mine?" This also makes for a cohesive campaign.

POWER LEVEL

The GM *must* establish before gameplay begins what Power Level (i.e. Active Points) the campaign magic is to be. For PCs, high levels of magic are not recommended. A campaign with medium level magic effects would be very powerful and not simulate the magic as presented in Horror. For *Horror Hero* a low level magic system is recommended, as this keeps magic from becoming the end-all of everything. It makes the horror all the more distressing when PCs know they can't just blast their way out. Remember PCs should think before confronting the horror, and a group that relies on magic instead of a plan is soon to be no more. For NPCs, campaign magic level is as high as the GM wants.

MAGIC ITEMS

Magic items should be restricted . PCs should understand that items in horror usually are as much a detriment as a blessing, and that most items were designed with evil or malicious intent. Most items also will be single use or severely restricted on charges. As the original creator probably had no intention of giving away the item, there may be persons who want the item back or simply destroyed along with the possessor.

So remember — restrict magic items and keep them mysterious, evil and dangerous.

HORROR HERO MAGIC SYSTEMS

With my one eye I've spied them all. The Ritualists; lonely old men huddled over their grimoires and diagrams, the Voodoo Hougan with his bones and tainted hosts, the New Age candle burner. The Ceremonialists; I've seen men of such miraculous faith that in other ages they would be canonized as saints, ordinary people who heal the sick. I've been with Alchemists as they strove for that final transformation. And, from afar, I've watched in terror as a Magic Wielder slew an army of jealous lesser sorcerers. Classification is a fool's errand, true, but with the four types of magic described below the Game Master may recreate any of the infamous mages of history and legend. If he dares...

There are four types of magician presented in this book. GMs should feel free to use any combination in his campaign.

RITUAL MAGIC

This is the standard *Horror Hero* spellcaster. Ritual Magic spells are lengthy and dangerous to perform, and the Ritual Magician is a man of great intelligence and self-mastery (at first . . .) Ritual Magicians achieve most of their power from trafficking with baneful supernatural creatures. Although "good" ritualists exist, they are rare.

BASIC SPELLCASTING

Spellcasting in *Horror Hero* is a hazardous undertaking, one that requires hours or days of rigorous preparation and nerves of steel...well, not really. Regarding game mechanics, it is very simple. A character activates a spell, making the Magic Skill roll, during one of his phases. The spell either succeeds or fails, and the results are calculated. The properties of ritual magic often vary wildly from the powers they are based on, due to the use of Advantages and Disadvantages; many spells are invisible, have greatly delayed effects, require the presence of demons to work, etc.

This is not to suggest that using magic is easy for PCs. To simulate the extreme rarity and peril involved in the Dark Arts, all Ritual Magic spells are required to be built with Limitations totaling at least a -2 from a specific group of Limitations. In addition, more powerful sorceries may require a series of successful Magic Skill rolls, and steeper Limitations may apply.

NUMBER OF SPELLS

Especially intelligent sorcerers can have more than one spell operating at once. For example, a ritualist might be enjoying an "accelerated healing' spell while using haruspication (entrail divining) to find his attacker's motives. In *Horror Hero*, the number of spells a wizard may use simultaneously is equal to his INT divided by 10. Spells held in reserve (see the power Advantage "Delayed Effect") count against this total.

Of course, this does not mean that a sorcerer can *cast* more than one spell at once. This is impossible no matter what the individual's intelligence. As an example, a wizard could only trap one person's soul during a phase, even if he has two soulcatching spells ready (as per "Delayed Effect"). A spell that has been completely cast does not count against the INT/10 total; the exception to this would be the presence of the "Continuous" Advantage in a spell without the Advantage "Uncontrolled." Some ritual magic spells have the Limitation "Concentration"; these spells can never be used with another.

INTERRUPTIONS DURING CASTING

One of the gravest dangers attending Ritual Magic is the possibility of interruption. Any interrupted spell is automatically treated as a failed attempt, and all Side Effects will apply. It does not matter whether the sorcerer himself or an outside force is responsible.

Needless to say, no sane sorcerer will attempt a dangerous spell if a possibility of interruption exists (this illustrates the value of "Delayed Effect"), nor will he willingly stop an unfinished spell. Any spell with the Limitations Gestures, Incantations, or Concentrate can be interrupted by others. Any attack that results in damage taken by the caster (BODY or STUN) counts as an interruption.

Spell Limitations suggest other ways to interrupt a spell — swiping material components, trampling magic circles, or blowing trumpets in the desperately concentrating spellcaster's ear, among others.

TURNING SPELLS OFF

What happens to a sorcerer's arcane efforts when he is asleep or knocked unconscious? A spell whose effects require a constant END cost will simply cease to function. Damage or transformations will remain, as will any summonings or mind control spells. Any spells built with the Advantage "Trigger" also will remain, since they are completely cast by the time the spell is turned off.

CEREMONIAL MAGIC

This is a system of Ritual Magic for priests. It differs mainly from its Ritual cousin in that no offensive spells of any type are allowed. Ceremonial Magic spells are limited to exorcisms (Dispel vs. Summon — Specific Creature), blessings (Transforms or Aids), or healings (usually Aids, but can be Transforms, i.e., blind person to normal sighted one).

BASIC SPELLCASTING

Ceremonial magicians, be they shamans or conventional priests, are always men of great faith. Spells are cast just as they are in Ritual Magic, except that the GM should apply modifiers to the caster's Magic Skill roll based on their behavior (adherence to their code of conduct) during play.

NUMBER OF SPELLS

This is handled the same as Ritual Magic.

INTERRUPTIONS DURING CASTING

This is handled the same as Ritual Magic.

TURNING SPELLS OFF

This is handled the same as Ritual Magic.

ALCHEMY

Alchemy is a branch of Ritual Magic dedicated to the creation of magical potions, salves and poisons; also, it is used to transmute elements. Many Ritual Magicians are also Alchemists.

BASIC SPELLCASTING

The use of Alchemy counts as three separate actions. One, the mixing of ingredients, two, a magic ritual that empowers the mixture, and three, the actual use of the item. Only step three is likely to occur in a combat situation; using an item is normally a one phase action unless an item requires extra time to activate.

NUMBER OF SPELLS

An alchemist cannot perform any other ritual during the creation of an item. This reflects the total concentration needed to prevent potentially lethal laboratory accidents. Regarding the consumption of multiple potions at the same time, many factors must be considered. Common sense, compatibility, and spell limitations apply.

INTERRUPTIONS DURING CASTING

Typically, an alchemist will suffer no adverse effects if interrupted while mixing ingredients, unless they are unstable to begin with (heh.) If the ritual portion of the enchantment is interrupted, standard penalties apply. Alchemical creations built with the Limitation "Limited Power — Correct Dosage Required" (-½) may have different effects if one consumes too much or too little of a potion, for example (heh, heh.)

TURNING SPELLS OFF

An item's effects can only be turned off by use of a Dispel. In *Horror Hero*, the exact nature of the spell must be known and a specific Dispel applied to the effect (for example, a Dispel vs. Invisibility will counter a magic potion of invisibility.)

MAGIC WIELDERS

This is an optional wizard who, because he uses solely his own END to create magical effects, does not need to perform lengthy rituals. The Magic Wielder is designed for faster and more combat-oriented spellcasting.

BASIC SPELLCASTING

Magic wielders need only succeed at their Magic Skill roll and expend END to create a magical effect. This is a one phase action, unless a spell requires extra time to activate.

NUMBER OF SPELLS

This is handled the same as Ritual Magic.

INTERRUPTIONS DURING CASTING

This is handled the same as Ritual Magic.

TURNING SPELLS OFF

This is handled the same as Ritual Magic.

MAGICAL LIMITATIONS

The magic systems presented in this book is designed to simulate the Dark Sorcery found in horror, where magic is as dangerous to the caster as it is to his victim. Spells in this genre are always designed with Limitations that greatly affect the way a spell is cast. GMs should carefully monitor all Limitations and require strict adherence to them.

Some Limitations apply only to the actual casting of a spell, while others must be observed throughout its entire duration. A sorcerer who summons an Oracle demon need only complete the combination summon/bind/dispel incantation once — the incantation only applies during the casting. But the drawn diagram necessary to bind the demon to the caster's will must remain undisturbed throughout the interrogation. If the caster's circle is damaged then he will be too.

HORRIBLE IMAGININGS...
PSYCHIC POWERS

The abilities to read other people's thoughts, to bend someone to one's will, and to perceive a world of supernatural happenings beyond the notice of normal men, are examples of psychic powers. Psychic powers derive from the mind of an individual, and vary in strength from the minor precognitive flashes of deja vu to the astounding strength of mind control.

PSYCHIC ABILITIES AND MAGIC

To compare these two areas of supernatural manipulation and cause/effect, some of the similarities and differences must be discussed.

In *Horror Hero*, psychic abilities use Powers and Power Modifiers to simulate the desired effect, just as magic does. Talents and Special Powers are available at the GM's discretion, but must have a Limitation "costs END." Psychic abilities, like magic, are not commonplace and are found in only a few individuals.

The differences between the two types of powers lay mostly within the individual PC. Psychic abilities come from the person and are "natural," inborn powers, whereas ritualists and magic wielders have to go out and learn about magic before using it. Psychics in the horror genre frequently have little or no control over their abilities; stressful situations and other external stimuli generally trigger the ability, rather than the magician's absolute control over his spellcasting and spell selection.

This does not preclude PCs from having control over psychic abilities; to the contrary, these are just classical ways of presenting psychic abilities for the genre.

USING PSYCHIC POWERS

The lists in the next sections can give the player and Gamemaster ideas for using psychic powers in a campaign. Some guidelines follow, but ultimately it is the player and GM who must decide exactly what it is the PC will and will not be able to do.

NUMBER OF POWERS

Generally, psychics can simultaneously use a maximum number of powers equal to their EGO divided by 5. They frequently possess only one power in the horror genre, but there are exceptions for powerful psychics. Psychic abilities built with the Limitation "Concentrate" can only be used singly. These powers are draining on the psychic and should be limited in other ways, so as not to overshadow other non-psychic PCs. Their abilities should complement a group.

INTERRUPTIONS

Optionally, when a psychic is interrupted in the course of using their powers, they can be allowed an EGO roll at -1 per 2 BODY damage sustained to continue using the power. If the power has the Limitation "Concentrate" then an interrupted power must be restarted. Also, if the power has a Side Effect, they take this when they are interrupted and fail the EGO roll (unless the power has "Concentrate," when the interruption will trigger the Side Effect.)

This system can be used for magicians as well.

BUYING PSYCHIC POWERS

You didn't think they were free, did you? Every power, whether it be magical or generated by the mind of the user, carries an awful price.

Psychic powers should not be too powerful in *Horror Hero*, or else they will tend to dominate the campaign. The GM should set an active point limit for psychic powers in the campaign; we recommend 30 active points as the maximum. Additionally, the GM should apply other restrictions to psychic powers. We recommend that characters be limited to one or two psychic powers, and certainly no more than three. Additionally, all psychic powers (except perhaps for Sensitive) should be bought with an Activation Roll; for most campaigns, an 8 or less is best. This keeps psychic powers from being used too frequently, and keeps them from becoming central to the campaign. Psychic powers should be an interesting talent that helps distinguish a character, not a powerful weapon that every character must have. The GM should feel free to place even more restrictions on psychic powers or eliminate them from the campaign altogether.

STANDARD PSYCHIC POWERS

Astral Projection

See the section on Spirits for a description of this power.

meanings of different colors in combinations or patterns. It's more fun when the meanings of colors are ambiguous, and the players must interpret them for themselves.

AURA COLOR TABLE

Color	Meaning
Blue-white	The basic aura color; the color of all inanimate objects.
Pink	Compassionate, warm, sociable.
Pale Pink	Psychotic; indicates weakness or confusion.
Rose	Generous, unassuming, motherly.
Red	Energetic, a leader, extroverted; anger, moodiness.
Dark Red	Emotion, desire, sensuality.
Orange	Sincere, open-hearted, a sense of justice, fair play.
Yellow-orange	Friendly, witty, humorous.
Dark Yellow	Cowardice, fear, inferiority.
Yellow	Intellectual, a teacher, deep thinker.
Pale Yellow	Idealistic, humanitarian.
Yellow-green	Greedy, stubborn; also jealous, deceitful, distrusting.
Green	Practical, composed; also indicates a love for nature.
Light Green	Brooding, lonely; often a loner.
Dark Green	Envy, hate, maliciousness.
Blue-green	Psychic or spiritual powers, a seeker after knowledge.
Blue	Peaceful, calm, a strong character.
Light Blue	Creative, spiritual.
Dark Blue	Blind faith, superstitious, fearful.
Lavender	Conservative, sensitive, civilized.
Violet	Excitable, easily swayed by arguments, loves variety.
Purple	Royalty, majesty, calm; a true leader.
White	Purity, innocence, honesty; often found in children.
Gray	Sickness, anxiety, a negative attitude.
Black	Rage, anger, savagery, black magic, extreme illness.
Gold	The color of saints; the highest, most spiritual color

Aura Vision

This is the ability to see auras around living beings and objects. An aura is a brightly colored radiance that extends for several inches about a person, with colors that have meaning to those experienced in perceiving auras. (See the Aura Color table for details.)

All objects have a basic blue-white aura; living things have more variation in their aura colors (though objects that are magical or otherwise unusual are an exception to this). Creatures and monsters also have auras. It's important to remember that it is impossible to "disguise" your aura; this could be handy when you're trying to figure out who is a werewolf in disguise, for instance. Auras are not very specific (it's not as if each person has a unique pattern of colors), but a supposedly meek, mild-mannered person with a blazing red aura is not right somehow.

A person's aura is rarely composed of one color; it's normally a mixture of several or many shades, and this mix changes with the current emotional state of the person. The effective range of Aura Vision is only about 3" (6 meters) in dim light, or 1" or less (2 meters) in bright sunlight. The GM should apply modifiers to the Aura Vision roll for ambient conditions, such as bright lights (-1 to -3), many people crowded together (-2), distractions (-1 to -3), and so on.

The GM should use the Aura Color table to good effect in a game; use this creatively to describe the various patterns and colors that a hero sees in an aura. Describing the aura of an evil creature can be particularly chilling. The GM should also feel free to add more colors to the table, and also the

Aura Vision is bought as Detect Aura, Sense, Discriminatory, for a total cost of 10 points. Though Aura Vision has a range, that range is so limited that it's more of a special effect than an added cost. Aura Vision is based on a standard 9 + (INT/5) or less roll, +1 for 2 points.

Clairvoyance

This is the ability to see visions of other places and events. Clairvoyance is purchased using the Clairsentience power for vision only, at a cost of 20 points.

Clairaudience

This is the ability to auditory equivalent of Clairvoyance. Clairaudience is purchased using the Clairsentience power for hearing only, at a cost of 20 points.

Dowsing

This is the ability to detect water, minerals, metals, and even caverns by use of a forked stick as a Focus. The character dowses by walking across an area, concentrating on whatever substance she is seeking. Dowsing characters walk at no more than 2" per phase and are DCV 0 (Concentration, -1 Limitation) while dowsing. The GM should apply negative modifiers if the substance being sought is very deep (-1 per 3" down), very small, or otherwise difficult to detect.

Dowsing can be used to find buried treasure, lost graves, hidden tunnels, and similar things of interest to heroes. Dowsing works best on large things, like underground rivers or oil deposits; a lost ring would be very difficult to find (at least -5 and maybe -8 or more). The dowser may specialize in dowsing for specific things, such as water or metal; the Detect that forms the basis of Dowsing would be changed to reflect this specialty.

Dowsing is bought as Detect Underground Objects/Substances, Range, Discriminatory; OAF Forked Stick, for a total of 7 points. You may buy +1 to Dowsing for 2 points. Dowsing is based on a standard 9 + (INT/5) roll.

Empathy

This is the ability to detect basic emotions of other people (and animals, too; even spirits, if you've bought Empathy with the +½ Affects Spirits Advantage). To use Empathy, make a successful ECV roll to target the subject, and then roll the amount of dice of Empathy to determine the emotional information you get from the subject. Empathy can serve to provide important clues in an adventure or to help communicate with people or creatures that cannot speak your language (by reading their emotions and reacting to them).

Empathy is purchased using Telepathy with the -1 Limitation Only to Read Emotions.

Medium

A medium is a person who can contact the spirit world, converse with spirits, and sometimes even have spirits manifest themselves in the real world in some fashion. This is discussed in some detail in the Spirit section of the rules. A medium should buy Mind Scan Affects Spirits in order to go looking for spirits; this is bought with the following Limitations: Concentration DCV 0 (-1), Extra Time (variable depending on the power of the medium, but usually 1 hour; -2 ½), and Side Effects (Failure to make the Mind Scan Roll brings the wrong spirit, -1). Additionally, the medium should buy some Telepathy (at least the minimum cost of 10, and usually more) to converse with the spirit; the Telepathy is purchased with all the same modifiers listed for Mind Scan, with the addition of Linked and without the Side Effects.

A medium may require that a seance be held, where a number of people gather in a darkened room with the medium and hold hands in order to help the medium's efforts to contact the spirit world. Requiring this setting is an additional -1 Limitation to the Mind Scan and Telepathy powers. The GM should apply modifiers to the Mind Scan roll, as specified under Seances in the Spirit article.

The cost of being a medium can vary greatly depending on the power of the medium.

Precognition

This psychic power allows the user to get glimpses of future events; see page 60 of the *Hero System* Rulesbook for details. Precognition costs 40 points.

Psychometry

This psychic power is the ability to gain impressions and information about someone by handling objects associated with that person. Information gained can include facts about the person, his personality, current whereabouts, current status (alive or dead), etc. The amount of information depends on the amount the PER Roll is made by. The GM should apply modifiers to this chance based on the degree of association an object had with the subject (for instance, a wedding ring would be worth a +3 bonus or more); objects seldom used or used long ago would take a negative modifier. The GM should use Psychometry to provide clues to the heroes, help set the mood, increase tension, and other useful plot purposes.

Psychometry is bought as Clairsentience, vision, with Retrocognition (-2, Only To See Person Associated With Object), OAF object (-1; whatever is the subject of the Psychometry). Psychometry costs 10 points and is based on a standard 9 + (INT/5) or less roll, +1 for 2 points.

Retrocognition

This psychic power allows the user to get glimpses of past events; see page 60 of the *Hero System Rulesbook* for details. Retrocognition costs 40 points.

Sensitive

This psychic power allows the user to detect the peculiar "vibrations" of magical or psychic phenomena, whether latent or currently in use. This includes the ability to detect the presence of spirits, though without any idea of direction. The GM should give this sense a bonus for very powerful phenomena; perhaps a +1 for every 10 active points in magic being used. The Sensitive takes a -1 to the roll for every 1" distance away from the target, -0 for the first 1". Physical objects between the character and the psychic/magic power tend to block the vibrations, so apply a -1 for every 2 DEF and -1 for every 2 BODY in the intervening objects. Sensitives may be able to tell a little more about an object with a half roll, but not very much; this psychic power isn't usually very discriminating.

Sensitive is bought as a Detect Psychic/Mystic Phenomena, Sense, for 5 points. Note that this is a different ability than Mental Awareness.

Telepathy

This is the ability to read the minds of others and to send thoughts to them. Generally, as a psychic power this should be a fairly weak ability, not the terrifically powerful version used by superheroes. Use the Telepathy power in the *Hero System* Rulebook to buy this, preferably with some additional Limitations, and with no more than about 30 active points.

OTHER ABILITIES

Powers and Talents can be purchased to simulate psychic abilities other than the ones listed above. These abilities should be subject to the same guidelines as the other psychic powers in the campaign..

SETTING

This section describes how to create a campaign background for *Horror Hero*, or how to use an existing campaign background with *Horror Hero* adventures.

CREATING A HORROR CAMPAIGN BACKGROUND

Creating your own *Horror Hero* campaign, like creating any other campaign, requires a lot of work. You must make a tremendous number of decisions regarding the world and its inhabitants, and then keep track of all this information. Plan on spending dozens if not hundreds of hours on such a project.

An easier method than the completely original creation is to begin with an existing campaign setting. You can take elements from a published campaign setting and make your own changes to it; this is much faster than starting from a blank piece of paper.

In any case, the general procedures are the same. You must decide the time and place where the campaign is set. For horror campaigns, this is usually set on Earth, most often in a near-modern time period (anywhere from 100 years ago to slightly in the future). Then you must choose the type of horror campaign to run, as discussed in the Sub-genres section earlier in this book.

If your setting is historical, then do some research to get the basic facts of the time period. An ideal source is a Hero product set in the time period, or any roleplaying product set in the time period should give you a nice historical overview from a roleplaying perspective. If you made up the setting, you may wish to use real world examples as models for your imagination.

We suggest you use the campaigns presented in *Horror Hero* as models for the information you need in your own campaign setting.

USING AN EXISTING CAMPAIGN SETTING

The settings included in *Horror Hero* campaign book contain enough information to use right away. We recommend you look at those campaigns as your first choice for a *Horror Hero* campaign. If those campaigns aren't exactly what you're looking for, there are other choices.

Campaign settings from other Hero products or other roleplaying games can also be used. Hero campaign settings are easy to adapt; just change power levels (if necessary) and campaign restrictions, altering NPCs to fit.

Using campaign settings from other games requires some work. Primarily, NPCs and weapons must be converted to the *Hero System* (though you can probably find analogous weapons and NPCs in existing Hero products).

THE OCCASIONAL HORROR CAMPAIGN

For many players and GMs, the most popular use of *Horror Hero* is as an occasional side trip into horror. This works quite well for almost any campaign.

Character selection is important; make sure they will feel threatened by the opponents. Stay away from long-term effects on the players. There should be a strong resolution to the story, to prevent lingering after-effects.

HORROR IN CHAMPIONS

Difficult, but not impossible. The first problem is that superheroes are so much tougher than normals, that often standard supernatural threats don't scare them. The GM must threaten them with events and opponents that are beyond the character's abilities, or at least can seriously affect the heroes. This may require careful selection of the heroes as well as the opponents.

See *Champions in 3-D* for a horror-oriented world for superhero adventures.

CHAMPIONS UNIVERSE

No large-scale horror campaign ideas here (no plagues of vampires). But individual horror works well: the spell gone awry, the demon, the magical supervillain seeking world domination through invocation of dark gods, and so on. Use magically oriented supervillains and organizations as your starting point. "Normal" horror won't be horrifying; psychotic killers may be disgusting and evil, but they don't represent horror to a superhero.

DARK CHAMPIONS

Horror works well with the grimmer shades of emotion found in *Dark Champions*. Since the heroes are lower-powered than their Champions Universe counterparts, it's easier to scare them with a variety of threats. To someone armed with normal weapons, a vampire or a werewolf or a ghost can represent quite a challenge, and a demon can be nearly invincible.

Integrate the modern paranoid horror campaign with *Dark Champions*.

GOLDEN AGE OF CHAMPIONS

Horror here can grow easily out the pulp horror campaign described here. Of course, the mystic inclinations of the Nazis make for exciting wartime scenarios. This can almost be like *Dark Champions* Horror in the Golden Age; an interesting melange of styles.

HORROR IN FANTASY HERO

An entire campaign can be constructed around horror, or horror can be used for occasional adventures. For horror to be effective, the magic wielded by the heroes should not be overwhelmingly powerful against the opponents. The opponents may well have magic of their own to overcome the magic of the heroes. Generally, the magic of horror opponents should have a distinctly different flavor and style than the magic that the heroes use. Necromancy is particularly appropriate. Animated corpses and skeletons are classic horror elements.

WHOEVER FIGHTS MONSTERS... CHARACTER CREATION

So you want to fight monsters, eh? You want to waltz into the vampire's lair and be home for supper? Fools. You, bright eyed and clean shaven, dressed in your new monster-hunting suit. You who have never felt the breath of the damned on the back of your neck, never felt their claws in your guts or wilted in their inhuman gaze. Do you really know why you are here? Have you thought about it? Look at me! I went to them willingly! To learn, not to fight! Look what happened to me and ask yourself — Who am I to want to do this?

You probably will already have ideas about the type of character you wish to play before an era to campaign in is chosen. Using the material in this section and the character creation guidelines in the HERO System Rule Book (page 8) will make it easy for novice players to construct their first character. It probably won't live long, so look at it as practice. Heh.

Depending on which era the new campaign is set in, your GM will decide how many points characters start with, and which disadvantages and skills apply. The choice of era also affects the use and availability of talents, powers, weaponry, etc. Not that they'll help, of course.

CHARACTER CONCEPTION

Horror is a personal matter. No matter how many atrocities a monster or villain has committed, no matter how much outrage you may feel at their actions, the real test comes when you face the horror yourself. When that happens, who do you want to be? A stalwart adventurer who won't even blink at the danger? A nutty professor who would rather study then slay? An average person whose first thought is escape? Or a mystic whose motives are as mysterious as the creatures?

Some players may have horror characters kicking around in their head that will jump full-blown onto a character sheet, once an appropriate campaign presents itself. Others may have never considered playing in a horror campaign before, and have no idea where to start. This section is for those players.

Sometimes a few ideas will present themselves after the GM chooses the era to be played, and the players section of that era is read. These concepts are the beginning of a complete character!

Was the character's motivation the first thing that came to mind? Has he set out to rid the world of evil or is he an unwilling participant in events beyond his control?

Maybe a certain skill or ability seems like it would be fun to play. Does the character catch glimpses of the future or is he a champion archer surrounded by gun enthusiasts?

Or does the era seem an interesting place for a character based on a historic or fictitious person to appear? Maybe playing a Sir Richard Francis Burton or Professor Challenger is appealing to the player. Perhaps the player would even like to play himself, either as is or a glamorized version. All of these styles for creating characters are perfectly acceptable, but final choice is up to the GM.

A player who cannot come up with an idea should ask the GM if there is a type of character essential to the campaign that was passed over. This gives the player a PC that is tailor made for the campaign, and may solve a few problems for the GM as well.

CHARACTERS BASED ON MOTIVATION

Oh, but you protest. I have a good reason, you say. I wouldn't want to do this but — but — Yes, I've heard it all before. You aren't the first to come this way. Let me guess. Your wife-lover-brother-sister-father-mother-friend-co-worker was killed-maimed-abducted-seduced by a vampire-werewolf-mad scientist-alien-monster. Or you're full of the light of righteousness and are driven to fight evil. Or it's your job. Or you're a scientist and you must study…bah! When you are seconds away from having your throat torn out you'll find the only true motivation. Survival of the fittest.

This is a PC that is defined by personality. The reason may be as simple as "I like to fight" or as complex as "My brother was abducted by aliens and I'll search until I find him."

The PC's motivation should be complex enough for the GM to utilize it in games, but not to the detriment of other PCs. Motivations should be defined at the onset of the

campaign. (The exception to this is when the motivation is the focal point of the campaign opening scenario.) PC's motivations should be kept mysterious and slowly revealed throughout the campaign, the scene where a PC's motivation is finally revealed should be a memorable moment in a campaign. Some common motivations for horror PCs are:

LOYALTY: This can include loyalty to a family (a clan of witches), an individual (a mysterious benefactor), an organization (secret society, church, or even the military) or a country or ideal. A PC with this motivation usually receives orders from a superior; his degree of loyalty is up to the player.

PROMOTING A CODE: This can be a code of conduct (nationalism/asceticism) or a religious belief (Catholicism). This motivation is rare in horror roleplaying by itself, but when combined with another motivation can round out a PC's personality.

LOVE: This is closely linked to loyalty, but the PC's "orders" are self imposed. For example, the adventurer is devoted to a cause or person, but he decides on his course of action, not someone or something else. This occurs in horror roleplaying more often than in other genres.

FAME: This PC exists for personal glory. This is a rare motivation in horror roleplaying, as most campaigns try to insure the general public learns nothing. A PC may seek recognition within an organization or among his peers.

MONEY: This motivation is similar to fame or loyalty, except the PC expects to be paid or otherwise become wealthy. Hard-bitten mercenaries who will do anything for pay are a natural for the horror genre. These are also well-suited for players who do not enjoy PCs with complicated personal motivations.

KNOWLEDGE: The acquisition of knowledge is a common motivation for horror roleplaying. The wizened professor or traveling mystic so appropriate to the genre will brave any terror to gain a chance to study. A character whose motivation is knowledge will blithely wander into situations that would cause other PCs to flee in terror (all at the while taking notes and questioning man-eating plants).

ADVENTURE: The adrenaline junkie is a character who battles for the sheer enjoyment of it. A PC with this motivation is likely to dash into hopeless situations with abandon; the adventure is often its own reward.

REVENGE: "So, Count, we meet again. This time *you* die!" Revenge is a natural motivation for horror characters, but can be inherently limiting. A character with this motivation may wish to broaden his base list of motivations. Imagine that Van Helsing, Harker, etc. continued to hunt vampires rather than hang up their stakes.

THE SEARCH: A PC with this motivation will use his association with the others as a means to further his own private agenda. He may be searching for a certain occult book, item, or even a person. The others may not be aware of this, and in certain cases a PC with this motivation may hold his quest in higher regard than he does the lives of his companions.

THE FUGITIVE: An individual with this motivation is on the run, and often leads to interesting developments for their associates. He may be a fugitive from the law, a secret society, or even a revenant. Often in order to maintain the group's protection he will conceal his motivation.

THE BYSTANDER: In horror many characters are accidental heroes. PCs with this motivation have the misfortune to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. This situation is perfect for opening scenarios, usually leading into other motivations such as the quest or revenge. The normal person whose mundane life is shattered by an encounter with the unknown is perfect for players who have never before played horror.

USING MOTIVATIONS

Have you got it yet? Let me tell you a story....The sleazy tabloid reporter Eddie Carson has as his motivation the acquisition of knowledge, i.e., he'll do anything for a story. The GM decides that potential Pulitzer prize winning situations crop up regularly in the course of the campaign; the occurrence of the motivation is common. But to what lengths is the malodorous Wombat willing to go? I.E., how strong is this motivation? If Mr. Carson is content to wait for stories to drop in his lap, this motivation should be listed as of moderate intensity (10 points). If he spends most of his time looking for and investigating stories, with only occasional "off" time, his motivation should be listed as strong and he will need to make an EGO roll to ignore the situation (15 points). But if the intensity is total, it's worth 20 points, and Mrs. Carson might as well turn off the porch light and go to sleep. If Eddie Carson's motivation is this strong he will obsessively search every nook and cranny for weird and occult knowledge to write about. In the average horror campaign he will find it!

An excitingly complex motivation is fun to create and roleplay, but it still must be accounted for in game terms. A motivation is usually bought as a Psychological Limitation. It may be reduced or removed altogether after the PC has gained experience points, and the events roleplayed to effect such a change. The number of points gained from a disadvantage will determine the strength of the motivation.

Obviously, the intensity of a motivation determines how great an effect it will have on the game. A strong individual with a "Total" intensity motivation may unduly affect the course of a campaign. GM's should take heed and monitor character creation carefully so that this does not occur unexpectedly. Besides their primary motivation, a well-rounded PC should have other personality quirks. For example, a pulp hero may go catatonic on airplanes, or a modern PC may distrust computers. While these are often amusing, they should not detract from the primary motivation.

PCs built in this manner, from disadvantages outward, are often the most "Real" in a campaign. But some players are not interested in why their PC crusades against evil, they want to know how he does it, which brings us to —

CHARACTERS BASED ON ABILITIES

Here's a tough guy. Are you good with that peashooter, or do you just carry it around to impress the others? Oh, you know martial arts too? That'll really help out against the Loup-Garou, they're terrified of people with martial arts and guns! And you're a magician! How splendid! Make sure they carve it on your tombstone...

This the type of PC that appeals to action oriented players, a PC based not so much on who he is, but what he can do. The first step in creating a character of this type is to decide on his abilities, talents, or powers. The power level and the era of the game will determine the selection available.

Be careful not to rely entirely on combat abilities to define the PC. Most PCs in horror spend most of their time researching, investigating and avoiding unwanted official queries. So spend points on abilities which will help the PC in these endeavors, and save a few for side-line abilities which help define the PC's personality. This is very important to establish a pre-campaign "life" for the PC.

Remember, the more "alive" a PC is, the more realistic his reaction to horror will be. A good way for players to "cheat" is to play someone whose motivations and abilities are already created. Which leads to ...

CHARACTERS BASED ON FICTION AND HISTORY

So you want to rip off — excuse me! Pay homage — to an already existing character? Here's one way to handle it. Stephen is running a 1950's saucer scare campaign, and Clive wishes to play Sherlock Holmes. Clive discovers that Holmes, faithfully rendered, will cost in excess of 300 points. As this is a Heroic campaign, Clive must build Holmes on 75 points plus Disadvantages. After this Herculean task is finished, Stephen informs Clive that in no way is he going to let Holmes in the campaign. The idea of playing Holmes' grandson meets with equal failure. So in the end Clive plays Sherman Locke, an aloof, calculating American private investigator with a DNPC Physician friend. In this manner he can play "Holmes," but in a version that is agreeable to the established campaign.

For many beginning roleplayers, this is the easiest method of creation. A PC such as this comes with motivations and abilities pre-made, and tailored to the campaign. The GM should be consulted before fictional or historic PCs are created. The GM will most likely impose a few conditions on the transference to game statistics. First, only a certain number of character points will be available at the onset, less than are probably necessary for a faithful rendition. Patience is called for; the PC will resemble its model after gaining a few

experience points. The GM also may point out that the PC in question simply cannot or does not exist in the campaign. The presence of a fictional or historic character may conflict with the believability of the campaign. This may be countered by changing the name and a few details of the PC.

Creating a PC based on fact or fiction is a good way to insure that the player will know how the PC will react in certain situations; consistent PC response is a big bonus to creative roleplaying. This can be taken a step further by creating a character whose reactions the player is certain to know…

CHARACTERS BASED ON THE PLAYER

Heh. Heh Heh Heh. Getting a little Freudian now, are we?

It may seem an unlikely option for a horror campaign, but it is possible for a player to base a character on himself, either transported to the game world or as an alternate version of himself. This option is subject to the same conditions that govern the use of fictional or historic characters, i.e., their suitability to the campaign and the attending "belief" factor.

Basing a character on oneself is not a bad idea for beginning roleplayers, and with a new name and an alternate history these characters are fun and easily roleplayed. All that needs to be done is assume that the character grew up in that setting, and has the appropriate skills for the era.

Playing oneself can be problematic. Even assuming GM permission (maybe he will want everybody to play themselves!) and the acceptance of the other players, questions regarding technology, historical knowledge, and character mortality arise. A player character transported to the past with memory intact could wreak havoc on history or find himself ineffectual. The point must be stressed: a horror campaign, more than any other, requires a realistic game world. Otherwise, the horror will not happen. The believability of the setting will be strongly compromised by the continued presence of a PC identical with his creator. Another aspect of horror gaming that may persuade players not to run "themselves" as characters is the sheer lethality potential. The horror genre is the least player-friendly of all genres. Dangerous situations abound, and great care must be taken lest players see attacks on the character as personal attacks. In order to prevent hostility between player and GM, great care must be taken to maintain a sharp distinction between a player and a character modeled on himself.

FLESHING THE BONES

What? You thought you were done? All you have now is a puppet, a cipher. How can you fear for the life of that? Now is the time for alchemy, for the mystic transformation. Time to bring your wretched creation to life.

Following the parameters of both roleplaying games and the horror genre, once the basic idea for the character is decided upon, he must be fleshed out and made real. Using the preceding sections will help, and when the character is finished he will usually be seen to reflect all four methods. Fighter pilots need motivations, obsessed vengeance seekers need skills, and almost all characters have a precedent in fiction or history and a bit of the players own (idealized) personality.

Confer with the GM and read the players section of the setting that has been selected. Each era has slightly different opportunities for character types, and the GM should always be allowed to decide whether a character is suitable for the campaign.

In real life, everybody has areas of knowledge or skills that seem useless. After giving a character his primary skills and abilities, the player should add a few of these to round him out. His psychic investigator may collect postage stamps, or be a terrific dancer. The creative addition of non-essential skills adds depth to a character and who knows? That knowledge skill of taxidermy may come in handy someday!

What follows are package skills reflecting archetypal horror characters, with notes on how to use them in the various eras. Players seeking ways to trim points off their characters, as well as those seeking ideas and inspiration, should keep reading.

CHARACTER ARCHETYPES

My one eye spies that you have yet to put your alter ego to paper. Is your mind a blissful blank? Cast your two upon the following. I've seen them all go out to conquer the night — the coppers, the army men, the nosy reporters — some have even returned! Keep reading. Perhaps your alias lurks below…

Horror roleplaying is unique among the field in many ways, not the least of which being the relative scarcity of role models for player characters. Most roleplaying games are set in genres that feature continuing characters or at the least leave the heroes alive and well at the end of the book, movie, or whatever. Horror books and movies, on the other hand, feature groups of individuals who are killed one by one until the "hero," through an amazing stroke of luck, somehow destroys the monster at the end, but is left either crazy or swearing off adventure forever. There are exceptions to this chain of events, but they are rare. Needless to say, this scenario is not conducive to enjoying long campaigns.

The *Horror Hero* character, in light of the above, should be regarded as more of an independent creation than a representation of the average horror genre protagonist. In no way does this limit a potential player's choices. The relative lack of genre conventions opens up the selection of potential character types! Given enough resourcefulness any type of individual is suitable for a horror game.

The following section has a dual purpose. It is a listing of character archetypes that have been proven to work well in horror roleplaying and a collection of package deals that enables players to build their character less expensively. Also, 85% of monsters interviewed found these particular character types to be tasty, easy to prepare and suitable for most fine wines and social occasions.

A player wishing to depict one of these character archetypes needs merely to purchase the package deal. If the player desires to play an archetype without the package deal, that is fine; package deals are not mandatory. The same holds true of the suggested abilities, motivations, and disadvantages. A character who has retired or quit a profession can use the package deal to reflect that past profession, with whatever modifications are appropriate.

Authors' Note 1: In some skill lists in the package deals, an option for a Skill called Brawling exists. Brawling is a 3 points skill that adds +1d6 in unarmed combat. Brawling *may not* be used in conjunction with Martial Arts; it is a more primitive form of that skill.

Authors' Note 2: Sample characters built using these packages can be found in the Sourcebooks under the heading 'The Opposition". They are referenced at the end of each package description. The GM may wish to use these characters as NPCs, so his permission should be asked before they are looked over.

OFFICIALS

Almost inevitably, the events of a horror scenario will attract the attention of the police, national intelligence agencies, or the military. An individual representing one of these groups is highly recommended for any character party.

POLICEMEN

(See also page 129 of the *Hero System Rulesbook*)

The policeman character is a staple for the horror genre. He may be a sheriff in the Old West, a highway patrolman, a security officer at a private industrial complex, etc. A policeman usually has access to privileged information and is normally armed. They can be helpful when official inquiries make life uncomfortable for a PC group, or they may have to hide their extra-departmental activities from their superiors. They are incredibly useful when impounded evidence or forensic information are needed, as civilians do not legally have access to this material.

Typical Goals and Motivations: The policeman's primary motivation is to uphold the law and protect those he has sworn to serve. If dealing with the powers of darkness demands that he follow the spirit, rather than the letter of the law, so be it.

Typical Abilities: Policemen, depending on their rank, tend to be skilled at fighting or bureaucratics or both. These characters tend to spend more of their characteristic points on physical stats, unless they are old timers or desk jockeys. He will have appropriate weapons skills and transportation familiarities for his era. For police combat units, such as SWAT team members, extra characteristic points and weapon skills are recommended.

Suggested Disadvantages: Watched by superiors is a must, and most policemen have "Subject To Orders" as well. Distinctive Feature — Uniform or a Reputation for their basic attitudes as viewed by the populace they protect and serve are appropriate (i.e., good cop, bad cop).

Roleplaying Tips: Policemen in horror roleplaying are often torn between sworn duty and the necessity for illegal activities when horror looms. Police PCs are usually very uptight about this, or very philosophical. A policeman will be very busy balancing his official duties and monitoring his civilian cohorts ("You did *what!*") to keep them out of trouble ("But he's, he was, the mayor!"). The policeman may be a hardy veteran or a wet behind the ears rookie ("Golly! That's illegal!").

POLICEMAN	
Skills	**Cost**
FAM w/Small Arms	2
FAM w/Billyclub	1
KS: Criminal Law 11-	2
PS: Police Officer, Trooper, Sheriff, et al 11-	2
Perk: Local Police Powers	2
AK: Patrol Area, City of Operations, et al 11-	2
Pick 3 Skills:	9
(Bugging, Bureaucratics, Combat Driving, Concealment, Conversation, Criminology, Forensics, Persuasion, Shadowing, Streetwise)	
Basic Self Defense Martial Art	15
Use Art w/Billyclubs	1
Disadvantages	
Package Bonus	-3
Distinctive Features: Cop	-5
Reputation (Good cop, bad cop, or another personality trait) 8-	-5
Watched by Superiors 11 — (Mo Pow, NCI)	-13
Package Cost	9
Detectives add:	
Bureaucratics	3
Deduction	3
KS: Wanted Felons 11-	2
Pick 2 Skills from above list	6
Disadvantages	
Package Bonus	-3
Watched by Superiors 14 — (Mo Pow, NCI)	-15
Reputation (As above, can be due to media coverage of a major arrest or a widespread story about the character, i.e., "Maybe we should register you as a lethal weapon.") 11-	-10
Psychological Limitation (Choose)	-10
Package Cost	**11**

SOLDIER

They signed up knowing that war might break out at any minute and that they might be called upon to give their all for their country. The *Horror Hero* soldier might be a boy in the Confederate army, a trench-bound doughboy from the Great War, or a shell shocked vet of the modern era. These individuals learned how to fight and kill for their country, or sold their services in mercenary armies. Now, either as special liaisons or civilians, they bring their skills to bear against the deadliest enemy of all.

Typical Goals and Motivations: An active duty soldier is just a joe doing his job. He is motivated because he is ordered to be! An ex-soldier might simply miss the gut-wrenching excitement of battle, or he may have reluctantly taken up arms again because a new war has erupted at home. Loyalty, love, or revenge can be a soldier's motives.

Typical Abilities: An active duty soldier is fit and tough, and his characteristics should reflect this. The ex-soldier may have gone soft, but as the action progresses he can buy his stats up to their former level. The soldier is skilled in several weapons and may also possess knowledge and skills in demolitions, martial arts, tactics, and other combat-related skills. PCs who are members or ex-members of Special Forces units will have higher characteristics and skill rolls than the normal soldier.

Suggested Disadvantages: Veterans may have suffered injuries in battle that can be reflected as Physical Limitations and Distinctive Features (Missing one eye, permanent limp, etc.) Especially gung-ho types may want Psych Limitations like Superpatriot, Always Obeys Orders, Hatred of Former Enemies, or Overconfidence. Particularly famous soldiers or well-traveled mercenaries may have Reputations reflecting this status.

Roleplaying Tips: Soldiers can be resourceful leader-types, sullen sociopaths, enthusiastic slayers of "enemies," or the favorite of late night war movies — the grizzled old sergeant with a heart of gold.

SOLDIER	
Skills	**Cost**
FAM w/Small Arms	1
FAM w/Melee Weapons	1
Concealment	3
Stealth	3
PS: Soldier 11-	2
KS: "The Enemy Army" 11-	2
Pick 3 Skills:	9
(+1 w/Rifles, WF: Rocket Launchers, Grenade Launchers, Man-Guided Missiles, Flame Throwers (Pick 3), +1 w/above weapons, Breakfall, Climbing, Combat Driving, Combat Pilot, Cryptography, Demolitions, Electronics, Interrogation, Languages, KS: Military Electronics Equipment, Mechanics, Navigation, Paramedic, PS: Surgeon, SC: Medicine, Riding (Eldritch/Pulps era), Survival, Systems Operations, Tactics, Tracking, Transport FAM: Large Ground Vehicles, Airplanes, Tracked Vehicles, Parachuting, SCUBA , Weaponsmith)	
Disadvantages	
Package Bonus	-3
Psychological Limitation (Choose)	-15
Package Cost	**3**

INTELLIGENCE AGENTS

With all the dire plots and hideous creatures threatening national security, it is only a matter of time before Washington takes notice. An intelligence agent may be a representative of the Treasury (Eldritch and Pulp eras) or the CIA, FBI, or NSA (Fifties and Modern eras). He may even be an agent for a top secret agency that monitors the supernatural!

Typical Goals and Motivations: The agent character is under orders from his superiors. Great dedication is required to advance far in his line of work, and the agent will take any steps to fulfill his mission and preserve his country. Some agents are more loyal to their organization than their country, and some are even in the service because they simply enjoy being a spy.

Typical Abilities: Agent characters are usually in peak physical condition and very intelligent. They are skilled with various weapons and devices, and are well-educated in politics, languages, and geography. Contrary to popular belief, a knowledge skill in fine clothing is not a prerequisite.

Suggested Disadvantages: The agent is always being watched by superiors, and he is often required to keep his mission and true identity a secret, even from other PCs. They may also have intense rivalries with fellow agents. In a horror game, dangerous enemies are a given.

Roleplaying Tips: The true occupation of an agent character is often a secret shared only with the GM. Their unexpected abilities and suspicious disappearances may arouse the interest of other PCs, and the agent will find himself constantly on guard. They usually play their cards close to the chest when undercover. When their cover identity is no longer an issue, they are often take charge types.

INTELLIGENCE AGENT	
Skills	**Cost**
KS: College Degree Field of Study 11-	2
FAM w/Small Arms	2
FAM w/Melee Weapons	2
Martial Arts (Choice)	10
KS: Law and Agency Procedures 11-	2
KS: Other Intelligence Agencies 11-	2
Criminology	3
Perk: Federal Law Enforcement Powers	3
Pick 3 Skills:	9
(Acting, Breakfall, Bribery, Bugging, Bureaucratics, Climbing, Combat Driving, Computer Programming, Concealment, Conversation, Cryptography, Demolitions, Disguise, Electronics, Interrogation, Inventor, KS: Culture (Pick one) 12-, KS: City (Pick one) 12-, Language (Completely fluent), Linguist, Lockpicking, Mechanic, Paramedic, Persuasion, Resistance +3, Security Systems, Shadowing, Streetwise, Survival, Tracking, Weaponsmith, +1 w/three maneuvers or tight group, +1 w/Perception, FAM w/Rocket Launchers, Grenade Launchers, Man-guided Missiles)	
Disadvantages	
Package Bonus	-3
Watched, "Organization of membership" (Mo Pow, NCI) 11-	-12
Psychological Limitations (Choose)	-15
Package Cost	**5**

AVIATOR

Like the soldier, the aviator can be on active military duty or a civilian. A PC group wishing to travel a great distance in a short time relies on the aviator's skills. The aviator appears in the Pulp, Fifties, and Modern day eras — he may be a jungle pilot, a saucer chasing Air Force aviator, or a chopper jockey in modern times.

Typical Goals and Motivations: An active duty aviator will have motivations similar to soldiers and sailors. A civilian pilot can have any motivation, from profit motivation to a vested, sinister interest in the macabre happenings.

Typical Abilities: Obviously, the pilot has at least a Transport Familiarity with his craft. Combat Piloting is also a must for this character; the better the pilot, the more his services will be in demand. Those with military training will have combat levels with their craft's weaponry. Other useful abilities are Navigation, Mechanics, Survival, Systems Operations, SC: Aeronautics, and appropriate knowledge skills.

Suggested Disadvantages: Like other military archetypes, the active duty aviator will usually have the disad "Subject to Orders." A civilian pilot may have disadvantages like Psych Lims: "Protective of his aircraft" (Ol' Bessie's a good girl.) , "Fear of Thunderstorms," or "Daredevil — likes to perform stunts." Pilots are fun characters when they have strange disads, since the other PCs lives are often in their hands.

Roleplaying Tips: A pilot is an individual who soars above the Earth and is master of his own fate. His life depends on his skills. He is usually a cool, confident character, but the time he spends up in the sky can give him odd perceptions and unusual viewpoints on life (Whaddya know, there really *is* a demon up here.) In a horror game, the aviator gets to see lots of strange perspectives.

AVIATOR	
Skills	**Cost**
Combat Pilot	3
FAM w/Small Arms	2
PS: Airman 11-	2
KS: Enemy Aircraft 11-	2
Pick 3 Skills:	9
(Breakfall, Cryptography, Electronics, Languages, Mechanics, KS: Military Electronic Equipment, Navigation, Paramedic, PS: Flight Instructor, Systems Operations, Tactics, TF: Parachutes, +1 w/Aircraft Weapons)	
Disadvantages	
Package Bonus	-3
Psychological Limitation (Choose)	-15
Package Cost	**0**
NCOs/Officers add:	
Bureaucratics	3
Pick 1 Skill from above list	3
Package Cost	**6**

SAILOR

Not many horror campaigns take place at sea, but the life of a sailor takes him to exotic ports and gives him a wealth of experience that is an asset to any PC group. Like the soldier and the aviator, he might appear in the campaign as a representative of the Armed Forces or as a civilian.

Typical Goals and Motivations: For a military sailor, see the soldier package deal. Civilian sailors may come home to find a tragedy has occurred, or maybe his adventurous blood is stirred at the prospect of exciting conflict with the powers of darkness.

Typical Abilities: Sailors are usually healthy characters; they also perform a specialized duty on board a vessel. These duties can be navigation, gunnery, engineering, piloting, swabbing the deck, etc. depending on the era. Sailors in the historic eras are particularly good at tying knots. Many enjoy a good brawl and have some skill at throwing a decent punch. Weapon familiarities range from the sword to modern small arms.

Suggested Disadvantages: The nomadic lifestyle of the sailor may be the result of Psych Lims like "prefers the ocean to land" or "dislikes cities or crowds." A Hunted may be motivation to depart a particular area via ship. Superstition has been a fixture of seaman's lore since ancient times, and would make an appropriate Psych Lim or three.

Roleplaying Tips: A sailor can be played as a crusty old seadog who has been around and seen lots of strange sights, or as carefree dreamers, rock-steady adventurers, or the rough-and-ready (and dim witted) boxing mariner.

SAILOR	
Skills	**Cost**
FAM w/Small Arms or Melee Weapons	2
PS: Sailor 11-	2
KS: Types of Seagoing Vessels 11-	2
Brawling	3
Pick 3 Skills:	9
(Breakfall, Combat Driving (Ships or Submarines), Cryptography, Electronics, Languages, Mechanics, KS: Military Electronic Equipment, Navigation, +3" Swimming, +1w/Ship to Ship Weapons, +1 w/Perception, Paramedic, System Operations, Tactics, Transport FAM: Boats, Submarines)	
Disadvantages	
Package Bonus	-3
Psychological Limitation (choose)	-15
Package Cost	0
NCOs/Officers add:	
Bureaucratics	3
Pick 1 Skill from above list	3
Package Cost	6

ACADEMICS

Knowledge is the greatest weapon that can be wielded in the face of horror. Men of learning have always played an essential role in the genre. They are the ones who know a demon's true name, or the location of the only weapon that can kill the horrible Toad-snake or who possess the scientific acumen that enables them to develop the obligatory death-ray in the nick of time. Innumerable groups of PCs, their mighty fighters sprawled unconscious on the floor, have had their butts saved at the last minute by the learned intervention of an academic player-character.

THE SCIENTIST

The scientist requires little elaboration. This character archetype pops up all over the genre. A scientist is one of the first individuals a person encountering horror runs to for help, and as often the scientist has useful information. A PC scientist may join a group, quit his job and enter the field, or retain his post and adventure on weekends and holidays.

Typical Goals and Motivations: The accumulation of knowledge is the scientists primary motive to adventure, but many are lured out of their safe academic environs into a world fraught with terror by the promise of fame and fortune.

Typical Abilities: The scientist will have communication skills and lots of knowledge skills or sciences. They almost always have a high INT stat — their physical stats depend on their age and health. The Cramming talent allows a scientist to quickly learn a skill that is necessary to defeat some monster. Do not assume that a scientist has to be old and doddering; movies, particularly from the Fifties, feature young, vibrant scientific types who are as handsome as they are smart.

Suggested Disadvantages: A scientist sometimes has Psych Lims like "Curious" or "Absent Minded." An older scientist may have the Age limitation to get a higher INT score. Some have Physical Limitations like "Myopic" or "Walks with a cane" and buys down some of their Running. Reputations (Abercrombie? He's mad, I tell you, mad.) or Distinctive Features (like "bookish looking" appearance) can be taken. The older scientist seem to insist on having a DNPC: Beautiful Lab Assistant, who is sometimes also their daughter.

Roleplaying Tips: The PC scientist can be a feeble-but-brilliant academic, a crusading professor in the Lovecraft mold, or a young idealist. The eccentric scientist can be very entertaining to have along when supernatural hostiles are being hunted, and useful when said hostile is encountered. Of course, in the midst of the greatest carnage he is likely to be outlining his next lecture on what he is currently learning. ("Now, then Mister Akkleeeatttlzllle, is that spelled with one "k" or two?")

THE INVENTOR

A handy character to have around, the inventor can be an on-the-spot gadgeteer or a laboratory scientist. When the destruction of The Really Big Critter depends on a recurring burst of holy water at three second intervals, or when a special computer card is needed to dispel the Demon Oracle of the Phone Company Computer, the situation calls for an inventor.

Typical Goals and Motivations: Excepting those motivations that arise out of game play, the inventor is usually driven by the love of creating things and the obsession to get it just right. Kook inventors who design flying saucers and perpetual motion machines will be motivated to find the knowledge to make such an item work.

Typical Abilities: High INT scores and a good DEX plus the requisite knowledge skills and Inventor skill. Skills like Electronics, Mechanics, or SC: Mechanical Engineering can be helpful. Successful inventors might have the Perk: Wealthy.

Suggested Disadvantages: A somewhat colorful character, the inventor may have Psych Lims that reflect the general slant the inventor is taking (i.e., Dislike of fried food, cigarettes, and X-rays, for an individual working on a machine to cure cancer.) Some inventors may have DNPC assistants. If the character is employed by the military, he may be subject to orders. A gadgeteer character may be overconfident in his ability to invent his way out of tight spots.

Roleplaying Tips: As can be seen, the inventor presents a wide variety of possible character personalities. Whether the character is an old eccentric, a military weaponsmith, or a gadgeteer field operative, he will have one personality trait — the belief that the universe is a working mechanism composed of building blocks that need only to be recombined to create new items. An introduction to the forces of sorcery and chaos may come as a rude shock.

SCIENTIST	
Skill	**Cost**
PS: Professor , Scientist, Researcher, et al. 12-	3
Scholar, Scientist, or Linguist	3
Cramming	5
Bureaucratics	3
Computer Programming (1950s and up)	3
Oratory	3
Appropriate Knowledge Skills, Sciences, or Languages	9
Contacts (Two at 11-, usually with universities or other professors)	4
Disadvantages	
Package Bonus	-3
Age 40+	-5
Reputation or Distinctive Feature (Choose)	-10
Physical or Psych Limitation (Choose)	-10
Package Cost	**2 or 5**

INVENTOR	
Skills	**Cost**
PS: Inventor 11-	2
Inventor at +1	5
Scholar or Scientist	3
Pick 3 Skills	9
(Knowledge and Science skills should be INT based): (Computer Programming, Electronics, KS: As Applies, Mechanics, SC: As Applies, System Operations, Weaponsmith)	
+1 w/INT based skills	5
Disadvantages	
Package Bonus	-3
Age 40+	-5
Psychological Lims (Choose)	-15
Package Cost	**1**

PROFESSIONALS

For every altruistic do-gooder combating the dreadful horrors of the world, there will always be five or six others who earn a living from the same horrors. Motivation for these characters is usually profit, but the motivation can be more personal, like revenge or a quest for knowledge . Competent and bold, the professional who deals with the occultic side of the world is an implacable person, risking his very life for his chosen career.

THE BOUNTY HUNTER

The world of horror is not all monsters and mysticism. Evil people seek to manipulate the living horror for their own ends, committing crimes and atrocities so terrible that law enforcement agencies have placed a price on the heads of the more notorious wanted felons. That is where the bounty hunter comes in, seeking a foe who is not only canny and dangerous, but bolstered by unspeakable powers and dreadful allies. But who said making a good living was going to be easy in this world, anyway?

Typical Goals and Motivations: The bounty hunter is just that: someone who hunts others for the reward offered. Frequently, they are pragmatic persons who could care less about megalomaniacal delusions of power or the dubious presence of magic. But they are brought into conflict with the forces of horror because they are in the way. And if the bounty hunter wants his prey, well, the horror has got to go. Most encounters for a bounty hunter with eldritch forces are by happenstance and not intention.

Typical Abilities: One does not last long as a bounty hunter without being strong and clever. They are knowledgeable about the world of crime and criminals. Although most rewards require the return of a live felon, most felons tend to resist capture with force. Thus, the need for weapon skills is important. Other skills are important, too. To catch a felon, you have to find the felon. Bribery and forgery can work well in places where gunfire would reveal the hunter to his prey.

Suggested Disadvantages: The desire for profit is paramount to the bounty hunter. A Psych Lim reflecting this profit motivation is very appropriate. Also, they tend to be loners (since you don't have to share the reward that way) and come across to others as very intense, slightly paranoid types. Particularly well-armed bounty hunters tend to be overconfident at times. A Reputation reflecting their tenacity and a Hunted seeking to reduce that tenacity to wafting smoke go together well. Hunters who frequently foul up the plans of eldritch powers may have a Watched: The Supernatural.

Roleplaying Tips: To the bounty hunter, the adventure is not a game. Magic and mysticism are children's stories; anything can be explained. The results are all that matter. Bounty hunters tend to look over their shoulders a lot. They can be portrayed as fearless and straightforward, or as patient and calculating.

BOUNTY HUNTER	
Skill	**Cost**
FAM w/Small Arms	2
FAM w/Melee Weapons	2
KS: Wanted Felons 11-	2
KS: Standard Criminal M.O.s 11-	2
KS: Police Agencies 11-	2
KS: Criminal Law 8-	1
Perk: Bounty Hunter License	1
Pick 2 Skills:	6
(Bribery, Combat Driving, Deduction, Forgery, Interrogation, Lockpicking, Persuasion, Security Systems, Brawling)	
Disadvantages	
Package Bonus	-3
Psychological Limitations: Greedy (Com, Mod)	-10
Package Cost	**5**

THE REPORTER

EXTRA! EXTRA! Read all about it! Sewer Slasher Slices Seven Shriners! The hallmark of a reporter's trade is the front page "scoop." Seeking the truth and exposing the lies behind the horror, this is what the reporter does. Unfortunately, printing stories on entities who would much rather remain unknown to the general public does make life interesting for a reporter. Particularly when the entity in question would like to rebut a few statements with the reporter present. If it was not for the intrepid reporter shining his light into the darkness, who knows what terrible deeds would be accomplished, were it not for his light.

Typical Goals and Motivations: Getting a story and getting it right is what a reporter does. If it means going undercover, or delving into the most dangerous places in the world, the reporter's quest for truth continues. After all, without them, the public would know very little of the truths in today's world. When revealed, people react to the truth, and changes in society come about. It is a difficult, perilous job, with all the horror existing today, but the job never has been easy.

Typical Abilities: Reporters are particularly attentive to detail, and quick to deduce the real story behind a story given enough clues. They are skilled at finding out information about people, and their press pass gives them access to some places normally off limits to people.

Suggested Disadvantages: Psych Lims like "Inquisitive" or "Compelled to find the truth" work well for the reporter. Some may have a DNPC photographer accompanying them. Many reporters may have a Reputation for obnoxiousness or fairness, depending on how they operate or who employs them ("Hi! Eddie Carson, Weekly Tabloid News! Can I have a . . .")

Roleplaying Tips: Get all the facts, keep after the subject, and break the story. Or, get some of the facts, "embellish" a few of the subject's quotes, and write whatever sells the paper. These are two basic ways to approach the character: fair, accurate, well-informed, or as a creative, over-exuberant, fiction-with-a-grain-of-truth style writer.

REPORTER	
Skill	**Cost**
PS: Reporter (INT based)	3
Perk: Press Pass	1
KS: Specialty (Sports, Sensational Crimes, Business, etc.) 11-	2
Pick 2 Skills:	6
(Acting, Bribery, Bureaucratics, Computer Programming (1950s and up), Concealment, Conversation, High Society, Oratory, Persuasion, Resistance +3, Security Systems, Shadowing, Streetwise)	
Disadvantages	
Package Bonus	-2
Reputation or	
Psychological Limitations (Choose)	-10
Package Cost	**0**

DOCTOR	
Skills	**Cost**
PS: Medical Doctor (INT based)	3
Paramedic	3
SC: Medicine (INT based)	3
Perk: License to Practice	1
Pick 2 Skills:	6
(Sciences: Biology, Biochemistry, Bacteriology, Pathology, Pharmacology; Forensics, High Society)	
Disadvantages	
Package Bonus	-3
Psychological Limitations (Choose)	-10
Package Cost	**3**

DOCTOR

In a campaign where characters face down armed cultists, magic-wielding wizards and bloodthirsty monsters, a doctor can be a very welcome character in a group. In many settings, showing up at a regular hospital *en masse* bearing a variety of wounds will draw unwelcome attention from the authorities. Being able to treat a number of patients who want to "keep things quiet" can be very profitable for a doctor.

Typical Goals and Motivations: The monetary motivation becomes more important to this character when the campaign era is closer to modern day. In a horror campaign, the doctor, having been exposed to terrible events, may find himself compelled to aid other PCs in their mission.

Typical Abilities: Doctors have a high INT score and many knowledge skills related to the human body. Surgeons are very proficient with knives, scalpels in particular. The profession itself tends to be well-regarded by the public, and having a good PRE helps out with that perception.

Suggested Disadvantages: A doctor can have Psych Lims like "Compassionate" and "Follows the Hippocratic Oath," or he can be "Greedy" and "Very Impersonal." Age helps a doctor buy up his INT and PRE scores.

Roleplaying Tips: A doctor should exude confidence, particularly to his patients. Being a more formally educated person, the character's language should reflect this training. Unless, of course, he is a back alley slugyanker who received his degree from some school in the Caribbean and only has his license because his brother-in-law is on the licensing review board. Then he may have a number of quirky personal habits ("Now, I know the appendix is around here somewhere. *Slice.* Or maybe it's over here …").

PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR

Sometimes a matter requires more discretion than an ordinary police investigation; alternately, someone may need the services of an investigator when the police cannot help because of legal restrictions. This is when the private investigator is usually hired. This character could also be working on a very ordinary, it-pays-the-rent case when he stumbles onto the activities of some dangerous person, cult, or monster.

Typical Goals and Motivations: Being paid for his services frequently becomes secondary to the solving of a difficult case, especially if his *life* depends on solving the case. For example, a private investigator who uncovers the activities of a group that normally eliminates any and all witnesses will have to see it through to the end. There are times when the character might turn down a case because it sounds like a waste of his time. When the would-be client is found dead, the detective may feel remorseful about not having listened in the first place and sets off to solve the case to "set things right."

Typical Abilities: The detective's mental statistics will be a little higher on the average than a regular policeman. He will also have more knowledge skills, and probably streetwise and disguise.

Suggested Disadvantages: Psychological limitations are a given for this character. Examples include "Seeks justice," "Overconfident" or "Hatred of The Cult of <Fill-in-the-blank>." Some may have minor Reputations among the forces of darkness due to their exploits, or known to the cops for the same exploits. They may have a Hunted or two if they have brought a criminal to justice who is subsequently freed from jail and wants revenge.

Roleplaying Tips: The stereotypical trench coat wearing, tough talking, hard boiled detective is fun when played against horrors, but is by no means the only option available. Private investigators have scores of examples in TV, movies and books.

PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR	
Skills	**Cost**
FAM w/Pistols	1
Perk: Private Investigator's License	2
Perk: Concealed Weapon's Permit (where applicable)	2
Deduction	3
Streetwise	3
KS: Criminal Law 11-	2
PS: Private Investigator (INT based)	3
AK: City of Operations 11-	2
Pick 3 Skills: (Bribery, Bugging, Bureaucratics, Combat Driving, Computer Programming (Modern day only), Concealment, Conversation, Criminology, Cryptography, Forensics, Forgery, Lockpicking, Persuasion, Shadowing, Stealth, +1 Perception, Brawling)	9
Disadvantages	
Package Bonus	-3
Hunted or Reputation	-10
Psychological Limitations (Choose)	-10
Package Cost	**4**

OCCULT INVESTIGATOR

Ever since there have been reports of occult related phenomena, there have been people who have made investigating these events an occupation. Many of these investigators have been self-serving greedy con artists, some have been interested for the sake of gaining information for their own use. A rare few have been genuine, knowledgeable people who track down horror wherever it makes its presence felt and opposes its agents whenever they act.

Typical Goals and Motivations: Very few people in the world know just how terrible the horror really can be if it remains unchecked. The occult investigator has made esoteric undertakings not only an occupation, but a mission bordering on a quest. His is a thankless, life threatening job, but it yields rewards of timeless knowledge more valuable than any currency. Sometimes, the occult investigator is the agent in gathering a group together to combat evil in its many forms, and his motivation becomes almost heroic.

Typical Abilities: The occult investigator knows what he is up against, and is the only non-mystical character archetype that would normally start a campaign with an Occult Knowledge skill. And such knowledge can save a PC group from certain doom. The investigator can be a strong, monster slaying person skilled in hand to hand combat, or a chess-like adversary that manipulates his foes into making critical errors.

Suggested Disadvantages: The type of character abilities chosen usually lead to appropriate disadvantages. The monster hunter can be "Paranoid" or "Fanatical about destroying monsters." An intellectually inclined character can be "Manipulative" or "Emotionally aloof from others." Watched by The Supernatural is an automatic disadvantage for the PC, but having it at more than an 8 — roll is suicidal. In a small town horror setting, the character may have a minor Reputation as a minor nuisance or nutcase ("But Mrs. Wallace, the tinfoil on your windows is for your own good.")

Roleplaying Tips: What helps this character out more than anything else is knowledge that other characters do not possess. They have confidence in that knowledge, sometimes too much, and usually come across as "do it my way or we're all doomed." The occult investigator usually has a plan of action before he engages the adversary.

This is a more serious PC than others in a serious genre. While most of these characters are fairly stern and solemn, there are exceptions. A currently popular comic book about a British occultist features a wise-cracking Cockney who sneers in the face of demons and other threats.

OCCULT INVESTIGATOR	
Skills	**Cost**
Deduction	3
Scholar	3
KS: Occult Knowledge (INT based)	2
KS: Occult Persons (INT based)	2
KS: Occult Areas (INT based)	2
KS: Occult Items (INT based)	2
KS: Specific Type of Occultic Activity (i.e., UFOs, Magic Tomes, Cults, Cryptozoology, Cultures, etc.)	2
PS: Occult Investigator 11-	2
Pick 3 Skills:	9
(Bribery, Bureaucratics, Computer Programming, Concealment, Conversation, Cryptography, Forgery, Languages, Lockpicking, Paramedic, Security Systems, Shadowing, Stealth, Streetwise, Tracking, +1 Perception)	
Disadvantages	
Package Bonus	-3
Watched: The Supernatural (Mo Pow, NCI) 8-	-10
Psychological Limitation (Choose)	-10
Package Cost	**4**

MYSTICS

The horror genre would be incomplete without a tinge of mysticism. Magic is present in all but one of the campaign eras, as it is in horror stories and movies. Monsters are spawned from mystical rituals, sorcerous items are sought by wielders of magic, and old houses are populated by psychics. A PC group does not necessarily have to have a mystic in their group, and a GM may prefer not to allow them to be played at all. Used properly in the game, they can add a lot of atmosphere to a campaign and act as "hooks" for future adventures.

THE PSYCHIC

Without a doubt, the psychic is the most well-known type of mystic in the genre. They can have any of a number of psychic talents, but usually they have one talent at which they excel. The talent can be as low-key as a sensitivity to psychic auras or as flashy as pyrokinetics.

Typical Goals and Motivations: Psychics are sometimes the unwilling center of activity in an adventure, as their talents become sought after by PCs and NPCs. These characters sometimes seek out other PCs, and take part in adventures to discover why some phenomena is "disturbing" their minds.

Typical Abilities: Psychics possess a psychic talent or power. They can become detached from society, due to their "different" ability. They do have knowledge of psychic phenomena and sometimes other esoteric phenomena as well, but are usually not as well-rounded as more worldly characters.

Suggested Disadvantages: Psychics can have a Psych Lim related to their powers. A telepath or empath may need to be around other people on a regular basis, while a clairsentient could experience unwelcome flashbacks in areas where people experienced severe psychic trauma.

Roleplaying Tips: This character is markedly different from other character types and should act in that manner. Seemingly trivial events may hold great interest to the character, while events of tremendous, albeit mundane, significance may be casually dismissed by the psychic ("Someone shot the president? So what's your point?").

PSYCHIC	
Skill	**Cost**
PS: Psychic 11-	2
KS: Psychic Phenomena 11-	2
Psychic Ability (From Psychic Powers section	10+
Disadvantages	
Package Bonus	-3
Psychological Limitation (choose)	-10
Package Cost	**1+**

THE SORCERER

This package can be used to create three different types of sorcerer — the Ritual Magician, the Ceremonial Magician and the Alchemist. Magic has been a part of society since prehistoric times (see Magic). The performer of these rituals has went from holding a revered place in primitive societies to being a fairly reclusive individual in more modern society. But the power of the act still holds promise for those who pursue such a path in their lives.

Typical Goals and Motivations: Acquiring more magical knowledge, learning new magic and gaining more personal power motivates this character. They will ally themselves with a PC group if the PCs' mission could bring some gain to the sorcerer.

Typical Abilities: Sorcerers must possess the Magic Skill applicable to their discipline (see Horror Magic skills) and a Knowledge Skill of the same. Also, a PS: Artist is needed to draw the ubiquitous magic circles that appear in most Ritual and Ceremonial magic spells and PS: Chemistry is necessary for Alchemists. The other knowledge skills and magic rituals available to this character are not available to any other except the magic wielder. Performing magic requires a strong EGO, and a high PRE and INT are also helpful.

Suggested Disadvantages: The sorcerer traffics in powers that can consume him completely if a spell is performed incorrectly. This can wear on him, and is reflected with Psych Limitations like "Obsessively devoted to detail." They can be very secretive or highly curious. Age helps them buy up their mental stats. Their activities can also have a Watched: The Supernatural or even a Hunted if the character "acquires" something he should have left alone in the first place.

Roleplaying Tips: To this character, magic means more than anything. More than life or death. He can be a very deliberate character, and is rarely foolhardy in taking actions.

SORCERER	
Skills	**Cost**
Choose one:	
Magic Skill: Ritual Magic (EGO based), Ceremonial Magic (EGO based) or Alchemy (EGO based)	3
Choose one:	
KS: Ritual Magic (INT based) Ceremonial Magic (INT based) or Alchemy (INT based)	3
KS: Occult Knowledge (INT based)	3
PS: Chemistry (INT based) for Alchemist	3
PS: Artist (INT based) for Ritual or Ceremonial	3
Spells (see Horror Magic section)	20
Pick 3 Knowledge Skills (all INT based) (Alchemists, Cults, Demonology, Elementals, Magic Legends, Magical Tomes, Items of Power, Magical Herbs, Properties of Gems, Historical Wizards, Undead, etc.)	9
Disadvantages	
Package Bonus	-3
Age 40+	-5
Psychological Limitation: Cautious (Com, Strong)	-15
Package Cost	**18**

THE MAGIC WIELDER (STOP)

Possessing the power of magic independent of the act or word associated with sorcery is akin to possessing a devastating superpower with the potential to backfire at any time. Magic is a wondrous gift, and a terrible burden. The person who actually can wield the force of magic as an extension of themselves is rarer than the rarest metal. A magic wielder in a horror game is not a superhero, nor should they be played that way. With great power comes great responsibility; with irresponsibility comes only doom.

Gamemasters should be warned that magic wielders in a horror campaign can be very unbalancing, like having mentalists in a mystery scenario. Players will come to rely on the fast and easy power of the magic wielder instead of their own abilities, and a GM may be disappointed to find his carefully nurtured cultists and monsters annihilated in a round of combat. Therefore, magic wielders should be strictly controlled with regards to spells available to them or disallowed altogether in the campaign.

Typical Goals and Motivations: Like the sorcerer, the magic wielder is a seeker of knowledge and new magics. They will oppose horror if the horror is a threat to the acquiring of magic. Since most horror tends to be highly destructive in nature, magic wielders find themselves left without a choice but to pit themselves against it.

Typical Abilities: As the name states, these are wielders of magic. Skills and stats are usually bought in a way that contributes to their magic wielding ability. For more information on magic, see the Horror Magic section.

Suggested Disadvantages: Age helps cheapen the purchase of mental stats. A magic wielder may have a DNPC Apprentice or Assistant. Past magical mishaps could leave the wielder with a Distinctive Feature, like a scar, or a Physical Limitation, like missing one eye. Supernatural forces might be Watcheds or Hunteds. The wielder is probably owner of one or two Psych Lims, like "Ambitious" or "Arrogant" or "Secretive." Among other wizards or in the occult world, the character may have a Reputation. In any era, the wizard is not likely to present himself to the public as anything more than a regular if slightly eccentric person; a Secret ID (Wizard) is appropriate with GM permission.

Roleplaying Tips: This character can be played in virtually any manner, from stoic and solemn to cheerful and daredevilish. But all magic wielders have an eccentric quirk or two that other people will notice.

MAGIC WIELDER	
Skill	**Cost**
Magic Skill: Spellcasting (EGO based)	3
KS: Spellcasting (INT based)	3
KS: Occult Knowledge (INT based)	3
Spells (see Horror Magic)	20
Pick 3 Knowledge Skills (all INT based)	9
(Alchemists, Cults, Demonology, Elementals, Magic Legends, Magical Tomes, Items of Power, Magical Herbs, Properties of Gems, Historical Wizards, Undead, etc.)	
Disadvantages	
Package Bonus	-3
Age 40+	-5
Psychological Limitation (choose)	-10
Reputation or Watched	-10
Package Cost	**10**

CHARACTER ABILITIES

Ahh... Aleanumerology. Your authors have included the information below to help you put your characters on paper. Remember — for best results create your character first. Do their statistics later. After all, numbers don't lie but they don't run away screaming either. Personality is the key, not prowess!

CHARACTERISTICS

Characteristics in a horror campaign function exactly as they do for all campaign settings. *Horror Hero* campaigns are heroic campaigns. This means that characters should be built on 75 points plus up to 75 points in disadvantages for a total of 150 points. This should be regarded as a guideline only. Effective and entertaining characters can be built for much less, and sometimes going over will not be detrimental to the game. GMs should not insist on a slavish devotion to the numbers unless a possibility of glory hogging exists. Characters also are built with Normal Characteristic maxima for zero points.

STRENGTH

Physical strength may seem less important in *Horror Hero* campaigns than in others. After all, few people relish the prospect of fighting hand to hand with vampires and werewolves, even if they are physically able to do so. But strength is sometimes quite important. There will always be heavy crypt doors to open and coffins to lug about. Sometimes sheer physical strength is all that stands between a group and certain doom ('Bruno, you hold the door shut while the rest of us escape, O.K.?').

DEXTERITY

Dexterity is important for combat oriented characters as it affects their combat values. Also, any character who relies on DEX based skills, like a doctor, should have a better than average DEX. A cursory examination of horror media will reveal that hair-breadth escapes abound, and that DEX roll is often the key to survival.

CONSTITUTION

Since END and STUN are both based upon CON, this stat is very useful for all characters. Those who do a fair amount of fighting or spellcasting will want higher CONs than most people to boost the END. Considering that some of the creatures are capable of doing a lot of damage with one strike, a good CON score can keep a character on his feet.

BODY

No matter how much effort is expended to avoid direct confrontation with things that want to hurt PCs it eventually will happen. In light of this, a decent Body is often crucial in *Horror Hero*. If the impairing/disabling rules are used, BODY becomes even more critical. A higher than normal BODY stat aids the character's STUN total and vastly improves the chance of survival versus the unknown. On the flip side, some players relish the challenge of keeping PCs with low Body alive through the festivities.

INTELLIGENCE

While it seems illogical that a character with a high INT would be out chasing monsters this may be the most helpful statistic a PC could have. For scholars, scientists and investigators a high INT ability is mandatory. Sorcerers will find that INT affects the maximum number of spells they are capable of "carrying" (see Horror Magic). GMs should not let a PCs intelligence-based skills override the players own deductive reasoning, however. It is well within the spirit of the game to use INT based rolls only as an absolute last resort. Realistically, a character with an INT over 15 would be able to solve every mystery within the first ten minutes of gameplay — definitely an unwanted development.

In a sense this is a unique Characteristic because it is the only one shared by player and Character. Only when INT based Skills are rolled is a PC smarter than his player. This results in supergeniuses running around like ordinary people most of the time. A good way to avoid this incongruity is for the GM to put a ceiling on available INT scores. While buying Knowledge Skills will be more expensive the payoff in greater realism and honing of the players investigatory skills will be worth it.

EGO

EGO vies with INT as the most important characteristic a character can possess. The EGO stat helps the character deal with the effects of spells, the fear instilled by certain creatures, and the maintaining of a stable mentality among all the grisly events to unfold. EGO is one of the primary protections against the ravages of stress. Not that a low EGO is necessarily a bad idea. The portrayal of a neurotic PC can be entertaining for both the player and his companions. Remember, not every character needs to be a superman.

PRESENCE

A characters' presence should be based on how the player wants it to react to an encounter with the uncanny. The enemies here are beyond the realm of normal encounters and should at least cause the PCs to question their actions ("I don't think shooting it is going to do much good, Clem."). Not every character should have a godlike PRE. The only thing worse than a bunch of PCs who turn chicken and run the minute they meet an imposing creature are those who do not bat an eyelash. A good mix of varying PRE statistics is both more realistic and more entertaining. PRE is also one of the defenses against stress.

COMELINESS

This characteristic is less important for PCs than NPCs; sometimes only an incredibly low COM separates a monster from the rest of the human race (remember actor Rondo Hatton, a.k.a. the Creeper?). This does not mean that Comeliness will not affect gameplay — think of all those women who are so strikingly beautiful that the monster just *has* to have her, or the handsome heroes who seduce the evil high priestess in order to escape.

PHYSICAL DEFENSE & ENERGY DEFENSE

These combat stats are vitally important to PCs that expect to face down cultists, monsters, spells, traffic cops and other horrors. Investigative PCs who do not plan to fight a lot would be better off spending character points elsewhere. Of course, it is the defenseless ones who get attacked first... For magic using PCs, here is a hint: sorcerers tend to encounter other sorcerers in a campaign. Therefore, a higher ED is recommended for those who may engage in sorcerous duels.

SPEED

Supernatural creatures are often inhumanly fast, so a combat-oriented PC is advised to have a minimum of a SPD 3. Cerebral characters like professors and inventors will find that a SPD 3 allows them to think on their feet to make meaningful contributions to the goings-on. An occasional fighter character with a SPD 4 can be a great help toward party survival.

RECOVERY

In the dangerous world of *Horror Hero*, the time it takes a character to come out of CON stunning can make the difference between making it home for dinner or *becoming* dinner. A good REC is encouraged for combative PCs and mystics, who depend on a lot of END to be effective in dangerous situations.

ENDURANCE

Like all combat statistics, this is of great importance for any PC that expects to fight frequently or cast spells. To face down horror toe-to-talon, a good END will aid the character greatly (particularly since he seems to be lacking in common sense).

STUN

In horror campaigning any points spent on STUN are worth their weight in gold. Any PC who is considering combat against the unknown should at least consider the purchase of a few extra points of STUN. Of course, PCs who get knocked out and captured a lot are also entertaining .

Here is some free advice—a character who depends entirely on combat skills for success is often the least useful during the course of a campaign. Certainly they are useful for those confrontations with the villains, but for the most part this is a thinking man's genre. To fight a monster you must find it. To destroy a monster you must know its weaknesses. So do not spend all your points on combat skills — knowledge and reasoning are the key to success. Skill in combat is important, and a PC fighting machine is entirely acceptable, but remember—your best weapon is that squishy gray thing in your thick skull. Heh. Just remember that some situations cannot be thought out of...

SKILLS

The Skills a PC can have are determined by the time frame of the campaign. Any skill may be possessed by a character as long as it is 1) available in the era and 2) approved by the GM. Certain skills will be restricted or expanded in each era, and these changes will be noted in the Skills section of the appropriate Sourcebook.

EVERYMAN SKILLS

The everyman skills for Horror hero are the same as those presented in the *Hero System Rulesbook*, page 18 (use the Modern list). The following changes apply: in the Eldritch Horror era, Paramedic is not available as an everyman skill and characters must pay the point to be literate in their native language. The other three eras use the standard list.

SKILL ENHANCERS

All the skill enhancers are available in *Horror Hero*. Players should confer with the GM before purchasing Skill Enhancers.

JACK OF ALL TRADES

The character who knows a little bit about everything is built using this enhancer. Appropriate for all the genres, the Jack of all Trades is often an eccentric who cannot stick to one job for long. Players who wish to use this enhancer to buy occult-based professions (Astrologer, Psychic Reader, Occultist etc.) should confer with the GM first. A character built this way may spoil many a mystery with a cheaply purchased roll of the dice.

LINGUIST

This enhancer is highly appropriate for occultists and researchers. Many tomes of lore are in ancient or obscure languages. It also never hurts for stranded characters to be able to learn the language of the local populace while waiting for rescue. Note that Linguist will not help a character decipher a written language he has never encountered before, such as one found on scrolls from a vanished civilization. In the real world this always takes years of painstaking trial-and-error (and a healthy Cryptography roll). Here's an example of how NOT to use this enhancer:

Inspector Graeme — "We've only got three days before the Vampire bites Betsy for the third time! Chandler, take this journal we found and try to translate it! It's in ancient Carpathian. Can you do it in time?"

Parson Chandler (Glances at book) — "OK, I'm finished. Let's go."

SCHOLAR

If there is an enhancer that is tailor-made for the horror genre this is it. The Scholar enhancer is a must for any character considering the exploration of the darker side of reality and is appropriate for every era. Again, the GM is cautioned to not be too liberal when allowing this Enhancer. One of the joys of roleplaying is the acquisition of knowledge — the PC who already knows everything may lose out on this aspect of the game.

SCIENTIST

This enhancer is encountered mostly in the Fifties (where scientists appear in alarming numbers) and the Pulps (where the heroes seem able to do anything), but is appropriate everywhere. An Eldritch character who is well-versed in that eras' myriad pseudo-sciences is very entertaining.

TRAVELER

Knowing his way around the world has saved many an occult investigator. This enhancer is very useful for the globe-spanning adventurer and allows for the reduced purchase price of Culture Knowledges as well. GMs who plan to include other planes of existence and alternate realities in the campaign may allow characters to purchase this Enhancer to cover these areas, i.e. Mystic Traveler.

WELL CONNECTED

The saying goes, "It's not what you know, but who you know." In horror, a character's contacts and perks are often instrumental to assuring success. This enhancer works well for the character who has contacts on both sides of the horror campaign. GMs should be careful not to allow a PC to buy any contact without a very good rationale for doing so, nor should they assume that once Favors are granted the dispenser will continue to be well disposed to the PC.

PERKS

Perks in *Horror Hero* differ only slightly from the norm. The following are a few of the variations which are unique to the genre. Players may wish to conceal certain privileges granted them by buying perks, until opportunities to use them arise.

CONTACTS

In horror some characters will belong to or join secret societies or lodges. These groups are often privy to secret knowledge or allow characters to meet individuals outside their normal social strata. The GM should rule that especially useful lodge contacts (i.e. players having an elevated rank within the society) which grant more privileges will cost more.

Occultist characters may also have contacts within the supernatural realm, such as a spiritualist with a favored ghostly contact. These entities are often very mischievous and cloak their information in riddles. GMs should impose high costs on such contacts depending on their usual clarity of information. Especially dangerous contacts will cost less due to the risk of summoning or contacting them.

FAVORS

These perks should be handled as per the rulesbook. Note that magical assistance should be more costly to reflect its rarity. And the favor giver may demand a service in return sometime in the future.

FOLLOWERS

Followers are important in *Horror Hero* for several reasons, and the GM should encourage their creation. A long-standing horror tradition dictates that the heroes are usually in the position of having to rescue, revenge or protect those who are in his care. Followers are usually fairly disposable, a status which grants the GM more leeway in creating horror without constantly targeting the PCs. Followers also help reduce the point cost of PCs.

The GM should build the Follower according to a rough outline provided by the Player. This allows the GM to purchase secret Disadvantages such as Hunteds or Psychological Limitations which the Follower has hidden from his mentor. This way the Follower will seem more like a real person and less of a cipher. Also, this provides the GM with more material for scenarios. Imagine the PC's curiosity when his loyal Follower 'goes on vacation' every time the Moon is full...

FRINGE BENEFITS

Additional fringe benefits for this genre include:

Lodge Member, Low Rank (1 pt) — This perk allows characters to mingle socially with fellow lodge members, grants them a small degree of sanctuary, and in some cases allows contacts in distant lodge locations (8-). This can be used to represent the rankings in secret societies.

Lodge Member, Middle Rank (5 pts) — After characters gains status in a lodge or secret society, they will be more privy to information, including access to the library if one is available and a slight degree of control over lesser members. The contacts from above are now at 11-.

Lodge Member, High Rank (10 pts) — This assumes leadership over a local chapter. The political clout of this perk may be considerable; GMs should use caution when players request this perk. All other benefits are as above, except the contacts now becomes 14-.

True Name Of Lesser Entity (3 pts per name) — Some creatures must obey any orders issued to it under its true name, i.e. demons and some spirits (in this book, the Tormentor demon is an example). This is a benefit of occult or magical knowledge. The rituals required to use this perk must be purchased separately. Revealing this knowledge to the entity in question without first taking proper precautions is suicidally stupid.

True Name Of Greater Entity (10 pts per name) — These are the true names of very powerful or useful creatures such as Oracle demons. As above the same conditions apply.

MONEY

This is unchanged from the rulesbook but GMs should note that treasures often appear in horror scenarios. If players keep a treasure which raises their income level then they should be required to pay the perk cost. Realism-minded GMs should keep in mind that the equipment and traveling involved in occult investigations is very expensive, so some provision should be made to explain their availability.

BASES AND VEHICLES

As this is a heroic campaign these should be paid for with money. However GMs may wish to impose a point cost on magically fortified buildings, or any other "special" retreat such as a lodge hall.

TALENTS

Special abilities such as talents are very common in horror, often being an individuals impetuous to investigate the unknown in the first place. Most are usable, although the suitability of STOP talents should be carefully weighed by the GM before play. Only talents that bear further elaboration with regards to *Horror Hero* are discussed here.

ABSOLUTE TIME SENSE

This is a blessing for characters who cast ritual magic, as the timing of the casting is usually critical for success. Also, this is useful for characters with the Demolitions skill.

BUMP OF DIRECTION

This is a good talent for adventurer/explorer types who search new continents and for those who delve into the labyrinths of monsters. Note that this talent does *not* help in dimensions or areas where the accepted laws of physics and geometry do not apply.

COMBAT SENSE

Combat Sense is great for those PCs who are foolish enough to tackle a monster in a darkened room by themselves.

CRAMMING

For scientists, researchers, and occultists this talent is wonderful. No one character can know everything about the occult, but using this talent and the right research material a few hours before meeting the enemy will help the PC sagely face any foe. While this will do wonders for his confidence, it does not necessarily mean that his plan is going to work...

DANGER SENSE (STOP)

This talent is not advised for the horror genre "as is." Naturally, players are going to want this talent, but GMs take note: it will wreck a lot of surprises. Only allow it to a player who is not going to want to make a dice roll every time they enter a room or a second ticks on a clock. The talent works much better in literature than in gameplay; the GM should carefully monitor it.

DEFENSE MANEUVER

A delightful talent for the PC who simply insists on going up against a roomful of cultists by himself. Idiot.

DOUBLE JOINTED

This talent helps the PC who likes to shinny down narrow holes in the ground so they can find out if the monster is down there or not. Also good for shinnying *out* of a narrow hole in the ground after it has been established that *yes there is* a monster down there...

EIDETIC MEMORY

If the character has to get a mystical alchemical formulae perfect the first time they try to make a potion, but they can only see the formulae for a few seconds in a collapsing cavern, then this talent is eminently helpful. And if your PC wants to memorize some codex that weighs around 25 kilograms because he does not wants to carry said codex around, then Eidetic Memory is worth a million words.

FIND WEAKNESS

If allowed, this talent should be carefully monitored by the GM. With the physiology of some arcane creatures, the GM should enforce the Find Weakness modifiers on the more physically challenging specimens.

IMMUNITY

This talent functions the same as listed in the rulesbook. Some GMs may consider contagious magical conditions to be a type of disease and allow the option that a PC may pay the three point cost and be immune to a mystical 'disease' like vampirism or lycanthropy. This does not stop damage from attacks by these creatures, only the resultant condition. Each immunity must be purchased separately and be specified to work on only one type of condition.

LIGHTSLEEP

For horror games this becomes almost second nature. Not all the things in the night go "bump;" some have Stealth scores that would put a Master of Ninja to shame.

RESISTANCE

This talent is a staple of horror literature and movies. Almost every story has a moment when the character(s) have to overcome an otherwise mind-shattering experience to survive.

UNIVERSAL TRANSLATOR (STOP)

As a STOP talent this bears close scrutiny. Especially nice GMs may allow this Talent to be used on written languages, but remember that a lot of the mystery of ancient tomes and cultures is lost with instant understanding.

Note also that often a PC really doesn't want to know what the shambling horror is trying to say...

POWERS

Because *Horror Hero* is a heroic campaign, characters cannot normally buy powers. As always, there are exceptions.

Certain beings may have powers as part of their racial background, like Ultraviolet Vision for someone with a feline parentage (don't ask us how). Ritualists, magic wielders, and psychics purchases spells or abilities as powers with limitations.

Also, in rare cases the GM may permit a character to purchase powers to fill in the character concept. This should be done only in extreme cases with good rationales and a need for the power to properly simulate the idea. Examples include a PC who suffers from lycanthropy having Multiform and all the powers of a werewolf, or someone whose grandfather was a monster and has passed along UV Vision down the bloodlines.

These abilities should be rare and never allowed to unbalance the campaign.

CHARACTER DISADVANTAGES

A key element of horror roleplaying is the human frailties of the protagonists. Character Disadvantages do not replace good roleplaying in this regard but are a useful GM tool for enforcing realistic play.

Some disadvantages will be bought at the onset of the campaign. Others will come about as the consequences of gameplay. For guidelines on how to manage a Characters evolution and a listing of pertinent Disadvantages see 'The Abyss Bites Back' in the Roleplaying section.

ACCIDENTAL CHANGE

This disadvantage works not only for lycanthropes, but for characters with Jekyll / Hyde personalities. This may also be used for creatures that conceal their trueform and may be changed by accident or intention. Incarnate demons are examples of how this disadvantage may be used.

AGE

Not all characters are young or physically fit . Scientists, professors, or even great magic wielders often times do not achieve their zenith until they reach middle age. Characters with this disadvantage should remember that they may be more vulnerable to illnesses or fatigue at the GM's option.

BERSERK

This is a good disadvantage for PCs who are lycanthropes or just unstable. The Enraged form may be used to show how strongly a PC feels about certain events. Taking a Berserk should be carefully considered, because a character that starts indiscriminately causing mayhem to friend as well as foe will find the other PCs not so friendly after the rage is over.

DEPENDENCE

This is a rare disadvantage for PCs in *Horror Hero*, but not for monsters (vampyrs need blood, radioactive adolescent kung-fu skunks need cabbage, etc.) A character may take this disadvantage but must be aware that the chosen substance can be taken away and the character will begin to die.

DEPENDENT NPC

In keeping with the theme of developing well-rounded characters, players should consider the value of buying Dependent NPCs. In horror this is a recommended and time-honored tradition. Almost every character in horror literature or film has had someone to save from the forces of terror. Depending on the age of the character, it is recommended that spouse and progeny or at least a true love is present for the proceedings. If the character is still a bachelor at campaign's start, the GM may introduce prospective mates along the way who could conceivably be major plot devices later in the campaign.

Why is this so strongly suggested? It is an altogether different matter when one defends spouse or child rather than just oneself. The horror is that much more evil and threatening; besides, the GM needs somebody to pick on!

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES

This is more appropriate for creatures than characters. This does not mean characters cannot have this, but it must make the PC stand out. Military and police types with their short haircuts and ramrod postures, or professors who dress in a style not popular for ten years are examples.

HUNTED AND WATCHED

For horror Hunted/Watched is almost an inescapable selection for a disadvantage. Officials will monitor the activities of government, police, or military types, and characters from special backgrounds or secret societies will be under some scrutiny from their contemporaries. And The Supernatural, mentioned in a few character archetypes, always notices intruders into the realm of occultic knowledge and events.

NORMAL CHARACTERISTIC MAXIMA

Since this is a heroic campaign, this is enforced for zero points.

PHYSICAL LIMITATION

The genre of horror is unique in that not everyone has to be a perfect physical specimen. Many horror protagonists in fiction have had physical disabilities, such as the blind man who sees only good and evil in a popular comic book miniseries. Players should not feel the need to skip this disadvantage.

PSYCHOLOGICAL LIMITATION

Arguably, most characters in horror have this disadvantage, otherwise they would be at home playing cards instead of battling horror. Past events usually are the cause for this disadvantage; motivations for the character can also be reflected with Psychological Limitation, such as "Driven by Faith" for a minister or "Protective of Spouse" for a married person. All characters should have at least one Psychological Limitation.

PUBLIC IDENTITY

This disadvantage is more suited for the Pulps and Fifties eras where larger-than-life characters exist more openly.

REPUTATION

Like Public Identity, this disadvantage is more suited to the Pulps and Fifties eras. A character may also have a Reputation within a certain group or organization, such as Wizards or the Black Dawn. A Reputation should be played for all it is worth by the player and the GM, but remember that some individuals or groups will benefit from knowing about the PC before encountering him…

RIVALRY

This disadvantage should be carefully considered. Rivals who are PCs playing in character during an encounter with horror may see their days end prematurely…

SECRET IDENTITY

Horror is probably the only genre where a heroic character can have this disadvantage. A character can be the town mayor and secretly be head axeman for the Black Dawn. Also a character can have a dark, shameful secret from the past and use this disadvantage to reflect that secret ("Let me get this straight; the minister used to work for a vampire?")

SUSCEPTIBILITY

This is almost entirely unheard of for characters; it is usually reserved for monsters and other NPCs. Although a character may still have this disadvantage if there is a reasonable explanation. Perhaps the character is an occult investigator who was infused with demonic blood in the past, making him susceptible to holy items.

UNLUCK

Life is difficult for horror characters. The creatures are tougher than the PC's best weapons, the cultists are relentless fanatics and most of the magic items are trickier to figure out than tax forms (and the audits are deadlier). Adding Unluck to these already formidable odds is recommended only for masochists.

VULNERABILITY

While Vulnerability is usually thought of as a monster or villain Disadvantage it can add an extra dimension to a PC, especially a sorcerous or psychic one. As with Susceptibility, a PC with an unusual past may have an unusual Vulnerability. If the GM and players have *Ninja Hero* they may be interested in the optional use of Vulnerability to hit locations on page 53.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

As in real life a Player Character is not a static creation destined to go through the campaign unchanged. The developments may be positive — these changes are reflected in game terms by buying or improving Knowledge Skills, Characteristics and Perks with Experience Points. But battling the unknown often takes a terrible toll on heroes. These changes are reflected by roleplaying, buying Disadvantages and lowering Skills and Characteristics. A third way of developing a PC is to roleplay the changes which cannot be represented in game terms, such as a natural increase or decrease in confidence or leadership ability.

When a PC is awarded experience at the end of a scenario the player may wish to consider the following points before spending. First, remember that XP are intended to simulate the learning and training process — there should always be a reason for an increase. If a PC made good use of his Climbing skill during the scenario part of the awarded experience should logically be used to increase Climbing, shouldn't it? Second, do not feel that XPs must always be used. If a player is happy with the way his PC is at the moment there is no reason to change it. XPs can be hoarded like gold and used later (some GMs even allow unused XPs to be traded for luck rolls). The player should never spend if he does not want to, except when the GM rules otherwise.

INCREASING CHARACTERISTICS

A PCs Primary Characteristics are bound to improve during the course of a campaign. This is, of course, the cheapest way of improving a PC because so many Figured Characteristics and Skills are improved along with the Primary. When picturing a Character it is useful to regard the numerical values as an indication of how well the PC uses his Characteristics rather than a rating of the Characteristics themselves.

Physical Characteristics (Strength, Dexterity, Constitution and Body) are improved when a PC exercises and eats well between adventures. These characteristics also improve along with a Characters understanding of his own abilities. In other words, just because a PC buys a higher Dexterity does not mean he has become physically faster — he has simply learned how to use his natural speed more efficiently.

Mental Characteristics (Intelligence, Ego and Presence) are improved as a PC gains confidence and learns how to use his abilities better. Buying Intelligence, for instance, does not mean that the PCs IQ has suddenly gotten higher. He may simply be studying more, practicing TM or engaging in some other brain-building exercise.

Figured Characteristics (Physical Defense, Energy Defense, Speed, Recovery, Endurance and Stun) are the best meter of how well a PC will survive combat. The more physically fit a PC is the better these Characteristics will be. Any action-oriented PC will want to spend XP here or on the applicable Primary Characteristics.

INCREASING SKILLS

The lions' share of PC activity in a horror game will be spent using Skills. In fact, the increase of Skill ability is the best barometer of a PCs growth.

There are three ways a PC can realistically and logically rationalize an increase in his Skill ratings. First, he can increase a skill which he used during the course of the latest scenario, as mentioned above. Second, he can engage in training during 'off-screen' time to improve existing but seldom-used Skills. Finally, he may learn a new skill.

For greater realism the GM may wish to impose a set of time constraints on the increase of Skill ratings. This will prevent PCs from finishing a game with an 8 or less roll and returning the next day with an 18 or less. Obviously, this is not realistic. A good rule of thumb to follow is that any skill successfully used during the course of a scenario can be instantly increased with no time lag but an unused or new Skill requires a months training for each point spent on the Skill. After all, no one learns Latin over the weekend. Characters with Talents or unusually high Intelligence or Dexterity may realistically shorten training time. This guideline will encourage players to adhere to their original Character concept while allowing realistically gradual change.

BUYING PERKS

After the initial creation of a Character the addition of new Character Perks is best left up to the GM. Perks will almost always arise out of game circumstances. For example, suppose the PCs rescue Judge Kowalski's son from joining the Shapeshifters International Conspiracy. Unless the PCs were performing the deed for profit it would be reasonable to assume that the Judge would want to reward the PCs for their actions. The Perk in this case would be a Favor or a Contact (depending on the character of the Judge).

Perks gained during gameplay are assumed to be 'free'; that is, a point or two for a perk is granted above and beyond any earned experience. The GM is entirely within his rights to ignore this suggestion — after all, a perk is more valuable to a PC in the Campaign world than a few XPs are to his player.

Contacts and Favors will be the most common and the most useful perks accumulated during gameplay. Not only do they contribute to the feel of a 'lived-in' campaign, they help the PCs gauge their contributions.

Contacts and Favors owed by powerful occult personas should be treated as if they were 'special', i.e. they should cost a point or three more. This is in accordance with the rules for extremely useful Perks from the Hero System Rulesbook (pg. 43).

Followers in Horror are usually doomed from the start but this does not preclude their use. Most will be purchased at the beginning of a campaign; any acquired later will probably be 'gifts' from the GM. They will usually be disciples of occultists or admirers of writers, etc. As with all GM gifts they can be a mixed blessing. Sometimes their skills are useful but they are a pain in the butt to protect. As with Contacts and Favors the PC should not bear the responsibility of paying for the Follower.

The most important thing to remember about Fringe Benefits is that their stated cost can always be exceeded, granting even more privileges. For example, a network news anchor will get more mileage out of a press pass than a writer for a supermarket tabloid. Players should always pay for Fringe Benefits.

Money is symbolic of the grasping evil that most horror PCs oppose. Despite this it is damned useful to have and no PC should pass up an honestly earned buck. PCs will probably spend more money than they earn during an average horror campaign unless they have a wealthy patron or are funded by an organization. Horror Hero recommends that GMs use the optional money system on pg. 44 of the Hero System Rulesbook.

LOOKING INTO THE ABYSS: HORROR ROLEPLAYING

So now you are ready. You have learned your skills and chosen your weapons. You know Who you are and Why you are doing this. Heh. Have you given any thought about How you are going to go about it?

Role playing is a cooperative venture between the GM, who designs the environment, inhabitants and general plotline of a scenario — and the players, who for all intents and purposes create the storyline. An exciting and scary horror game is the result of players who willingly suspend their disbelief and pretend that the situation presented by the GM is important and real to their Characters. They will respond to Horror realistically, have more fun doing so and encourage the GM to be more creative.

The roleplaying tips which follow fall under four general categories; Who to Play?, During Gameplay, Rollplaying and Roleplaying and The Abyss Bites Back, an examination of insanity.

WHO TO PLAY?

When a GM designs a campaign he usually has an idea about the types of characters would work best in the setting. As long as he expresses a willingness to consider new ideas the players should respect his final judgment. When making PCs the following points should be heeded.

A well balanced group is important if the party seriously expects to have any impact on the machinations of evil. Your GM will take care to insure that a well balanced group is formed, and that every player has a vital role in the success of the campaign against evil. But remember that sometimes allowances must be made to accomplish this. If it seems that you may have to play an unfamiliar type of character, don't complain but rise to the challenge. You might surprise yourself and find an untapped reservoir of talent you didn't know you had. For example, the *Hero System* is noted for allowing the creation of characters who use their brains to be as effective in scenarios as their more physically oriented compatriots — try a character who *never* fights. While a party of all fighters or all mystics can be fun for a while, the campaign will be unable to progress very far with any success, so work with your GM and the other players when you are deciding what type of character you want to play.

Make sure the PC fits the campaign. The GM has enough to do without having to deal with characters who simply don't fit in the setting. He may wish to set the campaign in the "real" world, which means you should not try to introduce overtly fictional elements, such as a character who obviously does not exist but is recognized everywhere he goes. If the GM wants the freedom of storytelling a fictional universe pro-

vides, take reasonable advantage of the opportunity. Don't get your hackles up if another player plays an internationally-known (and utterly fictitious) celebrity — play along, relax and have fun.

Write a brief biography of your character, and share it with the GM. He should be the final arbitrator of how much exposure to the unknown a PC has had before the start of the campaign. If a PC has had encounters before the GM may be able to incorporate them into the body of the campaign, in the form of revenge scenarios, helpful NPCs, etc. He may wish for the PC to be a member of a secret society which he has plans for, or he may require the PC to buy Character Disadvantages and Knowledge Skills to reflect his past. On the flip side of this are PCs who have never encountered the unknown at all, or are rigorous skeptics. These characters and their reactions to being involved in the unknown for the first time are entertaining for all.

DURING GAMEPLAY

The campaign has started. Character sheets and dice are at hand. The players open their beers and start munching corn chips. All eyes turn to the GM. "Scare us" is their unspoken challenge. Well, it's not entirely up to him. That's right, a successful horror scenario demands cooperation and input from all parties involved. Here are some ways that players can contribute to the campaign:

Psyche yourself! Imagine you're playing a horror scenario. It's a scary, claustrophobic setting and the monsters are ugly and hungry. In only a matter of minutes the final bulkheads will be breached and ravenous terrors will erupt with blinding speed toward the heroes, whose players voices can be heard. Strangely, the tone of the conversation is mild, almost leisurely. 'What do you think, the 45 or the Uzi?' — 'I don't know. What's your Speed? I think I go first, so give me the Uzi' — 'Okay. What do you think the body of that door is anyway? Hey, can I make a Metallurgy roll?'

Not very gripping, is it? Just as actors in a movie have to act scared, even though they know they're just in a movie studio, the players in a horror RPG should pretend to be scared. This is essential. No amount of GM descriptions will match a player's ability to psyche himself out when realistic reactions to horror are called for. The play setting — basement, living room — must be risen above and the game setting — old house, abandoned mine — should be allowed to envelop the players imagination. Remember, it's a roleplaying game, not a dice game!

Now imagine the same scene with players who make an effort to experience the game fully by scaring themselves. The conversation is rushed and tense, because each PC is experiencing the situation. They have 'seen' the mangled bodies of their friends and they 'hear ' the pounding on the steadily weakening door. 'Man, we're dead' — 'Shut up and

give me that Uzi! You don't need both guns' — 'Hey, hey, hey — how long do think that doors gonna hold?' — 'You're the expert — Go check it out' — 'No way am I getting any closer to that door' — 'We need a plan, quick'... Lots better, isn't it? Remember, being scared does not mean that a PC is a coward who will be unable to take decisive action when the time comes. In fact, there is more heroism in being terrified and then taking action than in calmly, methodically looking over a character sheet and rolling dice.

Cooperate with the GM's world vision. Roleplaying games, more than perhaps any hobby save mountain-climbing, are a cooperative venture. All the PCs inhabit the same world, that created by the GM. In an ideal situation every player contributes to the proceedings, and a player who constantly makes waves by second-guessing the GM will ruin the game for everyone.

Players can ruin the action by not cooperating with the 'world vision' the GM wishes to portray. In a realistic campaign such a player will attempt stunts which are impossible to reconcile with reality, such as blowing up the Queen Mary II. On the same token, they try to take advantage of 'real' knowledge which the GM may not be aware of — "Ha-Ha. The villain can't escape because [wherever] does not have a back door!" This is just being snide and petty — don't do it!

A similar set of guidelines apply if the GMs setting is fictional — for example, he may set the campaign in the *Champions Universe*. In a case like this, disruptive players will try to impose hard reality on the campaign setting. If the GM decides that a mile-long immunization record is not necessary to enter Borneo, keep your knowledge to the contrary to yourself. Any actions of this sort serve only one player and one character, and will easily derail the GMs hard won atmosphere. The only solution to a player who constantly acts in this manner is eviction from the game.

Do not argue with the GM's decisions. A player who has not GMed a game may not realize how difficult it can be to be fair to all the players while at the same time trying to keep the action moving. There is a lot to keep track of and sometimes mistakes happen or quick decisions must be made. The result of this is that sometimes a player may feel that he has been treated unfairly.

The GM knows what is going on all around, and sometimes he will announce developments which seem to not make sense or be fair. He may roll dice out of sight and announce that a PC is suddenly unconscious. All the monsters might be singling out a particular PC. Familiar villains on the verge of destruction might exhibit startling new abilities which help them escape. All of these may seem unfair to a player but give the GM the benefit of the doubt — it is all for the good of the game. If that PC hadn't been unconscious and unmoving a monster might have eaten him. The fact that all the monsters are after one guy is probably an important clue. The escaping villain is being saved for bigger and better things.

Sometimes a GM will simply screw up. He may forget that a character has Danger Sense. He might accidentally skip a combat round or lose track of a character's Body. He may be distracted from a PC's sure-fire plan for success. When things like this occur a good player will keep the peace, mentioning the omission or mistake when it will least disrupt the proceedings. Players should never insist that the clock be rolled back to accommodate what they imagine is the right way things should have gone. The GM can fix most things after the fact without having to rewrite history. A dead

character can become a badly injured character, and an ability forgotten in the excitement can be used again later (Hey .. you know Karate. Oh yeah !).

Don't hog the action. Here is a true gaming story which illustrates everything a single player and his character can do to ruin a game for everyone. The GM in this case was quite skilled but fairly inexperienced. The story involved a group of characters who are investigating a haunted house which drives trespassers insane. Professor Hog (our goat) calls all the PCs together and outlines his version of the problem. He insists on giving each PC vague orders and then throws a tantrum when they return from assignments they did not really understand. Instead of letting the others return he insists on doing it all himself, dragging along a new player (guess who) who finds himself saddled with knowledge which would benefit the entire group but is instead 'our secret'. So far, Hog has 1) Taken charge on his own recognizance, 2) Allowed his emotions to extend toward other players rather than their characters, 3) Withheld information from the others for his own benefit and 4) tried to pit players against each other.

Later on the PCs enter the house and split up to search. Hog discovers a journal which the ghost kept while alive and, finding a hiding place, he begins to read. The Gamemaster rules that it will take a couple hours to finish, and tells him what he will discover. Meanwhile, an exciting discovery is made upstairs. Hog, as if by magic, is suddenly upstairs himself. He starts barking orders and taking command. The GM gently reminds him that he is downstairs reading at that particular moment, and cannot be here without stopping his reading. Hog, very reluctantly and with much whining, agrees.
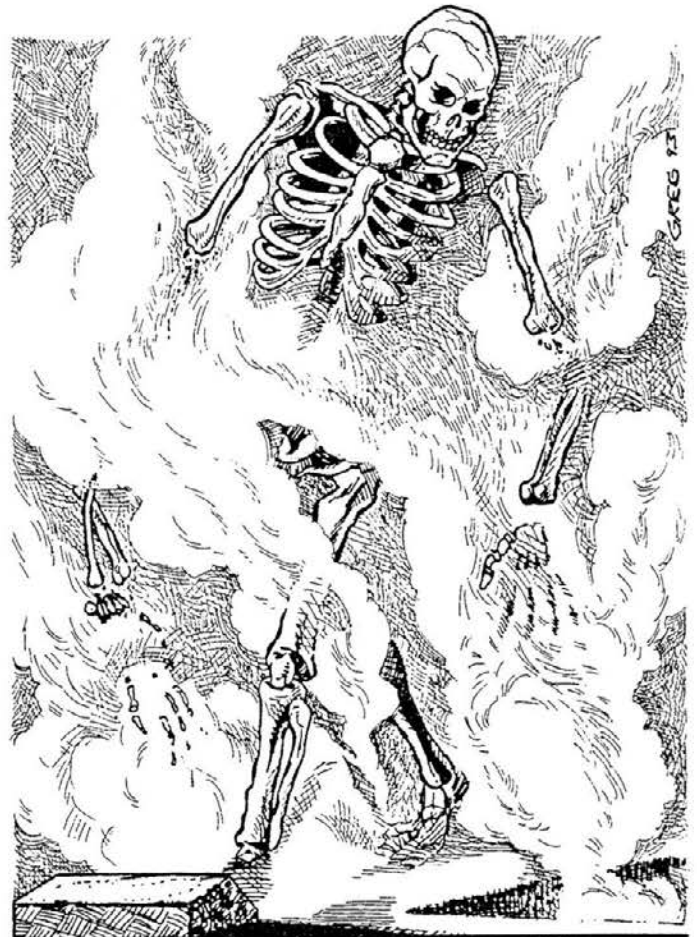
But he uses knowledge that could only have come from finishing the book through the remainder of the scenario. Finally, by the end of the scenario everyone is dead except for one PC who entirely by accident shoots Hog in the back, to everyone's warm approval. A few weeks later Hog's player is blaming the GM for the 'failure' of the game.

Here we see 1) a PC again hiding information in a pitiful attempt to be 'better' than the others. He also 2) changes what has already happened in order to be more important, 3) plays using player knowledge which the PC does not have and 4) whines. His reaction to being killed (quite fairly) had to be seen to be believed. Worst of all, he blamed the GM for all the problems he brought onto himself.

The whole point of this ugly tale is obvious. Players should never try to take over an entire game just for their own ego stroking. It is small-minded and wrong. Sometimes a GM will run a scenario starring a certain PC. If this ever happens the other players should relax, play along and wait for their own time in the limelight. If you feel that your PC is being left out, bring it up to your GM outside of the game session.

Be faithful to the spirit of your character conception. In Horror gaming, each character type has a specific function. The scientist experiments, the occultist does research, the reporter snoops around, the policeman investigates, etc. In short, everyone will do the job their player created them for. Obviously, overlapping of roles will occur during gameplay. This is natural, as unusual occurrences will require unusual solutions. But during ordinary gameplay, don't step on each other's toes. Let everyone do their jobs. The scientist should not be making arrests, and the cop should not dream up a death ray. Your characters will be more distinctive and more fun to play if you let them be themselves.

Another aspect of being true to your character is to keep in mind that a PC does not share all his creators knowledge. This is especially important in historical settings. Despite player misgivings, most PCs would be pleased at the chance to travel on the Titanic or the Hindenburg. By the same token, if a player notices that the GM's notes feature stats for Dracula he shouldn't start making stakes just for the heck of it. Players should never let their knowledge of history or their foreknowledge about a scenario impact on a PC's actions.

Behave consistently. Imagine that gentle Granny Prudence, who has been a model of wisdom and patience throughout the campaign, is taken prisoner by the minions of The Great Whatever. The GM, who has been watching Granny grow wiser and even more patient, and whose entire scenario depends on the octogenarian letting herself be taken to Whatever's lair and discovering a Dread Secret, is appalled to find Granny fighting back. Before he knows it the old bag has mopped up the cultists and started wearing ammo belts over her ginghams. What's wrong here?

A large part of the enjoyment of roleplaying is the way that consistently played characters become more real with each passing scenario. This does not mean they shouldn't grow or evolve like real people. They can tire of bloodshed and develop a Code versus Killing, or go the opposite route and become violence addicts. They may be more nervous with each passing scenario, or develop a skin so thick the Inquisition couldn't even tickle them. They can learn new skills and become better or worse friends. These are legitimate changes which fit game logic and keep players from growing stale on the same PC. But sometimes logic and characterization get thrown to the winds and the result can be very messy.

Maybe the player has had a bad day. Maybe he is sick of the character. Whatever the reason, his character is just not himself. It's happened to everybody. The most logical reason for an erratically played PC is that the character just does not suit the player. In this case it's best just to build another. But every player is urged to take a minute to think when the mood hits them to throw their PCs personality to the winds. Your GM may depend on a PC being in character in order to further the plot. After all, if the other characters don't feel that they know you, how will they know when *it really isn't* ?

Avoid stupidity and anachronisms. Lurking slimily at the bottom of the rogues gallery are those players who think that the whole game is there just for them. They are here to have fun, and they will enjoy themselves no matter what. How do they go about this? By making their characters do things that they shouldn't, couldn't and wouldn't. They commit deliberately stupid actions on a whim — 'The cultists are inside the building where the other characters are? I'll just blow it up, then.' They introduce jarring anachronisms — 'My character invented napalm over the weekend. Let's go torch the vampires.' Disruptive actions such as these can derail the atmosphere quicker than a house fire. Even worse than the stupidities themselves is trying to convince the player that they shouldn't have been committed. There are some people who just cannot understand *why* their PC couldn't have invented something years before its time.

It may seem harsh but the best thing for a player like this is to find a new genre to play in. Horror simply requires too much on the part of GM and players to have to put up with this type of nonsense. If you are such a player you may wish to

consider that what these actions do is sabotage everyone else's enjoyment. No one likes or respects an individual who shows so little regard for others. So don't do it, or go away.

Pay attention. This is very important. Everyone has been to a game where the action is starting to move really well and the skills of a certain PC are needed *right now* and when all eyes turn to the player...He's reading a book. 'Huh? What's going on?' This is how GMs get sent to death row, by killing players like this.

Listen to the GM. Horror roleplaying is a cooperative venture between GM and Players. When players pay attention to the GMs descriptions and willingly cooperate with his story the scenario will jell into an exciting experience for all. When a character is on stage he should be putting all his concentration into playing him to the hilt. The most hackneyed scenarios will be enjoyable if this simple suggestion is followed. But the best written, most original scenario ever written will not work if the players are not paying full attention to what is going on. Why? Because the GM will assume that the problem is with the game — he will lose confidence in his creation and become more concerned with finishing it than making it good.

So, pay attention to the game. Don't drift off to a comic book. Don't start talking about the latest bang-bang shoot em up flick you just saw. Don't interrupt the game for a discourse on your PCs favorite pop-guns. Horror requires everyone concerned to keep their concentration focused on the game. Only then will horror happen, and isn't that what everyone came for?

ROLL PLAYING AND ROLEPLAYING

Elsewhere in this book are GMing tips wherein it is recommended that the role of dice during gameplay be de-emphasized. The reasoning behind this is simple — rolling dice brings players back to reality, out of the game world. In many instances dice are used when they simply aren't necessary. Sometimes they damage the flow of the game. Take perception rolls, for instance. Should a reasonably intelligent PC have to roll dice to notice a Voodoo fetish nailed to his apartment wall? Of course not. Nor should any Knowledge Skill over 11 be rolled unless the circumstances are extremely unusual.

Another reason that constant dice rolling is wrong for horror RPGs is that it shifts the emphasis of the campaign from the story (where it should be) to paper and pencil character development. A player whose only concern is buying more skills and raising stats should probably be playing giant robots, not horror. The knowledge and memories a PC gains through experience are infinitely more valuable than a few more points of Concealment.

This is not to suggest that dice have no value. Their function is very important. They represent fickle fate, the luck of the just and the immutable laws of physics. In many cases they are the final arbitrator of what is and what isn't. But no one should rely on them to provide every insight and to justify a characters every move.

One final word of advice on dice — the GMing section of this book strongly recommends that many dice rolls which are usually performed by players become the responsibility of the GM. He may ask you to roll and never tell what it was for, or he may ask you to roll several times before gameplay begins and just check off the rolls as the game progresses. Do not be surprised if a scenario is completed with almost no dice rolling.

Finally, learn the rules! Do not put a drag on the action because you have to flip through the rulebook. When you build a PC read the entries for every Skill, Perk or Talent you choose. Know what your character can and cannot do. Practice the combat system and try not to create characters who take ten minutes a round to play. Remember, the more you are distracted from the scenario the less you will enjoy it.

To summarize, remember the two ideas underlining all the previous tips. First, *remember that you are here to create a story*. The GM will establish the world paradigm and act as arbitrator of events, but the story is written by the players because they are always center stage. Do not hog the spotlight — everyone involved has a role to play which may vary from scenario to scenario. Do not be a putz who ruins everyone else's fun. Be a Zen gamer — exist for the moment you are creating and do not worry about how your character sheet will look after you are finished. Second, *don't rely on the GM to keep you entertained* — enter into the spirit of the proceedings. The GM is here to have fun too. His sense of accomplishment and commitment to quality will grow if his players put a little effort and care into their roleplaying. At first this may seem like a very somber genre to play in, and the characters may seem like fatalities waiting to happen, but if the game and its populace are played straight, hilarity will erupt at the most inopportune moments and a fantastically good time will be had by all!

THE ABYSS BITES BACK

No one whose life work is the investigation of the unknown remains unchanged by his encounters with the uncanny. The fit young man who fearlessly goes off to fight the Shapeshifters International Conspiracy may learn much from his battles. By year's end he is a seasoned veteran who can withstand almost any torture. He has trained himself so that not even the least significant clue escapes his notice. He is now a crack shot. But all knowledge and all abilities have their price. He is now a white haired, lame insomniac with an irrational fear of being buried alive.

SOME THOUGHTS ON INSANITY

The authors have been queried on the subject of insanity. This seems to be a quality associated with the so-called horror genre. Their thoughts will follow this paragraph, but I am sure that they will agree on one point. If there is to be any representation of a formerly lucid horror investigator succumbing to the effects of insanity, the player must *roleplay this effect. All the rules and guidelines in the world are useless if a player simply refuses to play his now-unbalanced character properly. While this should be the only information you need to convey the quality of insanity, I am sure many of you require the umbilical safety net of written rules. Again it begins...*

CHARACTER DEGENERATION

Horror roleplaying has the dubious distinction of being the most lethal of genres. This means that while PCs might face horrible creatures similar to those in *Fantasy Hero* only in the nicest campaigns can they expect to benefit from that genres magical healing. *Horror Hero* PCs can look forward to being shot, stabbed, bitten, eaten, buried, electrocuted, maimed, deboned, field dressed, fed to things, cursed, tortured and skinned alive. And that's just the physical stuff. Courtesy of the villains and monsters in *Horror Hero* the PC will also be possessed, brainwashed, disembodied, haunted, driven mad and made to live in a constant state of unease and paranoia. And yes, players will love every minute of it.

The effects of these horrible occurrences are simulated during gameplay by buying Disadvantages, lowering Skills and Characteristics and most of all by *roleplaying*.

BUT WHEN DID I GO INSANE?

Unfortunately, players, there is no magic formula for counting down points to madness. Nor is there a dice roll with modifiers for every possible variable that will allow the Gamemaster to say "Ah, an eleven. Sorry, J.D., but the dice say your PC is, well, mad."

Determining insanity is ideally the product of cooperation between the GM and the player. Together, the GM can run down the list of factors leading to this turning point in the PC's mental state while the player decides how to present this PC if it is still playable. In a perfect world, a good roleplayer will not need prompting from the GM to portray insanity. The player would assess all that the PC has encountered, consider the PC's background and Disadvantages, and then play the character in a way that would indicate Something Is Definitely Wrong With Him. This can be subtle physical variations in the PC's mannerisms to a full-blown new personality possessing only vestiges of the previous personality.

In gameplay, everyone will find this method of roleplaying to be far superior to any dice-roll directed behavior. However, a system for keeping track of stress and insanity is provided for those who wish a more mechanistic approach.

WHY HAST THOU GONE MAD

Some PCs are very stable individuals, while others are only a heartbeat away from the line that separates normal society from the abnormal. What causes a PC to become insane?

Usually there is some part of the PC's mind that is vulnerable to the day-to-day atrocities of *Horror Hero*. Reflected as a minor Psychological Limitation, it usually provides nothing more than some mild discomfort at times. After the continuous hammering the PC's mind suffers from scenario after scenario, the little phobia becomes an encompassing neurosis or affective disorder.

All it takes is one trauma to push the PC over the proverbial edge. The sight of some horrifying crime, dreadful monster, or abysmal remnants of a bizarre society could be the little nudge that a PC (and GM) needs to send the character into the terrifying enclosure that is the insane mind. There should not be a lack of these experiences in a *Horror Hero* game.

Some examples could include a brush with death, a face-to-face meeting with a monster, witnessing the death of one or several close companions at the hands of horror, or a scene filled with items of an otherworldly nature. Perhaps the PC falls into the clutches of some terrible group or entity, and is tortured, or confined, or subjected to experiments. Any one thing can be the trigger; when it is pulled, the GM and the player should get together and discuss just how in-depth the newfound insanity is going to be. The player needs to understand the absolute need to roleplay the PC appropriately, while the GM should tell the player what he thinks the PC should be doing in those moments when real life and insanity mix.

WHERE THE INSANITIES ARE

In the world of *Horror Hero*, PCs are exposed to sights, sounds, and smells that they usually have never experienced before. After one incident, or after a substantial length of game time and repeated exposures to horror, PCs may find themselves feeling the mental effects of any one of a variety of disorders. This occurs because most (and probably all) PCs will have a background where they never did more than dabble in occult research. Their life experience to that point has never included seeing the wondrous and mind-shattering sights of a world of horror.

The easiest method, in game terms, for the Gamemaster to impose required roleplaying of insanity is for him to make the player emphasize pre-existing Psychological Limitations as if they were Total intensities if they are not already. Suddenly that Psych Lim: Fear of Bats (Common, Moderate) becomes a wide ranged phobia of anything bat-like. The PC will be uncomfortable even looking at a picture of one in a book, and he probably will not even touch a photograph of one. Fluttering sounds in the night will send him screaming for cover; clothing billowing in the wind on a clothesline may evoke a "first strike" attack on the offending article.

GM: "Yes, it most definitely looks like a classic vampire's batlike cape. Undoubtedly the fiend is trying to unnerve you before swooping in for the kill."

Insane PC: BLAM BLAM BLAM DIE DIE DIE BLAM BLAM BLAM

Other PC: "Are you crazy? That's a @^&%! bedsheet hanging out there!"*

Insane PC: "PANT PANT PANT Oh PANT PANT PANT sorry. Guess I overreacted a little. I sure nailed it though, didn't I?"

The phobia, or unnatural fear, of something is a time-honored element of Psychological Disadvantages. In a horror game, many of the players may have taken one or two of these Disads to fill out the character concept. Other phobias can be of heights, water, bridges, animals, reptiles, insects, the dark, open areas, enclosed areas, people in uniform, people from foreign countries, high technology, magic, etc. By "playing up" these phobias to a higher intensity, the player will be in character while the other players will be able to react to their comrades former mild phobia turned acute fear.

Sometimes the mind triggers a flight response, or something similar, when the body encounters some type of sensory stimulus that brings back memories of a dreadful event. These are known as affective disorders, causing the PC to overreact to sensory input. For example, loud noises may remind a PC of the sepulchral bellowing of a nigh-omnipotent creature who nearly had the PC for a snack.

Grimy or dirty areas could be reminiscent of the lair of a voodoo priest whose spells took the lives of everyone except the PC during an investigation. This PC may be toting disinfectants and dust rags around with him, so he may clean up an area before checking for clues. This would be to the dismay of a PC police officer who is trying to dust for fingerprints.

Powerful or faint odors of a certain type could trigger some other unpleasant memories, and the PC would react to their presence as if the odors were a precursor to an attack by something. Drawing weapons and wandering around some public area, like a shopping mall, while sniffing the air and bellowing out "I know you're here! Show yourself, you murdering demon bastard!" is bound to bring forth a memorable response from the other PCs the first time they witness it. Mall security probably will not heed this PC's protestations of "unseen creatures with claws that reach out of the air to take you away! Damn it man, I have the scars to prove it! Let me go!!!"

While there are a number of compulsive disorders that a PC could suffer from (pathological lying, kleptomania, etc.), these are not typical of the horror genre. Certainly a PC with a habit of dropping various little items into their pockets could find themselves at the center of unwanted attention . . .

Player: "I don't understand! What do you want with me?"
GM (as A Slew Of Diabolical Creatures Surrounding The PC): "Have you the Eye. Us give the Eye. Have you the Eye. Us give the Eye."
Player: "Eye, what Eye? I have this little rock, I don't know how it got in my pocket."
(Sounds of Slew Of Diabolical Creatures all going Gleeargyh, teeth gnashing, dice rolling, Hand Killing Attacks being totaled by the GM, etc.)

Some of the more severe types of insanity suffered by PCs will result from some sort of traumatic experience. These psychoses are at the extreme of insane behavior, and a PC who exhibits them will find that their career as an explorer of the unknown is over. Done. Finished.

The unheroic Disad Berserk/Enraged could be acquired by PCs with a penchant for shoot first and ask questions at the seance later. An encounter with any aspect of horror would provoke an immediate, violent, continued response until the "come out of Berserk" roll is made. After one or two episodes with this PC, his former allies are likely to cart him off to some distant facility for treatment if they don't shoot him first in self-defense.

Other types of psychotic behavior, like paranoid schizophrenia or manic depression, could function in a campaign. These two disorders could add a bit of edge to a PC and his comrades . . .

PC in manic phase of manic depression: "Don't worry friends, I can translate the scroll and fend off the Unconquerable. Just watch this!"
Other PCs (in asides to each other): "This is the same person we pulled off the ledge last night, right?" "Uh huh. But he's on a roll now, so leave him be."

THE LAST STEP

A good roleplayer given the chance to portray an insane PC should remember a few items. First, conveniently ignoring the Disadvantage during game play is not an option. Second, the GM may impose some restrictions on the PC's use of skills if they are not in complete control of their faculties. Third, other PCs may decide that associating with the insane PC is no longer desirable, requiring the player to "retire" the PC. Fourth, "insane" does not mean "evil." While insanity is sometimes associated with villainy, it is the perception of the actions of the PC that determines their goodness. If a PC is "good" but sometimes cannot recognize the consequence of his actions, this does not make him "evil." Finally, the GM is well within his rights to take over the insane PC whenever it suits his story. After all, insanity is a *Dis*advantage, not just a personality quirk.

GRAVE UNDERTAKINGS: GAMEMASTERING HORROR

There is an emotion that all mankind shares, and none enjoy. It is fear. A response to the unknown, fear drives a man's heart to beat wildly, his muscles to weaken. There exists no weapon to combat fear, save one. Knowledge. Implacable fear falls to its knees before irresistible knowledge. Thus, knowledge must be withheld from the masses. But fear cannot deny the most inquisitive searchers what they seek. Fear has a weapon, one to shatter the senses and bodies, and inter the searchers within the primordial dust of the Earth, flesh to ash, ideas to wafting dreams; that weapon is horror.

Horror. The unbelievable becomes real, the illogical becomes fact. It is horror that guards the knowledge of fear's demise. And there are many who benefit from fear and unknowing, from the street-scarred mugger who surprises you on a darkened street, to the rulers of the world. They do not want you to know, will not let you learn, can not allow themselves to end. Using horror, they will project fear like a shadow over all their grand schemes. Schemes that would fade before the light of knowledge …

INTRODUCTION

This section is designed to help the GM conduct a successful horror campaign. Novice GMs who are unsure how to proceed will find many helpful hints here, and experienced GMs may read it as a refresher course.

THE NATURE OF THE BEAST

Horror roleplaying is unique in the field for two reasons. First, horror is universal. Some roleplaying genres are based on the type of character that is played (superheroes or fantasy characters), while others are defined by the setting (The Wild West or Dark Future). Horror is different because it is based on an *emotion* and can be played in any setting with any type of character.

The second difference is the way horror translates from the source material. While several exceptions come to mind, the bulk of horror films and fictional tales feature characters who have no desire to confront the unknown, spend most of the action fleeing from it and are either dead or insane at the end. The last thing a survivor would want is to seek out and confront the horror again. This works fine in film, fiction and 'one-shot' scenarios but is not very suitable for character-oriented roleplaying campaigns.

With this in mind, the beginning GM will find it useful to regard his campaign as an opportunity to create a new type of horror rather than trying to recreate the type of plot found in books or movies. But several storytelling techniques and story devices borrowed from film and fiction work well in roleplaying; these, along with others unique to RPGs, are explored in this chapter.

IMPLEMENTS OF DESTRUCTION

For the harried GM whose schedule does not permit hours of preparation time, the following lists and tables are offered. Included are lists of Standard Horror Elements, Classic Scare Plots, things found at The Scene of the Crime, Scenario Boosters, a Horror Scenario Generator and more. GMs should use this section as a tool kit to speed up scenario construction only — nothing here is intended to be a replacement for the GMs imagination.

STANDARD HORROR ELEMENTS

Although horror scenarios can appear in any genre, a horror campaign has a set of 'props' all its own. Standard Horror Elements in roleplaying include:

Cults The presence of cults in horror roleplaying helps the GM keep players guessing about who can be trusted, and cult members serve as convenient cannon fodder for PCs between monster encounters.

Death By its very nature, horror roleplaying is the most lethal of all genres. The most common fear is that of death, especially violent, painful death. If players do not believe that PCs or their loved ones can die, then horror will not be as effective.

Mad Scientists These characters, with their grandiose and ill-fated plots to save or rule the world, have evolved right along with the horror genre and are sure to appear.

Magic Evil sorcery is a prevalent theme in horror RPGs, and even those who wield magic in the name of goodness run an appalling risk of corruption and destruction. As a type of power that defies physical laws, the Black Arts are perfect for instilling disquiet in the hearts of players.

Monsters And what horror campaign would be complete without them? Monsters can be insane or evil humans, demons, real animals, aliens, transformed humans, mutations (atomic and otherwise), the dead, cryptozoological mystery animals, machines, prehistoric survivors, mutated plants or anything else with a taste for PCs.

Mystery The most common horror RPG structure is the mystery, where PCs investigate crime scenes, conduct research and develop hypotheses long before they attempt to destroy the evil.

Psychic Powers Mind powers can duplicate many magical effects without the use of special equipment or rituals. They are especially frightening because they are very plausible. Also, many characters have a sixth sense that has drawn them into investigation of the unknown.

Religion A touchy subject for some, but battles between good and evil often involve the personifications of these cosmic axioms. Whether God and the Devil are real beings or only projections of humanities' desire for an ultimate authority and a scapegoat is entirely up to the gaming group. Without religion there wouldn't be any Holy Water or crucifixes to chase off vampires. Sometimes an evil religion is the crux of the tale, and only the intervention of a good one can save the day.

The Supernatural The abiding fear of the unknown. Who has not felt a chill at the thought of the supernatural intruding into their lives? Sure that noise in the dark is just the house settling, but after a Creature Double-Feature at two AM it takes on a life of its own, empowered by the imagination of the person who perceives it.

GREG '93

CLASSIC HORROR PLOTS

Here's a partial listing of Horror Plots which have withstood the test of time.

Apocalypse It's the End of the World as we know it. Horror erupts everywhere, and civilization perishes. The agents of change might be flesh-eating Zombies, an outer space mutation, or even eldritch gods. In a horror RPG the PCs might travel to the post-apocalypse world which will result if their current efforts fail. Or, a limited campaign could feature the characters efforts to survive after the End of Everything.

Astrohorror The moral is, don't go into space or you'll be sorry. Mankind has no place among the malevolent stars. Unfortunate astronauts are transformed into monsters, pick up hungry hitch-hikers or both. Worst of all, these things never happen until the trip back to Earth. Has this ever really happened? Remember that N.A.S.A. stands for Never A Straight Answer!

The Curse This is the plot of almost every Gothic horror ever created. For whatever reason, someone has sworn vengeance. It may be because of a breach of jungle etiquette, an overzealous archaeologist or an ancestors hand in the burning of a witch. The problem with curses are that they have a tendency to dog families for generations. Madness, monsters and fear await the victim of a curse.

The Deadly Friend An unholy partnership has commenced. An individual seen by all as weak and ineffective suddenly gains a benefactor. This deadly friend could be the Monster From Under the Bed, a manifestation of the weaklings dark desires or a demon sent to fan the thirst for revenge. Sometimes the Deadly Friend operates without the knowledge of their ward. Sometimes the creature is summoned in the heat of the moment and the summoner is later appalled by the extent and ferocity of its atrocities.

Devil Worshippers and Sundry Cultists They're everywhere, the pesky little devils. If they aren't trying to bring about the advent of the Anti-Christ they're chasing hapless folks who have inadvertently spied upon their rites. They've got spies every where and monsters on their side. They don't want to kill — they want to watch their victims suffer. They're your neighbors, your priest, your parents...Say, we haven't seen *you* in church lately, have we? Hmm...

The Experiment Gone Wrong Where would horror be without scientists meddling in the province of the Almighty? From Shelly to King the scientist and his ill advised experiments have been the crux of classic horror tales. Through madness or misguided idealism a creature is built, a doorway is opened, a weapon is built. The seeker of knowledge becomes the architect of terror as the creature kills, things come through the portal and the weapons fall into the wrong hands.

Extraterrestrial Visitor The plot that launched a thousand B-movies. What do they want? Are they friend or foe? In an RPG the heroes must find the alien and discover what it wants. Even if it is benevolent, its methods leave a lot to be desired. And if it is not it must be destroyed.

The Haunting Ghosts are the best known monster and the one most believed in. A haunting usually features an ordinary family plagued by manifestations of the unknown and the occultists they summon for help. But how to fight a foe that is already dead?

Hunting a Monster In the far corners of the Earth they still survive. The Snowman of the Himalayas. The Living Dinosaur of the Congo. The Serpent of the Loch. Their names are a siren call to anyone with a romantic soul and a taste for danger — Yeti, Mokele-Mbembe, Nessie. Who knows what horrors they hide? And who knows what would happen if they were brought back to the land of men?

Invasion Similar to the Apocalypse, but not all is lost. An invasion could be noisy and destructive or subtle. All that is required is one group (race, country, planet, surprise indigenous species) entering the territory of another with an intent to usurp ownership. In RPGs an invasion can be played out through the course of an entire campaign. Big scale horror for those who like to blow things up real good.

The Item of Power An ordinary person finds something which changes their life forever. It may be an accident or the culmination of a long search. The Item whispers promises of power and the fulfillment of the finders darkest desires, but there is always a catch. The item may be a book of magic, an idol of an eldritch god or an ordinary object imbued with fantastic power. It may even be strange powers gained accidentally and not an item at all.

Lost Worlds Who knows what secret places are hidden around the world, and what brave fools are willing to go there? A lost world can be the interior of the hollow Earth, an island forgot by time, the ruined city of a prehuman race or a network of tunnels beneath a modern city. But just because they are lost does not mean they are forgotten — sometimes dark things endure the ravages of time and isolation, and grow mad in their secret places. And when trespassers appear...

Madman on a Rampage He's crazy, he kills. He has no redeeming social values. He might not even have a face. But he's armed, by God — you can bet on that. If the reader attended one Horror movie in the 1980's then he knows all about madmen. Interminable examples include the hockey mask guy, the dead guy with the glove, the guy who dresses like mother, the guy who hates babysitters, the mutant guys in the hills and the guys in Texas who use chainsaws. They all have two things in common. They're hard to kill, and they keep coming back.

The Misunderstood Monster It is big, ugly and violent. Where it goes, death follows. It may be an alien, the result of a scientists experiment or the product of an occultist's rite. But is it really evil, or just afraid? How threatening everything seems to a visitor in an unfamiliar place. It lives on the brink of panic and fury, knowing nothing but its own power.

Nature Revolts Mankind and nature live in a precarious balance. Sometimes the scales tip too far and nature reasserts itself. Ordinary creatures or strange mutations are her weapons and pity the humans who meet them face to face. Popular versions of this plot have featured carnivorous worms, killer bees, slugs, giant bunny rabbits, rats, spiders, killer shrews, ants, etc. If it has more than two legs someone somewhere has featured it in a horror story.

Occultist Goes Too Far Here is the plot of a zillion Weird Tales stories. Sorcery is for professionals, and anyone who dabbles in the Black Arts had better be careful — he's playing with dangerous forces which consume all but the wisest. Usually the plot involves the summoning of something which cannot be controlled, but sometimes unholy bargains are reached and lowly apprentices become masters before their time. Before the Devil collects his due the recipient of power is a force to be reckoned with.

The Possession An innocent becomes the vessel of evil. The possessor may be a demon from hell, an avenging spirit, an alien from space or the shade of an evil ancestor returning to this coil. Maybe the possessor is here only to corrupt the faithful. Maybe it has a dark agenda all its own.

Psychics Run Amok This is actually two classic plotlines. In the first, power resides in unstable minds which crack under the strain. In the second, shadowy agents of authority pursue psychics and try to turn their abilities into weapons. In both chaos and death are sure to erupt.

The Secret Race Unseen, they walk among an unsuspecting humanity. The secret race may look like and live among humans, or they may skulk in the shadows. But almost always they prey upon man as he does the cattle. Sometimes they just want to be left alone. Sometimes they want to rule the world.

The Seduction A monster has targeted an innocent. Its goal is not to kill but to corrupt or use. The monster may be a cultist seeking new followers or a sorcerer seeking an apprentice. Or maybe it is a vampire who has fallen in love and wants to share his immortality. Whatever its reason, the monster may appear to his victim as a new best friend.

Transformation Sometimes a monster is an innocent human who has no control over their evil alter-egos. It could be a werewolf whose human side doesn't know about its alter ego's new diet plan, the hapless victim of an experiment gone wrong or the victim of a malevolent spell. The problem is that the heroes may have to resort to murder in order to stop the monster's rampage. It may even be one of the heroes himself...

HORROR SCENARIO GENERATOR

Every GM has had it happen: After eight grueling hours of wage slavery he trudges home and collapses on the nearest horizontal surface. Something cold and wet magically appears in his hand as his mind winds down. His significant other calls, wants to know what's on tap for the evening. 'Got a game tonight, babe. Yeah I know it's weird. Be nice — they're my friends. Okay, later.' He soaks in some peace and quiet and then realizes — *I have a game tonight! Oh damn!* Madness ensues as the GM rustles papers and tosses books around only to verify what he already knew — He forgot to write a game, and in a few hours his head is going to be on a pike.

The following game generator is for GMs who find themselves in this lovely situation and any others who are temporarily bereft of ideas. The generator is easy to use. Just pick or randomly roll 3d6 to select an item from each list. The first list tells how the players enter the story. The second is the villain. List number three determines what the villain will do/ is doing/has done, and list four determines the focus of the villain's attention. List five tells why they are doing this and list six tells where part of the action will happen.

After rolling, sand the results around the edges so they dovetail with the ongoing campaign. It may be necessary to change a few results so that anachronisms and genre-inappropriate scenarios are not generated.

HORROR HERO SCENARIO GENERATOR

List One: The PCs... (on 7–13 they are hired/ordered to...)	List Two: The Villain, a ...	List Three: Who will (1,2), is (3,4), or has (5,6)...
03 Use divination to discover	03 Mind controlled PC/NPC	03 Harass
04 Psychically discover	04 Necromancer	04 Sacrifice
05 Witness	05 Established NPC	05 Corrupt
06 Dream about	06 Alien monster	06 Summon
07 spy on	07 Undead monster	07 Mind control/manipulate
08 avenge	08 Maniac/Fanatic	08 Hide
09 protect victim of	09 Mad scientist	09 Murder/destroy
10 investigate	10 Occultist	10 Abduct
11 find	11 Minor cult follower	11 Use
12 destroy	12 Demonologist	12 Steal
13 capture	13 Cult leader	13 Cast spell on
14 Read about	14 Witch/mystic	14 Experiment on
15 Just stumble onto	15 Government agent	15 Marry/join
16 Get secret message from victim of	16 Deluded scientist	16 Feed on/drain
17 Are challenged by	17 Lycanthropic monster	17 Replace with duplicate
18 Attacked by	18 Demon	18 Impregnate

List Four: The Object, a..	List Five: Because...	List Six: The Hideout
03 Meteorite	03 Nihilist	03 Other dimension
04 Mystic locale	04 Lonely	04 Mystic site
05 Relative of sponsor/PCs	05 Sociopathic	05 Wilderness
06 Magic item/alien device	06 Battle of wits	06 Mine or tunnels
07 Very Important Person	07 Influenced by drugs or alcohol	07 Lodge hall
08 Formula	08 Love or lust	08 On the run
09 Stranger	09 Revenge	09 Laboratory
10 Friend of PCs	10 Knowledge	10 Abandoned house
11 DNPC	11 Power	11 Home/dwelling/lair
12 PC	12 Wealth/profit	12 Church/temple
13 Friend of sponsor/DNPC	13 Following orders	13 Public building
14 Minister or priest	14 Hatred	14 Military or Gov't Base
15 Important documents or evidence	15 Believes "it's right"	15 Factory
16 False item of power	16 Obsession	16 Subway
17 Spell	17 For kicks	17 Cave
18 Monster	18 Religious reason	18 Virtual reality

Here is an example of a randomly rolled scenario: The PCs (13) are hired to capture the Villain, a (8) maniac / fanatic, who (1) will summon a (7) very important person. The villains is doing this (12) for profit / wealth. Part of the game occurs in (6) a subway / system of tunnels.

Now the GM must make sense of his results. Taken at face value it looks like a possibly insane person or a religious nut is trying to set up a meeting with an important person. As profit is his motive, the GM could guess that he intends to commit blackmail. The V.I.P. has hired the PCs to catch the guy. This one is pretty straightforward. As this is a horror scenario we can assume that either the hiring party really has something to hide (and thus may actually be the villain by scenario's end) or the blackmailer has monsters in the cave with him. Maybe the maniac is a lycanthrope who infected the V.I.P. and now wants to be paid to keep it quiet.

HORROR: BROUGHT TO YOU BY...

Somebody, but who? With a scenario in place, the Gamemaster may need to develop some on-the-spot NPCs for the game. Any Player Character archetype can be used for villains; everyone has heard of a crooked cop, demented scientist or evil sorcerer.

What makes villains villainous is their willingness to do evil. To quickly create a villain the GM can take a PC archetype, assign a rank and motivation from one of the following lists and WHAM an evil villain is born. Some minor retooling may be necessary to fit the particular style of the campaign. Note that none of the following motivations require the villain to be human.

Notable motivations and self-rationalizations:

Bent on Revenge: "They shall pay for my humiliation. The World Shall Know My Wrath." Everybody has a breaking point. The villain who is bent on revenge will sometimes stop at nothing to even the score with his enemies. The PCs may be put in a position to protect the target of vengeance or be the offending party themselves.

Conqueror: "Nothing compares to holding a city in your grasp, save maybe holding a country." Here is the standard power mad fool. This archetype ranges from a scheming sorcerer who just wants to be head of his cult to an alien invader bent on domination of the world.

Crazed: "The skies have turned purple and the lemon drops are rallying to my cause." They may think silly, but madmen are the scariest and most unpredictable of villains. How do you track a villain when his M.O. changes every time he turns around? A crazed villain may be a homicidal killer or someone with no conception of consequences.

Fanatic: "In the name of the terrible Grrtfeg, I cast you down!!!" There is nothing worse than a villain whose motivation is, "God (or whoever) told me to." In addition to an annoying habit of speaking in Jamesian English the fanatic will never question the source of his divine decrees.

Greedy: "At last the wealth of the ages is mine! I shall buy and sell countries as others would sell trinkets." Ah, the vice that sunk a thousand ships. If the supernatural can help this villain achieve his dreams of avarice then he'll pay any price. Of course, in his rush to riches he may neglect to study the fine print...

Hunger: "Terribly sorry to do this, but a man's got to eat, you know?" Not too much elaboration needed here. The commonest monster motivation.

Nihilist: "It's all means nothing and your striving is pointless." To a nihilist the morals and ethics mankind lives by have utterly no meaning. Life is but an empty state in which one may do whatever they want, because when it is over, it is over.

Outside Influenced: "You are my only true friend. I'll do whatever you ask. You want me to dig up a body?" This villain is only doing what he is told. Maybe his mind is being controlled; maybe he is just such a weakling that he will do whatever he is told.

Power Hungry: "Now I have the Scrolls of Blood, and the world will tremble at my name." This is the twin of the conqueror. The biggest difference is that while the conqueror may lose interest once the struggle is over, the power hungry individual looks forward to running things afterward.

Seeker of knowledge: "The end of a lifetime of research is within my sight, and no group of uneducated idiots is going to ruin it for me." Curiosity, the need to know, is a powerful motivation indeed. Someone who is on the verge of a great discovery may forget exactly why the knowledge was important in the first place — knowing is all that is important, and woe to anyone who stands in the way.

Self Righteous: "My reasons are my own and you are too stupid to understand." The self righteous villain is similar to the fanatic except that his motivation is not religious. He may be convinced that he is superior and therefore entitled to do whatever he wishes, or he may believe that his goal is too important to be hindered by moral considerations.

Thrill seeker: "Life is a game and I play hard." Excitement is a drug that many are addicted to. But addicts need bigger and bigger doses. A thrill seeking villain may kill for sport and mess with the supernatural because of the rush that accompanies danger. Eventually somebody gets hurt...

CLUE AND EVENT LISTS

The most brilliant individuals in the world are often stymied when faced with puzzles in a roleplaying game. No one knows why this is; numerous GMs have despaired at seeing what they thought were obvious clues go unheeded.

Despite their best efforts GMs occasionally get stuck in the middle of a game. They have a thrilling climax all worked out but suddenly they have no clear idea how to get players to it.

In this section are listed clues and events which the GM can use to either nudge players in the right direction or off on a wild goose chase. To use this material, go to the appropriate section and read the introduction. Each section concerns a specific part of a scenario. They are: 1) The Mystery (The initial hook) and 2) The Investigation (The middle section of the game). Each section lists several options for the GM to consider. Listed below each option are plot points the GM should decide on followed by clues and events which he can use to direct the investigations of his players. Please note that some of the listed evidence applies to multiple occurrences; the evidence list under 'Murder' contains most of these. The GM is encouraged to read through all the lists when building scenarios.

SECTION ONE: THE MYSTERY

These are ideas on how to involve PCs in a scenario. Almost every type of horror scenario begins in one of the following ways. While this list may seem rather short the GM should remember that thousands of variations on each type of opening is possible. All one needs do is vary the type of victim, the local color (location), the villain and his ultimate objective, the monsters involved or the attendant strange phenomena. The GM is urged to consult the preceding sections on random scenario building and classic horror plots for ideas on how to keep out of a storytelling rut.

Murder

The most common horror opening event is the discovery of a body. The average horror PC will not, of course, be interested unless there is something weird about the condition of the body or the circumstances surrounding its demise.

Plot Points: Is the victim a John Doe or easily identified? Is the body found at home or elsewhere? Did the victim die where the body was found? Was there a struggle? Who is the culprit?

Evidence: Placement of body (i.e. inside residence), statement of witness, missing person's report, DNA analysis, fingerprints, tattoos, dental records, ID in wallet (drivers license, credit card, voter registration, etc.), identification by relative or friend, personal journal, effect of weather on corpse, animal feeding, fallen leaves, last entry in journal, last seen alive, stopped watch, last contact with PCs, temperature of victim's liver, telephone record, visual inspection of body or fragments thereof, strange coloration, unusual odor, type and location of wounds, missing body parts,

apparition of victim, psychic divining, weapons or objects that may have been used as weapons, signs of struggle, anomalous material on shoes or clothing, location of victim's vehicle, known habits of victim, undeveloped film, photographs, will, articles missing from residence, sound recording, video tape or filmstrip, notes, insurance policy, journals, matchbook cover, map, movie or theater ticket, telegraph or fax slip, address books, bloodstains, fingerprints, footprints, detritus beneath fingernails, hair samples, non-human spoor (claw marks, animal tracks, droppings, feeding on corpse), tire tracks, known enemies of victim, black magic paraphernalia, fibers, background check on victim, cigarette butts, monster-specific items (crucifix, wooden stake, silver bullets, etc.).

Disappearance

Suddenly someone has dropped off the face of the Earth. It may have been a kidnapping or a seemingly meaningless disappearance. PCs will become involved if the missing person was a friend or relative. Perhaps it was someone involved in a similar line of work whose researches proved deadly. Often the quest for a missing person ends with the revelation that they are dead. Sometimes an abductee is still alive and can be rescued. Sometimes the missing person disappeared on purpose for safety or sinister reasons.

Plot Points: Did anyone witness the disappearance? Has there been a ransom demand? Who would profit from the abduction, and why? When was the victim last seen?

Evidence: Ransom note, signs of struggle, statement of witness, disruption of victims normal routine, background noises on recording of ransom call, similar M.O. to previous abductions, whereabouts of known kidnappers, clue left by abductee, abductee attempting to find assistance (note dropped out window, phone call, etc.). If ransom note is received: paper type, saliva on stamp, handwriting analysis, odor or perfume, fingerprints, typewriter or printer peculiarities, 'cut out' letters, postmark on envelope, similar occurrences, 'locked room' or 'impossible' disappearances, previous paranoia on part of victim, occult researches of victim, known enemies, journal entries, signs of struggle.

Unnatural Phenomena

Nothing makes a horror PC's ears perk up like a just damn strange occurrence. But once the GM has snagged players interest how does he initiate an investigation?

Plot Points: Has this phenomena happened before? Does it pose a threat? Will it happen again? Why is it occurring? What does it mean?

Evidence: Circles in fields, recently vacated crypts, plain sight disappearances, old airplane wreckages, shared dreams, cattle mutilations, strange radioactive events, inappropriate atmospheric changes, hair samples, odd footprints, random innocuous events happening on a wide scale, statistically impossible coincidences, inanimate objects moving around, bleeding walls, personal messages appearing in newscasts that no one else notices, etc.

Robbery

Many games will begin with the theft or disappearance of a valuable or seemingly worthless object. The object could be a book of spells, a magical artifact, an archaeological treasure or a common possession. Sometimes a break-in has occurred but no one is sure what is missing.

Plot Points: Where was the object stolen from? Why was the object stolen? Who stole — or had a motive to steal — the object? Where is it now?

Evidence: The missing item, evidence of a break in, no evidence of a break in ("locked room" vanishings), rumors on the street (so-and-so wants the tome badly), item has been switched for a fake, new people at the crime scene before the robbery, observation of covert surveillance before the crime, etc.

SECTION TWO: THE INVESTIGATION

The material here is to help the GM pump up the middle section of his game. Included are events and evidence which help steer players in the right direction or to slow them down when they are moving too fast. The events depicted here occur in most horror stories and are certain to make games more interesting. As with the preceding material the choices may seem limited but will not be repetitious if the details are varied from game to game.

Recurrence of Initial Mystery

The reason for the PCs' involvement once again manifests itself. Now, the PCs are closer in time and space to the event. The investigators have a better chance to glean clues from a fresh crime scene, and thereby get on the villain's trail.

Attack by villain

The PCs are getting too close! To deter them, the villain or his henchthings launch an attack. Unless the PCs are really chicken-hearted, this will only harden their resolve to find the mastermind behind the plot.
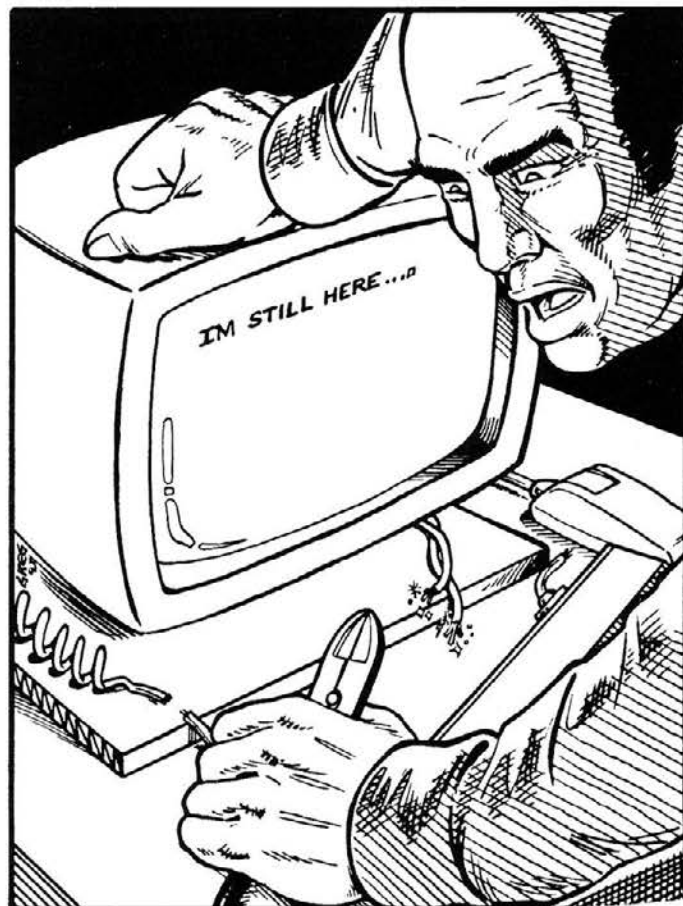
Red Herring

Clues have been gathered, leads checked, trails discerned. The PCs approach the villain's hideout, shotguns in hand, and blow the doors off their hinges. Only after they enter the residence and confront the occupants do they realize the magnitude of their mistake. It's not the right place, and the real villain is committing another atrocity somewhere else!

Interference by authorities

The PCs are on track now. On their way to confront the villain, the police stop them. They are not pleased with the explanation for all of the loaded weapons and are requesting your presence at the police station. Of course, the fiend the PCs were about to throttle discovers they have been detained, and continues its plans unhindered. Eventually, the PCs should be released, preferably just in time to see the fiend's plans come to fruition. Heh.

Tip-off

A lead! Now the PCs can go out and rescind that madman's license to kill. But if the lead is instead a trap …

Supernatural Intervention

And what horror game would be complete without members of the supernatural community showing for some reason? In horror games, the appearance of the otherworldly in tangible form usually means the time for negotiation is past. This intervention could be informational rather than confrontational, if the GM wishes, but it can be just as terrifying as a combat situation just by the implied violence of the entities in question.

New evidence

The villain has cheerfully thumbed his nose at the PCs for half the scenario. Now, the PCs have a piece of evidence that connects the criminal to his crime. When he realizes they have it, he will become very aggressive at recovering it, especially if it has some mystical importance.

PROJECTING ICY TENDRILS OF FEAR

In *Horror Hero*, the Gamemaster has to project an emotion when telling his story. Dreadful fear is essential to the tone of a horror campaign, but the players will not accept a suspension of disbelief if the GM cannot present a proper tone to the proceedings. The following information may be of assistance to those GMs new to the shadow world of *Horror Hero*.

WHAT THE GAMEMASTER CAN AND SHOULD DO

Before a game session, the GM needs to develop an idea for the basic plot of the game. This may be the latest installment in a continuing campaign against the Black Dawn or Shapeshifters. It could be an investigation into the activities of a sociopathic murderer. Perhaps there exists a few "loose ends" regarding a dependent NPC. This becomes the basic idea behind the story, the "what."

Some people can generate ideas without difficulty. In roleplaying games, these are frequently the ones who are the Gamemasters. But many times, ideas can be difficult to develop. A little "spark" can be found by casually skimming newspapers, tabloids, CNN, or computer news services for ideas. Something as innocent as "Debutante's Ball To Be Held Tonight" can become "Two Cultists With Attitudes And Explosives Terrorize Formal Ball To Get Back At Rival Cult Leader Who Is Also One Of The Deb's Parents."

See how easy that was?

The "where" and "when" may be easily determined, particularly if the campaign is one of an ongoing nature. For example, if the previous session ended with the PCs departing for Patagonia, the next session could pick up a day into the journey, or a week after their arrival. In a "timeless," episodic campaign, where there is no specific timeline utilized, the setting could be this: Nighttime, city street, light rain falling, suddenly a scream rings out from an alley.

Adding minor details to "where" and "when" will help your players get into the proper mood and urgency for the game. Realism in a description is helpful. If a game is being played in a real-life geographical location, take a few minutes of game preparation time to research the setting. Using CompuServe or watching special channels like CNN or The Weather Channel can give up-to-date information on current news happenings and climate conditions. Maps, travel guides, and recent encyclopedias will help augment the GM's description of the setting.

(Please note how the word "real" keeps recurring in this section. This is done for two reasons. First, players find it easier to accept real-world settings than fantasy settings. They can more easily visualize a hotel ballroom with high ceilings and expensive chandeliers than some realm filled with basalt spires extending upward from dense clouds where people can move up or down as easily as walking on level ground due to some gravitational anomaly. Second, images of real threats, like fanatical gunmen devoted to a cause or pit bulls with slavering jaws and a taste for blood, have been reinforced by the media so much that subconsciously the players will react to the threat realistically, and roleplay their PCs response appropriately.)

"Who" is the antagonist in the story. Thugs, monsters, cultists, lawyers, government men, anyone who is providing the opposition for the PCs drives the plot behind the story. After the "what," the "who" is easily determined. If the campaign has a predetermined adversary, then they are almost always going to be the "who"…unless the GM wishes to temporarily sidetrack the PCs with a subplot where, although the main adversaries are not directly involved, their activities have caused the situation.

A "who" subplot can involve the loose ends that PCs have left behind earlier in the campaign. If they once set upon the trail of three murderous ghouls, but only dispatched two of them while the third escaped, an idea for a subplot is in place. Perhaps a novice occultist has been contacted by the ghoul, and they form a simple alliance. The ghoul provides arcane information from a long-buried library in exchange for the occultist's aid in securing victims to satiate the ghoul's hunger. When the PCs begin to track down the ghoul, they encounter the corrupted occultist and must stop his ritually-powered schemes also.

But "why" is any of this happening? "Why" is the one question that only the GM should determine. It is his campaign. World conquest, sinister voices from nowhere, frustration, power hunger, the reasons are numerous. For much of the campaign "why" will be unknown to the PCs. But the

GM must know "why." The random acts of horror that terrify are more diabolical if they are part of a greater scheme linked to the campaign world.

The ultimate goal of the campaign would be to learn about the horror, to investigate it, and finally, to confront it. Now, do not mistake "horror" in this context with "adversary." Every game would contain a measure of horror, empowered by the campaign's primary adversary. But how to accomplish the goal ...

HOOK THE PCS

In the misty domain of horror, where fear and paranoia walk in the shadow of the PCs, involving the characters in a plot should not be very difficult. If getting players "into" the game is taking valuable game time, let them know about it. Directly. A hooked hand across a PC's face should not be necessary to get the players involved every single session. But a plot "hook" is needed, and good players will take the tasty bait even though they know what lurks above the surface of the water.

Hooks can be very blatant. A man staggers up to the PCs, clutching the time-honored mortal wound, and mutters some enigmatic clue that has a vague meaning to a PC. Screams emanate from behind a closed door; the investigating PCs find items of an occultic nature and set upon the trail of the cultists. Newspapers carry a story that the general public dismisses as nonsense, but the PCs recognize as the onset of yet another evil plot.

Or, hooks can be subtle. In a horror campaign, the players *know* that they are up against very bad things. If they are playing in character, a subtle nudge should be all they need. Events in horror can be preceded by a standard set of weird happenings known as "Fortean" events. Named after author Charles Fort, occurrences like fish raining from the skies, strange lights in the heavens, plain-sight disappearances, and mirages can be harbingers of bad times to come.

GM: "You look out your motel window and gaze upon the falling snow. Of course, the flakes are colored chartreuse."

Players (in unison): "We load our guns."

Whatever the method, the hook should not dominate the game. It is only a catalyst for the events to come ...

DOWN THE HALL, WITH WEAPONS IN HAND

The PCs are enmeshed in the GM's plot. Having been hooked, they investigate the events of the game's onset and find more clues to Some Dreadful Event To Come. Their progress is marked by encounters with...

Well, that depends. Will the PCs find normal humans in the service of a scientist who is being deluded by a possessor demon? Are shambling shapeshifting monstrosities waiting around the corner with a subaltern of the Shapeshifters International Conspiracy? Is the victim of a long ago crime back from the dead as a revenant, manipulating the PCs into destroying its foes? The nature of the adversary is the force behind the early encounters. Powerful enemies will have weaker henchmen who share their master's motivation.

Only in the most complex plotlines will two or more types of followers be working together. Such activity is bound to add tension and some confusion to the proceedings.

GM: "Well, it's pretty evident that the werewolf was indeed aiding those cultists."

Players: "But the werewolves we encountered before hate humans. What gives?"

What indeed? This could be due to a tenuous alliance of villainous masters. A clever villain may maneuver a stronger but dumber fiend into using its resources to further the first mastermind's plans.

The number of encounters before the final confrontation with the real cause of the horror is determined by the GM. If he desires a quick, one night game, he will give the PCs fewer encounters than a GM who wants to milk a particular idea for five or six game sessions. Plotting an outline for a game is a good idea for the novice (and more than a few advanced) Gamemasters.

An outline for a sample session could be as follows:

1) Prelude — PCs are alerted to a plain sight vanishing in a nearby city.

2) Introduction — Traveling to the city, PCs are accosted by an NPC occultist friend of one of the characters.

3) Plot Point A — At the occultist's urging, PCs go to the scene of the vanishing.

4) Plot Point B — Investigation of the site uncovers a clue.

5) Plot Point C1 — PCs follow up on clue or Plot Point C2 — PCs are followed upon by monster.

6) End Game — Resolution of conflict with monster.

7) Postscript — GM leaves players with a sense of "things to come."

This is a simple format for a basic horror game theme — Monster Hunt. The outline from 1 through 7 may go something like this. In 1, the PCs hear of a Fortean event — an inexplicable occurrence that (in the PCs experience) foreshadows dreadful events to come. A plain sight disappearance of a normal person, one without any ties to the horror investigative community, catches the PCs' attention.

In part 2, the PCs have decided to go to the sight of the disappearance. An NPC occultist, acquainted with one of the PCs, intercepts them before they reach the city. Any particular habits, mannerisms, or other personalities of the NPC should be conveyed in the encounter. The GM should have this NPC's basic personality noted for future reference. Notes will allow the NPC to be presented in a consistent manner throughout the campaign. If the players are fairly adept at looking for clues, this NPC can merely add color to the proceedings. Or, the NPC can aid novice investigators by pointing them in a general direction. Either way, this NPC should *not* hand the PCs a vital clue; he has not been to the scene himself, so how could he know what is there?

The PCs should feel a sense of urgency and foreboding in 3. This is where GMing comes into play. Describe the cold chills a PC feels in 90 degree weather that pass as quickly as they come. Intimate the weird sensation that insects are paying close attention to a particular PC. Elaborate how nature seems to be acting...strangely; the grass, the trees, the flowers reacting to unseen footsteps.

But don't get too carried away with this "mental scenery." The players will spend too much time hunting down the causes of mere background effects. If the game time is limited, this will become a problem. Players will unerringly go after some minor flash of light when they should be concerned with the real threat, and will spend *hours* of real time

chasing the innocuous light. The GM can dissuade the players with a stern "*It's gone, what do you do now?*" Or, if the GM is comfortable with inventing a subplot on the fly, he can let the PCs go on as long as he likes.

Point 4 is similar to 3, but the hinted-at strangeness of 3 is replaced with the discovery of tangible evidence of a horrible event. Personal items of the disappearance victim, or even body parts, could be found. From the clue, the nature of what befell the unfortunate victim should be discernible by the PCs, adding to the horror of the event. In 5, the PCs must decide what to do with this clue. The NPC occultist may or may not have given the PCs the information necessary to proceed. The PCs may figure out the clue themselves, or may be completely at a loss. Perhaps the GM will omit the clue, loosing the monster on the PCs' trail without any warning.

What happens in 6 does *NOT* necessarily have to end with a firefight. Read that last sentence again, GMs. If the monster can be thwarted through intelligent non-violent means, and the players develop a plausible way to implement this method, then do it. Alternately, the GM can ensure the game ending with a bloody fight to the finish. Whatever suits the GM's plot should be used here.

If there are any survivors, 7 will let them know that, although the battle is won, the war continues. At midnight, the sky glows red, then fades as the snow begins to fall...

THE TERROR CONTINUES

The first game is over. As the Gamemaster looks over his players feverishly developing new characters to replace the ones that did not emerge intact from the initial session, he reflects on the horror he has wrought. Plot points uncovered, skillful and adept roleplaying, the inevitable demise of the PCs, one tortured scream after another echoing into the darkness, the GM is at least partially satisfied with the beginning game ...

Wait a moment. Some of the players actually *survived*?

Uh oh. Now the players want to continue playing these characters, don't they?

Of course they do. *Hero System* characters take a long time to create. Skills and characteristics and disadvantages do not just mystically appear on the character sheet. The players had to make an effort to develop their characters. Likewise, the GM must put effort into establishing a continuing campaign, whether it is an unconnected series of episodic adventures or a fiendishly crafted world where the slightest PC activity has repercussions on the rest of the campaign.

Earlier in this section, an outline on creating a basic scenario is presented. In that same vein, the Gamemaster must concoct a tasty stew to serve up to the players.

First, light the stove. Set the creative fire under the players. To do this, do not just tell them, "Let's make this a campaign!" Tell them that the campaign they are about to encounter will shatter the PCs' senses. Emphasize the alluring aroma of dark places and forbidden knowledge, dangerous cultists and loathsome monsters, labyrinthine plots and inscrutable plotters. Get the players excited about facing the unknown on a weekly basis.

Characters are the meat of any roleplaying game. If the campaign is like most travails against horror, secretive and underground, the PCs should also possess this character trait. Fitting in to the background will help the PCs avoid casual notice. Any PC who stands out in the fight against dreadful horror by their actions will CERTAINLY attract a great deal of unwanted attention before they are truly ready to handle the threat. Skills possessed by a PC group should show diversity and balance in their selection. While some useful skills should be duplicated by most or all of the PCs (KS: Occult, for example), some skills should be the sole domain of the PC whose background dictates their possession most logically.

GM: Sorry, but that Weapon Familiarity: Flamethrowers has to go.

Player: But why?

GM: Pacifistic Occult Researching Bookworms carry magnifying glasses, not military ordnance. Since you are playing the brains of this group, you should spend that point on a Knowledge Skill related to your PC's field of expertise instead.

Player: If my character is that smart, he would be carrying a flamethrower.

GM: Sigh.

Sometimes, the GM must firmly stand his ground. Players in a horror game have a good idea that whatever they will be facing, they will need every edge they can wheedle out of the Gamemaster.

With regards to weapons and PC magic wielders, the GM must define allowable levels of power. Real cost of weapons/spells, maximum damage/effects, power modifiers and limitations, skill levels applicable to weapon/spell use, these limits must be clearly spelled out and enforced by the Gamemaster.

Of course, the adversarial horror may do whatever it pleases. This is a tough genre on PCs who like to shoot first and interrogate the remains later; the GM must make clear that intelligent uses of firepower or spells are required. The moral of this paragraph to impart to the players: Show off too much power, too many monsters show up.

With the meat of the campaign in the pot, add the vegetables next. Carrots are the hooks of the campaign. (See "Hook The Players" above). These morsels entice the players to take a bite and see how it tastes. The GM would be well-advised to establish one to three "Fortean Events" before running a campaign that would appear almost consistently before the going gets weird. But not always, because there are times when horror will show up and *surprise* the PCs without any foreshadowing. A sample platter of Fortean Events could be this: inappropriately colored snow or rainfall, a shared vision of a child holding a headless doll, and the number 327 appearing in odd places (bank marquee temperature displays, deli counter "Next number please" tickets that should only go up to two digits, etc.)

Another way of using the carrots is by creating physical clues, like maps, diary entries, or personal effects like watches, wallets filled with business cards, or clothing articles. Giving the players something to actually touch is a good idea in any type of RPG, anyway. It shows the players that the GM is really into the game, and makes them want to be as into the game as he is. By fleshing out the items (i.e., putting fake business cards in the wallet, fake blood stains on a scrap of clothing), the players will have a better taste of the horror to come.

It takes potatoes to flesh out a good stew. These are cut into many different shapes and sizes from a larger potato or even a sack of potatoes. Meat and potatoes go together;

thus, PCs and NPCs also go together. The NPCs are everyone who appears in the campaign who are portrayed by the GM. Preparation, like peeling spuds before adding to the stew, is required.

Each of the major NPCs should have a complete writeup, featuring stats, abilities, background, and their rationale for being involved in the proceedings. Minor recurring NPCs, the ones that PCs will encounter the most, also need writeups on stats and abilities, with any distinctive personality traits listed. This is crucial because the most frequent mistake a GM will make is failing to present a recurring NPC in a consistent manner. A simple computer file or index card will eliminate this mistake.

Monsters make the horror genre a difficult yet entertaining challenge for PCs. Without their presence, either overt or merely hinted at, the game will cease to be horror. They are the most identifiable part of this genre. Take special care to impart the nuances of the Monsters presented in the Sourcebook or the GM's own creations to the players. Make the critter memorable in a way besides its method of slaying countless PCs with one swipe of a tentacle.

The most flavorful part of any stew is the time-honored ingredient, the onion. For the GM, the onion is the multi-layered plot so important to any horror game, or campaign. As an example, the PCs are drawn into the first layer of the plot by a Fortean Event. This gives way to the next layer, the details of a crime committed in a cult-like manner. Following this, the PCs uncover the layer where the cult exists, but find another layer beneath them. This layer is the start of a new subplot, the layer behind the cult that actually gives the cult substance.

Perhaps this inner layer is the cult leader, and peeling him away finally puts a finish to the onion. Or, the cult leader may yield to the power of a Tempter demon, and the Tempter is the first layer of a new plot that the PCs must begin to investigate. After a few sessions, the PCs should realize they are part of a continuing cycle of conflict with horror, and every layer reveals another facet of the traumatizing powers awaiting the PCs.

Now, the GM is ready to serve his players. Of course, horror is a dish best served at corpse temperature …

THE GAMEMASTER, AS SKALD

From the time when mankind began passing down tales of darkness and mystery, the most legendary tales have been filled with descriptions so threateningly real that many became accepted as truth. It is possible the novice horror GM may not be as adept at crafting a highly descriptive tale when he first begins a campaign. For example, someone familiar with the hack-n-slash genre may say "You open the door and see a zombie in the room."

This is fine for the treasure seeking fantasy heroes of the gaming world. For the horror genre, where maneuvering the players into suspending their disbelief of things inimical is part of the game, a more detailed account of the events is required. Before many of the sections of this book, the enigmatic narrator One-Eye imparts a few paragraphs of his hard-won wisdom. He is a good example of horror narration style. Returning to the scene of "open door, see zombie", the GM can accentuate Who, What, Where, When, and Why with a little creative embellishment.

"Who" is the zombie. It is a creature the PCs encounter in this setting. Or it can be: Turning away from the low wooden

table with a laborious shuffle of its bare, dirt-crusted feet, it regards you with a tilted, smooth face. Drool escapes from its curled lip as its eyes capture the light of your lantern. But even the steadily burning flame reflected in the glassy countenance of the twisted form before you lends no fire to its long extinguished soul. Hunger is the pulse that beats within the abomination, and the sense that draws it to you …

"Where" is the location of the pleasant scene taking place. A room becomes: The cubical area, about thirty feet deep and half as wide, is caked with the grime of the centuries. Behind the creature rests the only standing piece of furniture, a low table made of termite-eaten oak. Bits of metal and bone carpet the area near the table, a grim memorial to countless others who met their demise here …

The Gamemaster is heartily encouraged to elaborate on the details of his scenes, painting enough mental imagery to give the players something to see in their mind's eye, but leaving out just enough to hint at a greater evil permeating the whole scene. Don't give them everything at once; discovery is the greatest part of horror.

THE GAMEMASTER, AS HOST

A group of games does not a campaign make. The Gamemaster, reader of this tome, cannot be merely a monster generator and be a horror GM. Taking on the challenge of running a PC-lethal genre and keeping the same players coming back for yet another nibble of forbidden fruit requires quick thinking, laborious planning, and a dab of showmanship. Players want to be entertained, yet chilled at the horror their PCs must face. It is the GM who

makes a group of character sheets and concepts into an interactive part of a pseudo-realistic world.

In any RPG, players take cues from the GM on how to react to the game. An effective way to get the players to react to horror in a natural manner is to act natural. The GM does this by taking on the role of a "storytelling buddy", seemingly just as amazed at what transpires in the game as the players are. He tells the story from a "we" point of view, handling game mechanics questions in an easy, off-hand manner while sitting with his players and gazing at a certain point in the room. Players are drawn into this "projecting", reacting to a point in space as if the action is taking place right there.

Running a game in this manner requires the GM to commit the plot and characters to his mind. Vital game mechanics, such as a Speed Chart and NPC sheets, should be kept nearby and referred to only when necessary. Having this information on hand allows the GM to concentrate on the story without interrupting the flow by needing to ask a player some mechanical question about a PC's Combat Skill Levels. Sitting with the players, instead of the customary front and center position, is probably something most players have never seen. It breaks down that unseen "players versus Gamemaster" barrier because the GM is in it with his players.

But remember, friendship only goes so far …

Players: "Oh, no, something is coming out of the book! What should we do?"

GM: "Why are you asking me? I'm just the Gamemaster. What do you think should be done?"

Another side of Gamemastering is showmanship. A GM who enjoys being a showman, using accents and physical gestures, is a benefit to his players, who are enjoying the show so much that they will cheerfully return each week to be monster take-out.

Effective showmanship starts with preparation. Those NPC notes on mannerisms and vocal qualities are now part of a script (did someone say…a tragedy?) that the showy GM may wish to rehearse before trying out. And for those GMs who are saying "I can't act," take advantage of available resources. That video rental membership is absolutely golden when it comes to finding foreign accents, attitudes, or physical mannerisms. The GM is running a game for players, not theater critics, and a well-timed facial twitch may be all a player needs to realize that their supposed-ally is really a traitorous enemy.

Simplicity is a major element of showmanship. Players will appreciate the extra effort made by the GM, but he does not need to do Hamlet when only one or two little physical distinctions are enough to convey the NPC's personality. If an NPC can be made distinctive merely by the GM talking in a slow, deep voice and looking around through half-closed eyelids, then do it. Instant characterization is achieved. Again, keep notes on which mannerisms will be used to portray specific NPCs and avoid duplication unless, heh, the plot calls for it.

THE GAMEMASTER, AS PLOTTER

Ah, the thankless task of plotting a game, or a campaign. The players show up at the designated time, clutching munchies and beverages, chatting and joking, when the GM walks up to the group. Everyone stops, looks at the Gamemaster, and they all say the same thing with a look.

Entertain us.

Fighting the impulse to begin a real life subplot of "Killer GM On Acid," the GM runs his game. After a few hours, the session ends, and he asks "Well, how was it?"

Oh, it was OK.

And that is all it was. Sure, everyone had a good time, but something was missing. Even during the game, the GM could feel it. The plot, the plot was somehow, flawed. It was a good game, but it could have been better. How?

First, the dreaded "P" word. Preparation. Think about what should be accomplished and Write It Down. Very few GMs can run a plausible, solid game solely from imagination. Consider the following:

Does the game fit in with what I have run/what I plan to run?

Do the players have the necessary skills to accomplish what I want them to do?

Do the NPCs have a (game) logical reason for being there?

In an episodic campaign, continuity of games is unimportant. With a continuous campaign, where each adventure draws on what has transpired before and feeds what is to come, there should be some element of the plot that players can see as part of the greater whole. This element would either be something familiar from a past game, or it would become relevant only after some future session had shown just what that little plot point had set forth.

PCs who have no way of dealing with the horror do not belong in anything except an introductory scenario. The Gamemaster should give individual PCs a chance to demonstrate just why they are part of this group. If in doing what they do best, the PCs cannot accomplish what the GM thinks they should, then the GM needs to rethink the approach of this plot. To wit, thinker PCs do not belong in hand to hand combat with werewolves and combat oriented PCs are going to indiscriminately blow up subtle clues. The plot should be a reflection of the PC group, not its evil opposite.

Like plot points in an ongoing campaign, the NPCs should have a good reason for opposing the PCs in a particular session. Part of the horror in a horror game is the interconnected nature of evil and the world. All events have a reason for taking place, being empowered by men and entities of influence, woven through the tapestry of "business as usual." It is when the PCs come across hints of behind-the-scenes string pulling while investigating an impossible event that the NPCs will respond. And these NPCs will have an interest in stopping the PCs' progress.

If the campaign has a predesignated antagonist, such as The Black Dawn, and this antagonist is responsible for nearly all of those events that will draw PC attention, then it is they who will oppose the PCs with who or whatever is available. Only on occasions where a change of pace or a sinister plot twist is required will NPCs with no prior interest in current events will show their abysmal maws.

For the GM running a campaign against "horrors of the world," where the PCs encounter an underground of creature activity paralleling normal society, the NPCs will be seemingly unconnected. They can remain that way, or an NPC mastermind can manipulate the forces around it to further its own goals. Thus the PCs' forays against monsters will take on a different tone, with NPCs allying for the greater "good" of horror in general. Mind wrenching horror is one thing to encounter, but an organized group of NPC monsters using a measure of intelligence and tactics against PCs is real terror for the PCs, and a joy to run for the GM.

SCENARIO STRUCTURE

Like most roleplaying games, horror is most effective when structured in the manner of the classic mystery plot. The main difference in horror, of course, is the identity and motive of the guilty party. Beginning GMs will find this the easiest type of scenario to run; later, after he gains experience, other story structures will become apparent.

Classic horror scenario structure is divided into three parts, or "chapters." They are the Strange Occurrence, the Investigation, and the Resolution. The Strange Occurrence usually takes place off-screen, and PCs will travel to the site to investigate. They might do so under orders or because of a personal interest in the matter. The Strange Occurrence could be a monster report, a disappearance, a strangely mutilated body or any happening that falls outside of mundane interest. This part of the game is usually little more than a brief attention grabber setting the stage for the meat of the scenario, the Investigation.

A successful horror scenario will gradually gain momentum during the Investigation. There are several ways the GM can help it along. First, devise a series of strange events to take place while the PCs are following up clues, interacting with NPCs and snooping around in general. Examples are repeats of the original Strange Occurrence, NPC disappearances or even the efforts of the quarry to throw off his pursuers. Second, toss in a few "red herrings" to throw them off track. The most effective way to ensure player interest is to split the character group and send players away when their characters are not "onstage." They will go crazy trying to figure out what is going on.

The final step in the typical horror scenario is the Resolution. Let players regroup, compare clues and experiences, and decide what is going on and how to deal with it. If they are wrong, let them be wrong (more fun for the GM!) Finally, the climactic endgame. The enemy is found, secret weapons have been built, plans are made and the fight to the finish is on.

Using this basic structure will keep the campaign running during the first few scenarios. Later, the players will grow to know their characters better. They, not the plots, will become the engine that runs the campaign, and the classic scenario structure can be loosened a bit.

A final thought on scenario structure — roleplayers are a clever and devious bunch. No matter how well constructed a scenario is, they may be counted on to do something the GM has not thought of. Never cheat to make the scenario proceed exactly as planned; the GM must be ready to improvise and should have a backup plan if the PCs solve the mystery too soon.

PACING THE HORROR

Players spend most of their time in a horror game solving mysteries. These may only apply to the scenario at hand ("What ate Professor Ferguson?") or be relevant to the campaign as a whole ("What *is* the ultimate goal of the Robot Invaders?") Mysteries with relevance to the game will be solved, as they should, but the GM should take care that it is not done too quickly. A puzzled player is an interested player, and if not overdone a dose of the enigmatic is good for the game.

No matter how pleased the GM is with a new creation, he should not be in a hurry to unveil it. Remember, the GM's job is to terrify players, not impress them with creativity. If more

than one game session is necessary to set the stage for a new monster or plot twist, let it take that long. Horror roleplayers will investigate every clue and jump at every noise. They will imagine more horrific fiends and darker designs than thought possible, and the GM can help by providing mind numbing descriptions of the monsters atrocities or hints of a vast conspiracy afoot.

At the same time the GM should provide clues at a steady pace to further bewilder his players. Horror is most fun when players do not know what to expect. This does not mean the GM should block their attempts to solve mysteries, only that he should prolong their agony as long as possible (or until he hears knives being sharpened in the next room.)

So, the GM should keep his cards close to his chest until they can be revealed with maximum shock value. The more self-restraint he exercises, the greater the payoff.

MYSTERY AND DECEPTION

Players will inevitably become more adept at bringing scenarios to a successful conclusion. To help combat player overconfidence and complacency, the GM may wish to utilize the following methods.

The simplest way to keep players off balance is to include elements that are *never* explained. The GM can either withhold clues, or he may introduce wild cards such as the previously discussed Fortean events. GMs may rationalize the events by having these phenomena preface supernatural occurrences (also known as "The Scenario"), while players will be baffled by their failure to construct linkages between totally unrelated events. If nothing else these incidents will help perpetuate the campaign atmosphere by suggesting vast unknown forces at work.

Another good method is to lie. The evildoers in horror are not only exotic and uncanny but skilled at deception. The GM should take advantage of this. PCs may discover that all the clues in a certain scenario were clever fakes and that an innocent has been framed through *their* unwitting actions. Or, perhaps their "mysterious benefactor" has been assisting their efforts against one cult only because he secretly leads another rival cult. Each of these examples could lead into scenarios.

In game terms, cheating can be accomplished by using the good old Gamemaster screen to shield prying eyes from dice rolls. If the dice come up with a result that just is not appropriate to the GM's story at that point, he can ignore it. One good example would be in combat, where the last standing PC with a chance at "winning" the scenario for his comrades is slower than a mad cultist with a dagger. The GM's roll for the cultist indicates a successful attack. Knowing that even an average damage roll will finish the PC, the GM shakes his head and goes "The cultist just missed your throat. What do you do?"

Another PC dice roll that should be GM controlled is the Deduction skill. Giving out clues just because the dice say so is not conducive to exciting horror scenarios. The amount of information garnered from an encounter should be minimal. Heed this example of how not to use Deduction ...

PC (after rolling a three for his Deduction skill): "OK, so where is the top secret Robot Invader base?"

GM (in spite of the fact that the PC has nowhere near enough information to find this out): "Under your mother's house. She's been a sympathizer for years."

PC: "Mom?"

If a dice roll says "Ha! Game over!" then the GM should say "*No*. I put too much work into this to have it undone in six minutes by a lucky dice roll." So, if necessary, cheat, cheat, cheat.

A word of caution — excessive use of this technique will put off players. It is in the best interest of the campaign to establish untouchables; some aspects of the game should be above suspicion. In the intense world of *Horror Hero*, PCs will need friends they can trust and safe places where they can relax.

Finally, and most importantly — by no means should players have previous knowledge of a scenario before it is run. The GM should not divulge campaign secrets or scenario plotlines beforehand, except when lying. If the game does not revolve around the player's portrayal of characters who are solving mysteries, developing theories, being chased by monsters or looking death square in the hollow eye socket, then they are only observers rather than participants. A player who already knows what a game is about will show up, roll dice, make jokes and guide his character around but he will not be inside his character's head experiencing the adventure. He will not be roleplaying and miss all of the fun.

WINNING WITH A COST

HEROIC DEATH

In the peril filled world of *Horror Hero*, regardless of the time it is played in, not every encounter ends with the PCs dusting themselves off and going on to the next encounter unscathed. Frequently, horror claims some measure of victory for itself. This victory is usually in the form of a PC's demise.

There are going to be times in the campaign when some PC will have to make the ultimate sacrifice to save his fellow PCs and thwart evil. This is the "hero" part of *Horror Hero*; normal people making above normal sacrifices for the greater good. A good roleplayer, while attached to his character, usually will not have a problem with this. Some of the newer players may still equate PC death with losing. The GM must address this before the campaign gets under way.

First, horror is a deadly genre. There will be many seemingly random acts of violence perpetrated on the PCs; suffering from violent assaults is not an exclusive right of NPCs. Players had better be ready to handle the PC demise issue maturely. The GM should tell his players death is a sometimes result of confronting horror; if they can turn this situation to an advantage for the rest of the group, they will have accomplished what they set out to do in the first place.

Second, PCs should die. It enforces the concept of the genre, and it ensures that foolish actions by the PCs will not be lightly ignored by an adversary seeking to reduce the PCs' threat to its plotting. Also, it helps the remaining PCs develop a solid resolve to ending the threat of horror to their world. The Gamemaster has an assortment of monsters to choose from in this book. None of them has "Suffers Fools Gladly" as a Disadvantage.

Finally, if a PC has grown weary of playing a certain character, or feels that the PC has reached a point where the battle is not worth the trauma, they may wish to withdraw the PC from the game. If the player wishes for the PC to go out in dramatic fashion, the GM should oblige the request. And this PC sacrifice should make the memory of the PC last in the minds of both PCs and NPCs forever. It will help that player feel he made a good decision, and it will show the other players that their actions are making a difference in the campaign world.

THE TRADEOFF

Sure the PCs defeated six hundred mad cultists and their associated monsters, but it cost them the most powerful spellbook known to exist. Or they have ended a government coverup of the truth behind UFOs, which in turn ended the funding for their organization the next day. Or they managed to get assistance from a long time foe to save the life of one PC, but now they are legally bound to avoid this adversary in the future. In these examples, the PCs are alive and victorious, but have lost something.

Items, particularly those of great power that should remain lost, may be all that stand between world domination and world salvation. After they have fulfilled their prescribed duty, the GM sadly informs the PCs that the item is useless, except as a really weird paperweight. While the players *know* that the GM is nowhere near as disappointed as they are at the loss, they still won and will be content with that.

Another way of trading off power for victory is to let the PCs retain their mystical, government, or influential edge. This will give the GM very good reason to throw larger than normal numbers of enemies at the PCs without seeming unfair ("Hey, you chose to keep pretending you were the CEO of Mega World Dynamics Corp., that makes you a visible threat.") Soon, the smarter (surviving) PCs will realize that the loss of this edge is worth the reduced interest of their adversaries ("Fine, I'll resign tomorrow. Sheesh!")

When using the tradeoff, the GM need not worry about equality of the trade. If the PCs receive what they feel is the short end of the deal, such is life. Of course, they may never have found out all the uses for their little treasure while they had it. Be certain that the NPCs know exactly what to do with it, and that the PCs find out in the future. Heh.

LOSING WITHOUT DYING

Yes, not every PC loss in *Horror Hero* requires a trip to the tombstone engraver. While several of the fiends who oppose the PCs are of the "kill it if it is in our way" mentality, there are others who will find that the PCs are eminently useful to the bizarre plottings they have developed.

Assume that an NPC ritual magician desires to summon a spirit of the Moon. Part of the summoning of this dangerous entity requires the slaying of a werewolf. The ritualist is no match for the fury of a lycanthrope, but he knows some people who are ...

NPC Ritualist (posing as a benevolent giver of information): "Oh you must find the beast before it kills again! It has already victimized two farms, it is certain to try the farm that borders the two next."

PC: "Don't worry, sir. We've encountered them before. I'm certain we can find it and stop its killing."

NPC: "Oh bless you, kind sirs, bless you."

Naturally the NPC is certain of where the monster will strike next. He has already planted wolfsbane in a perimeter around the two farms that were attacked, making certain that the beast will have to avoid those areas in order to feed. The PCs have set up a trap for the werewolf in the prescribed area, and the NPC ritualist has tagged along ...
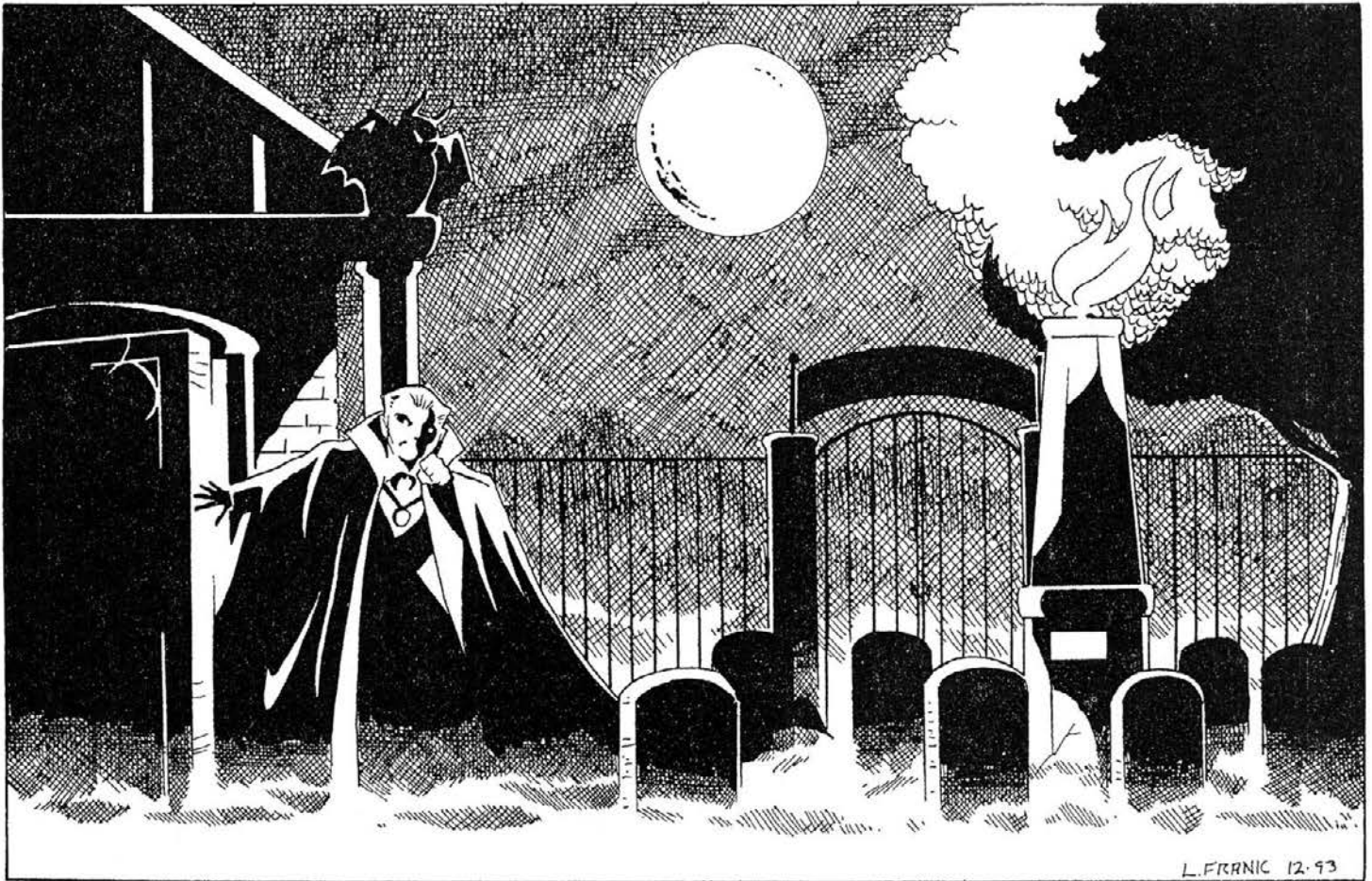
L. FRANIC 12·93

NPC Ritualist: "Oh thank you for letting me come along. I know I can be of some help." (Pats gun loaded with silver bullets in pocket)

PC: "Just stay back here and be ready to shoot if it gets past us."

NPC: "Oh, you can be certain that I will."

Yes, the PCs can be very certain of the NPC staying back and taking care of himself. He has a spell to finish casting, and all that is left is a few lines of the spell to be spoken aloud over the dying werewolf. After the PCs have barely defeated the creature, the NPC will speak over the body (prayer for its soul in ancient Greek, he will say) and depart. The PCs may notice that the moon shines a little more brightly around the NPC. When they encounter his newly formed cult of Moon worshippers competing with them for artifacts in the future, they will know that it was their actions that helped this new group of madmen come into existence.

USING NPCS

NPCs in horror campaigns present new opportunities and new challenges for the GM. The *Horror Hero* GM must be subtle and skillful when portraying the inhabitants of his world. Much of the fun and drama of this genre derives from figuring out the motivations and identities of NPCs, so the GM must try to portray them as consistently as he is able.

Remember, players will be on constant lookout for traitors and villains. If NPCs are too erratic in their behavior then PCs will not want to interact with them and this important element of gameplay will be lost. A medical examiner, for example, should not be helpful one day and indifferent the next without good reason. If an abrupt change in behavior occurs merely to speed the plot along then similar occurrences that are essential to the GM's plans may go uninvestigated.

NPCs in horror serve three basic functions. First, they act as local color and atmosphere. They also serve as information sources. The third function of the NPC is to physically take part in a scenario as an ally or enemy. An NPC may serve all three functions during the course of a scenario. In order to cut preparation time, it is recommended that the GM determine beforehand whether an NPC will enter combat situations or not.

One of the best things about a horror campaign set in near-past or contemporary times is the opportunity to involve real people in the proceedings. The extent to which these characters interact with PCs depends on the game era, the desired "reality level" of the campaign and the acting skill of the GM. The encounter may be as minor as seeing a celebrity eating at a nearby table ("Look, it's Boris Karloff!") or as extensive as an eminent physicist secretly helping the PCs breach the dimensional barrier ("Surely you're joking, Mr. Feynman!")

Using real people in historic campaigns is relatively risk-free, since their entire lives are on record and there is little danger of new information surfacing to trip up the GM. Using real people who are still alive is a little trickier, especially in a "hard realism" type campaign where the GM cannot introduce NPCs who are world renowned but obviously fictitious. A GM using real people as NPCs should:

1) Establish them as untouchables, or

2) Be ready to explain how the NPC can be on television the day after the PCs fed him to his Röttweilers.

LOOKING FOR TROUBLE

In horror film series, the monster is the star. The killing of a new cast of characters (with any survivors disposed of in the first reel of the next sequel) is the thread that holds these series together. Horror RPGs are the opposite. Here, the characters and their continuing exploits are the basis of the story. This section discusses the options of having PCs belonging to an Acronymical World Wide Organization (AWWO) versus being an Independent Investigator Group (ILG). Both options have merit in *Horror Hero*, but each will result in a different type of campaign.

THE ACRONYMICAL WORLD WIDE ORGANIZATION (AWWO)

For fast-paced action and a lighter tone an Acronymical World Wide Organization is recommended. Fans of horror have always been fascinated by the possibility that somewhere in the world exists top-secret organizations who investigate and do battle against the unknown. GMs can capitalize on this interest by having players belong to or join such a group.

An organization can cut red tape, provide monetary assistance, bestow reasonable protection from the law, and generally make life easier. Possible drawbacks of this approach are loss of urgency and PC dependence on the group. These concerns are mitigated a bit if the GM plays the organization as realistically as possible. He should consider the utmost secrecy that these groups must maintain. If faced with a choice between unwanted exposure and cutting loose foolish PCs, they will choose the latter. The watchword of these groups is secrecy. They cannot achieve their goals if their activities are emblazoned on the first page of the Times. Sometimes these groups have to make harsh decisions, and member PCs whose lack of good judgment endanger the group may find themselves brainwashed, cast out, or condemned to death for the good of the world. In short, neither the GM or an AWWO should suffer fools gladly.

An AWWO can be real or imaginary. Many real life "alphabet organizations" exist which PCs may belong to, such as the FBI, CIA, NSA and others. Each of these groups may have bureaus that specialize in the occult. On a smaller scale, many local police forces have special occult crime task forces. Using groups like these will add realism to a campaign, but some players may tire of following orders. This campaign rationale works best in Fifties and modern settings.

If the GM chooses, he may create his own organization or use one listed in this book. Fictional AWWOs spare the GM and his players from following established procedure, and allow the GM greater latitude when designing scenarios.

INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATOR GROUPS (ILG)

Independent Investigator Groups are best suited for campaigns that feature a high level of realism. Choosing this option means that save for an occasional NPC met during play, the character party is on its own. They provide their own funding, transportation, research, and equipment. The implications of this approach are obvious — PCs can be arrested and jailed, go broke, or have their activities garner more vigorous notice by their enemies.

The benefits of this approach include a stranger atmosphere of desperate paranoia and situations that force PCs to become more creative at problem solving. PCs will be strongly motivated to proceed with care when they cannot expect a last minute rescue by the cavalry.

PC motivations should always be considered when an independent group is formed. There is no reason why an ILG should not include an individual or two who are members of AWWOs. The inevitable conflict of organizational agendas is entertaining for both GM and players.

A happy medium between the AWWO and the ILG is met when the latter group is sponsored by a Mysterious Benefactor. This happens frequently in horror, and the players' interaction with Mr. X, who is every bit as mysterious as the creatures he helps to destroy, is fun to roleplay. A Benefactor is usually incredibly rich, has friends worldwide, and is generally a one man (or woman, or critter) AWWO. His true motives and his final plans for the PCs are up to the GM.

HORROR MAGIC SOURCEBOOK

Raided my library, they did. Distracted me with feigned fawning adoration and absconded with material and secrets that took me the better part of a century to collect. And they ask my cooperation? My wisdom? Bah. Had your unreliable authors bothered to check they would realize that the information and examples they present are but the tip of a black iceberg and they now lack a steersman. Let us hope they can swim...

So. The history of magic and the occult is one of horror, bloodshed and damnation. Few can see all that the occultist sees; those who brave the darkness are often lost. This section describes the underlying rationale for the Horror Hero Magic System and ties it in with the Sourcebooks. Here are notes on Ritual Magic and descriptions of Sample Spells and Enchanted Objects. Also included is information on Ceremonial Magic and Alchemy and examples of each. Last is the Horror Hero Cosmology, which ties it all together. The perceptive reader will heed only my comments, of course.

RITUAL MAGIC

Ritual Magic is used by practicing magicians around the world, from shamans in the West to secret society leaders in the East. Cave drawings found in Europe dating back to the Pleistocene period are similar to those made by the Bushmen of South Africa; this gives a historical starting point for the art. Indeed, some researchers consider Ritual Magic the third of three classes of true magic.

The user of Ritual Magic is a well prepared individual. Native American shamans perfect their dance steps and fast the impurities from their bodies. Learned men on the East Coast research books and draw complex, symbol-laden circles of power. In the South, witch doctors acquire locks of hair from persons to be ensorcered and sharpen their keen edged ceremonial blades.

Results hoped for by the ritualist usually are of a conjured nature; that is, something not present is brought into existence from somewhere else. A thunderstorm or an Oracle demon, a treasure revealed or a question answered, the power to harm, the strength to heal, all this and a thousand more possibilities may be sought by the caster.

Sometimes the fruition of one's efforts is not entirely successful. Rain does not come; cattle and crops perish, as do the people they sustained. Foolish men summon what they cannot control, and perish horribly. A ritualist errs in his conjurations, and the enemy he sought to strike down now confronts him with weapons drawn. Worst of all, the casting can go exactly as planned. The result, however, is wholly unwanted.

One type of conjuration that, in horror, never goes exactly as the caster plans is the summoning. Not a more ungrateful, terrifying creature is that one which is summoned from its home surroundings by some self-deluded ritualist. An Exorcism is used to expedite the departure of this ill-mannered sanctum guest; in *Horror Hero* terms, this is a Dispel Versus Summon (Creature type). This ritual normally requires Extra Time, Concentration, Incantations, and the Required Skill Roll Limitations. Some monsters take over their victims via the Transform power (q.v. Qiang Shi), and must be countered with the same power: Major Transform (possessed to free person), Cumulative, with the Limitations described above.

Magicians love to acquire knowledge. A useful spell for a ritualist, and one that some derive an income from, is the Divination. This is simulated with the Precognition (Sight) power, and usually has a Focus, like a crystal ball, I Ching books, Tarot cards, entrails, tea leaves, etc. The spell Requires A Skill Roll, Extra Time, and occasionally Gestures or Incantations.

A well used but very appropriate spell, particularly in the more primitive societies is the Curse. It is also useful in any genre where sympathetic magic users are present, such as Voodoo cults, Gypsies, or tribal shamans. The curse, or its opposite form, the Blessing, is purchased as a Major Transform (normal person to cursed/blessed individual), with the particular curse/bless defined. The curse can be as simple as a few dice of Unluck, or as dramatic as setting the character on a new course in life forever (q.v. Vito LaGardia).

And where would the horror genre be without a few magical creatures of wildly varying temperaments and appetites wandering around the campaign? They have to get to the campaign somehow. The genre is rife with the next spell, the Summon, and its aftereffects. For those who feel their lives will be incomplete unless they can bring forth a monster they have absolutely no hope of controlling (or for the GM who needs his favorite NPC ritualist to have some supernatural assistance), the Summon works exactly as its power description. The Limitations are Requires A Skill Roll, Extra Time, Gestures, Incantations, Increased END Cost, Focus (magic circles are popular with the summoning crowd), in any combination the GM deems appropriate.
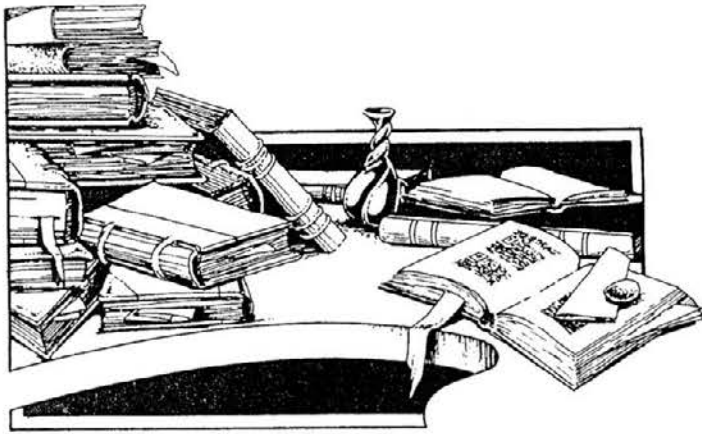
One other entirely appropriate Limitation for Summons, and a given for the horror genre, is "Must know creature's true name." Entire scenarios can be built around the need to discover the true name of a creature, if it is not already known. Some demon entries have ideas on other Limitations to apply.

SAMPLE RITUAL MAGIC SPELLS

To bring misfortune upon an enemy the curse is favored by sorcerers worldwide. The casting of this spell varies from culture to culture with one common element — a belonging or body part of the victim.

Curse: 3d6 Unluck, Usable Against Others [Defense: Having a Lucky Charm], Costs END, Requires A Skill Roll, Extra Time: 1 Turn, Gestures: Throughout, Incantations: Throughout, Increased END Cost x2, OAF (Personal item belonging to or image of the victim), Side Effect (Caster is cursed with 6d6 Unluck)

Active cost: 30	Real Cost: 5	END cost: 6
	Magic Skill roll modifier: -3	

To raise a whirlwind protecting the caster in the center, this spell is used. An invisible vortex of energy will materialize when the spell is completely cast.

Summon Spirit Wind: Telekinesis 30 STR, Area Effect Radius, Hole In Middle, Requires A Skill Roll, Extra Time: 1 Turn, Gestures: Throughout, Incantations: Throughout, Increased END Cost x2, OAF (Bag containing wind-blown leaves, feathers, etc.)

Active cost: 101	Real Cost: 20	END cost: 20
	Magic Skill roll modifier: -10	

To blast an enemy the caster must have access to an open flame. The spell is then cast and an inferno of destruction is rained upon his enemies.

Iracundia: 8d6 Energy Blast (Caster defines Special Effect), Requires A Skill Roll, Extra Time: Full Phase, Gestures, Incantations, Increased END Cost x2, OAF (Open flame)

Active cost: 40	Real Cost: 8	END cost: 8
	Magic Skill roll modifier: -4	

CEREMONIAL MAGIC

The annals of magic state that most Ritual Magicians conduct their art in the service of the evil entities from whom their power comes. The dark sorcerers of the world, then, may be largely considered priests. No matter how self-serving these fiends may seem, they are but pawns of larger powers. This is not to say that all ritualists are evil, but those who are not must constantly guard against corruption. The governors of the outer darkness do not suffer failure gladly; this is why a miscast spell is so injurious. But what of the powers of good? Are they so intent on man finding his own path that their priests are denied the power of magic? Fortunately for mankind, this is not so.

Some researchers believe that Ceremonial Magic was practiced long before its evil counterpart; some even contend that ritual magic is merely a corruption of the older art. Two facts are incontestable: one, that Ceremonial Magic is extremely rare and rarely practiced with the sanction of its parent church. This is because magic of any kind is universally condemned in the dogma of most religions; this is to protect the faithful from corruption. Two, that the life of a Ceremonial Magician is fraught with peril. The temptation to wield power for its own sake is ever present, and only men of staunch faith can resist it. Ceremonial Magic can *never* be used in destructive ways; its spells are dedicated to blessing, healing, banishment of evil, and other beneficial uses. A Ceremonial Magician who strays from the narrow path will find his power gone until he repents his wrong-doing.

To the uninitiated little difference can be seen between the casting of ceremonial and ritual spells. There are similarities: each requires Incantations, Gestures, Extra Time and Foci. The powers of good are a little more forgiving regarding an honest mistake made when spellcasting (no Side Effects). Another stipulation of Ceremonial Magic stems from the clandestine nature of the art. It will not function in public places.

A basic spell of the Ceremonial Magician is the Blessing, which functions as either a Transform (Normal person to blessed person) or an Aid, usually to PRE or EGO, with a longer rate of decline than the normal 5 CP per turn.

Another spell effect, popularized in many fantasy horror settings, is the Healing spell. A simple Aid to BODY to starting values will accomplish the spell that makes a Ceremonial Magician very popular with his comrades.

Finally, the most challenging, difficult, and frequently used spell in the horror genre by the Ceremonialist is the Banishment. Although the Ceremonial Magician never has anything to do with summoning some fiendish monstrosity, they are the ones who usually have to undo what their friends have wrought. Let it be fair warning to all that creatures being subjected to a Banishment (Dispel vs. Summon — Specific Type, of course) will know that they are being banished. If said fiend wishes to remain where it is rather than return home, it is likely to attempt to interrupt the casting. With violence. Lots of violence.

SAMPLE CEREMONIAL SPELLS

The Gamemaster can determine what standard Foci will be required for the Ceremonial spellcaster. These items include, but are not limited to, Crystals, Herbs, Icons, etc. The following spells have the Limitations: Focus OAF: GMs choice, Concentrate ½ DCV, Extra Time 1 hour (-2 ½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), 2x END cost, Requires Magic Skill roll.

To heal the injured, the Harmonic Adjustment is used. This spell knits bones, closes wounds and replenishes lost blood.

Harmonic Adjustment: 2d6 Aid to BODY, Only to starting value

Active Cost: 10   Real Cost: 1   END cost: 2
        Magic Skill roll modifier: -1

To protect against mind control the Freedom Cage is used. This is useful against the thrall of Demons, Vampires and other types of mental manipulators.

Freedom Cage: 40 pts. EGO Defense

Active Cost: 40   Real Cost: 6   END cost: 8
        Magic Skill roll modifier: -4

ALCHEMY

While some regard alchemy as a medieval version of chemistry, it is more correctly identified as a branch of ritual magic. "Khemeia" originated in ancient Egypt, and was kept alive after the empire fell by the Arabs. In the Eighth century alchemy came to Spain from Morocco, and thereafter spread across Europe. The Thirteenth century traveler Marco Polo found that Chain had developed an almost identical system of alchemy independent of Western sources.

For a time alchemy was the most common form of ritual magic practiced in the world, until the Church decreed it to be blasphemy. Its favored status may be attributed to the relative lack of peril involved in conducting alchemical rituals. The choice between handling volatile chemicals or trafficking with soul-hungry demons was understandably easily made.

The primary goals of the alchemist are three — the transmutation of lesser metals into gold, the discovery of an immortality elixir using the philosopher's stone, and the manufacture of homunculus, the artificial life. Hundreds of lesser goals have been recorded. These include the mixing of potions that will explode when certain conditions are met, insidiously clever poisons, drugs that augment ordinary abilities and others that grant non-human powers.

Alchemy is a true neutral art; unlike most ritual magic there is no evil inherent in its practice. Many occult scholars believe that the three major goals are actually symbolic, and refer to the transformation and ensured immortality of the alchemist's soul, after the success of which will make him a "new man." The validity of this hypothesis has been contested by the victims of evil alchemists whose only goal was wealth and power, and the controversy is unlikely to be resolved.

A *Horror Hero* alchemist is built in this manner. First, the character must have SC: Alchemy, and a supplementary SC: Chemistry is recommended. A Magic Skill: Alchemy is also required; the cost of the skill is three points for a 9+(INT/5) roll, with a +1 costing two points. Please note that the characteristic INT is used for alchemists rather than EGO, which is used for other spellcasters. The suggested limitations and requirements for ritual magicians apply to alchemists.
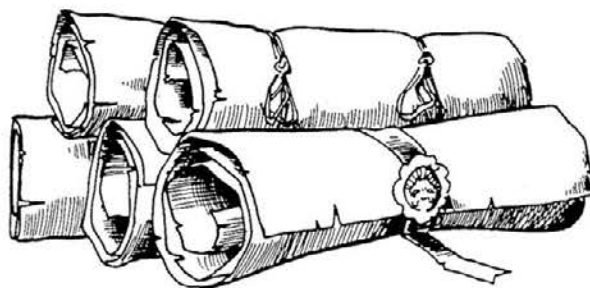
SAMPLE ALCHEMICAL POTIONS

To heal the body this potion is used. It is rumored that several modern Alchemists have become rich by blackmailing pharmaceutical companies, lest they reveal it to the world.

Restorative Elixir: 2d6 Aid to BODY, Only to starting value, 3 charges, IAF Potion, Independent

Active Cost: 10   Real Cost: 1
            Magic Skill roll modifier: -1

To kill from afar this potion was developed. Anyone who drinks it becomes a magnet for lightning and prone to electrical accidents. Each potion must be mixed with a specific target in mind. Others who drink will suffer only the side effect.

Lightning 'Shine: 4d6 RKA Energy, Time Delay (Three days), Indirect (From Skies to Target), Explosion, Limited: RKA only affects imbiber of potion (-1), No Range, 1 Charge, IAF Potion, Independent, Side Effect (6d6 Unluck, related to electrical accidents)

Active Cost: 150   Real Cost: 20
            Magic Skill roll modifier: -15

To gain mind powers this potion is used. But beware! No sane person would try this. An entire scenario could be built around this potion, which first gives the imbiber a tremendous feeling of well-being, then uncontrollable telepathy which drives most insane, and then makes the imbiber explode into flame. Rumor has it that several western towns were destroyed by the wide spread use of this deadly mix.

Professor Margrave's Soothing Warmth Wonder Elixir: 3d6 Aid to CON (Fades 5 Power Points/ Day, +1 ¼), 1 Charge, IAF Potion, Independent

Active Cost: 33   Real Cost: 6
            Magic Skill roll modifier: -3

10d6 Telepathy, 1 continuous charge of 5 days (+ ¼), Linked to Aid, Activates two days after consumption of potion (-1), IAF Potion, Independent

Active Cost: 62   Real Cost: 12
            Magic Skill roll modifier: -6

5d6 RKA NND (LS: Heat), Time Delay (Five days), Limited: RKA only affects imbiber of potion (-1), No Range, Linked to Aid, 1 Charge, IAF Potion, Independent

Active Cost: 168   Real Cost: 22
            Magic Skill roll modifier: -16

Totals: Active Cost: 263   Real Cost: 40
            Magic Skill roll modifier: -25

MAGIC WIELDERS

The Magic Wielder is the rarest and most hated of spellcasters. Unlike Ritualists, the wielder does not need to perform lengthy incantations or deal with devils. He needs not serve a deity, like the Ceremonialist. He has no use for the potions or items of the Alchemist. Magic Wielders are despised for their independence from fettering limitations.

A Magic Wielder, unlike his jealous fellow magicians, is gifted from birth with a natural reservoir of magic to draw upon. He can cast a spell with scant warning and at practically any time. Less than a dozen of these individuals

probably exist at any time, a rarity attributable to both the murderous jealousy of lesser known sorcerers and the unlikelihood that such a gifted person should encounter magical teachings.

Fortunately for the world, the power of the Magic Wielder is limited in some ways. Because their spells drain away their magic reservoir they must rest often. Also, because magic without control is powerless, they must study and master the written formula for a spell to work. They are unable to summon or dispel supernatural entities unless they cast the ritual as a Ritual Magician would, with all Limitations and Side Effects applying.

The life of a Magic Wielder tends to be solitary. Their teachers tend to react violently upon learning a wielder's true nature; murder is the most common reaction. Some groups have successfully wooed magic wielders to their cause and allowed them to live under the group's protection. But most wizards will have nothing to do with a wielder and certainly will not share any hard won secrets. Only by criminal means or fortuitous discovery can a wielder broaden his repertoire.

SAMPLE MAGIC WIELDER SPELLS

These spells have the following limitations: 2x END cost, Requires Magic Skill roll, cannot use spells on ground sanctified to opposite beliefs (-½)

To protect the Magic Wielder this spell is used. It creates a force wall around the caster. The GM can adjust the spell to have several different manifestations, such as a wall of bones, fire, etc.

Shield: 6 PD/6 ED Force Field

Active cost: 12   Real Cost: 5   END cost: 2
            Magic Skill roll modifier: -1

A torrent of consuming fire jets from the body of the caster when this spell is cast. It is wearing on the caster but extremely effective.

Demonfire: 5d6 Energy Blast, Area of Effect (5" Line) (+1), Not in water (-¼), Side Effects (3d6 END drain) (-½)

Active Cost: 50   Real Cost: 15   END cost: 2
            Magic Skill roll modifier: -5

To detect the presence of magical forces at play the Wielder uses this useful enchantment. A more expensive version will allow the magician to be more precise in his evaluation.

Sense Magic: Detect Magic (sight) w/sense, Costs END (-½)

Active Cost: 5   Real Cost: 1   END cost: 2
            Magic Skill roll modifier: -1

To exorcise spirits and Demons the Wielder may attempt this magic. Note that the exorcee rarely wishes to be evicted, adding to the danger of the operation.

Dispatch: 8d6 Dispel vs. Summon, Side Effects (3d6 END Drain) (-½)

Active Cost: 24   Real Cost: 8   END cost: 6
            Magic Skill roll modifier: -2

To fly is the purpose of this spell. Of course, a flying wizard is an inviting target…

Air Mastery: 10" Flight, Side Effects (3d6 END Drain) (-½)

Active Cost: 20   Real Cost: 6   END cost: 8
            Magic Skill roll modifier: -2

ENCHANTED OBJECTS

Any horror campaign that involves magic can be enhanced by the introduction of enchanted objects. This section describes how to use objects wisely, explains how they can be created and provides an easy classification system with examples of each to govern their suitability for a given campaign.

USING ENCHANTED OBJECTS

Enchanted objects are useful in a horror campaign for several reasons; some help build atmosphere, while others merely facilitate roleplaying. Among the best reasons to introduce items are:

It's Scary — Many a tale has revolved around an ordinary person (PC) who comes upon an item and is ensnared by the power it offers. An item can contain a demon, cause a major transformation, or bring its previous (and very powerful) owner looking for it.

As A "MacGuffin" (Plot Device) — The race to obtain or destroy an item is often the focal point of horror scenarios, or in the case of a powerful artifact, an entire campaign.

As A PC Aid — Horror is an extremely dangerous genre to adventure in; sometimes PCs need the added power level an enchanted object provides.

To Provide Interparty Power Equity — A player whose PC is ineffective or under powered can be granted an item to help balance his abilities with the rest of the group.

CONTROLLING OBJECT AVAILABILITY

The GM is encouraged to limit the number of enchanted objects available for continued use. Too much magic in a horror campaign can seriously dilute its effectiveness; this is doubly true of items, because most can be used by anyone. Remember, magic is like uranium; even when used for a good purpose it is still incredibly dangerous.

How can the GM limit the use of an enchanted object? His options include:

Don't Introduce Any

Purchase the Limitation "Limited Power" — The limitation "Limited Power" is perfect for this purpose. Examples could include "Used only at night," "Works only for clergy," "Must be dipped in blood daily," "Requires sacrifices," etc. The purpose is to make it difficult or distasteful to use, more so than the Limitation "Charges" does.

Purchase Side Effects — Instead of making it difficult to use the item, make it dangerous. Side Effects can include "Ages User five years per use," "Summons Monster," "Drains BODY," "Self-destructs after x number of uses," etc.

CREATING ENCHANTED OBJECTS

Caution is recommended when debating the wisdom of allowing PCs to create enchanted objects. Even the lowliest item can damage a campaign if it is mass produced.

If PC object creation is allowed, the GM should make it a major undertaking. First the item should be designed. The GM must consider the benefits and drawbacks of the item's potential use or misuse. If the object is approved, the point cost should be charged to the creating PC and roleplayed into the campaign.

Important Rule #1 — The PC should not know whether his efforts were successful or not until:

A. He uses the item for the first time or

B. He suffers the Side Effect for the enchantment spell he miscast.

The GM is well within his rights to delay the Side Effect or item malfunction until the appropriate time, such as in when the PC is in combat with eighteen screaming, murderous Black Dawn cultists.

Important Rule #2 — Only under the most extenuating circumstances should PCs be allowed an object of greater power than a charm (see below).

Important Rule #3 — None of these rules apply to NPCs, who can do anything they want as long as it is terrifying.

TYPES OF ENCHANTED OBJECTS

Horror Hero uses a classification system of five types of enchanted object. The five types, there power level, and hints for their use follow.

AMULETS

The most common type of enchanted object is this item, which marginally improves one or more existing abilities or characteristics. The power of amulets varies but should not exceed the limits of normal capabilities.

These rules apply to amulet creation:

An amulet can only enhance an existing ability or characteristic. The -½ Limitation "Must already possess ability" applies only to amulets that modify an ability, since all characters have characteristics.

No more than five points may be placed in an amulet. This will generally yield a +2 to most skills. An amulet that affects Primary Characteristics will affect Figured Characteristics, unless it is bought with the -½ Limitation "Does not affect Figured Characteristics." In any case, an amulet should not allow a PC to exceed the GMs ability or skill roll limits on the campaign.

An amulet must be built with a Focus. This could be an IIF Ring or an OAF Medallion that glows in the dark. An amulet is considered to be functioning as long as it is worn.

CHARMS

A charm is an item that gives PCs an ability (Talent or Skill) that they do not already possess. Most charms are designed to grant talents like Bump of Direction, Combat Sense, etc.

Charms built to simulate skills must have their own Characteristic value. Charms that do not have a value will yield a skill that performs at a 9 — roll (9+(CHA/5) with the CHA equaling zero gives a roll of 9+0=9).

Charms built to simulate talents should have Activation Rolls and Side Effects. An example would be eyeglasses that bestow the Eidetic Memory talent. If the Activation roll is missed, it may cause the character to suffer from an immediate onset of amnesia for a brief time. A malfunctioning Universal Translator might cheerfully start chanting a spell on a castle wall that awakens a vampyr, over and over until the vampyr shows up to smash the charm and the PCs.

Charms cannot boost skills or talents above current levels. If a PC has a skill rated at 13 — and a charm that would give that skill at a 15-, they still have only a 13 — rating with the skill. Exception: if they are unimproved everyman skills, they can be boosted by a charm.

Charms must be Foci, like amulets.

ITEMS OF POWER

An Item of Power imparts an ability not usually present in the human race. These include both spells and powers. An Item of Power also can be built as a charm or amulet, but with the Advantage "Usable By Others." An example of this would be a Mkodo priest using his Fetish staff to bestow Ultraviolet Vision on a group of his followers during a nocturnal combat.

Never treat an Item of Power lightly. Amulets and charms are minor magicks compared to what an enchanted object of this type can do. The following guidelines are strongly recommended:

The active cost of an Item of Power should be limited by the GM. Usually, no more than twenty-five points should be needed.

Items Of Power have standard limitations. Costs END and an Activation roll are part of an Item's design.

Side Effects are suggested. If the Item has been constructed by a particularly nasty wizard, then it should have nasty side effects on users other than the wizard.

Items Of Power cancel out lesser magical items borne by an individual. An Item that raises the bearer's Strength would negate the effect of an amulet that had the same effect. This is to prevent magic hoarding so common to fantasy genre RPGs.

Like charms and amulets, Items are Foci.

ARTIFACTS

Artifacts are the enchanted objects that give birth to legends. They are also less common than saints in Hades. History suggests many artifacts: the Holy Grail, the Spear of Destiny, the Cup of Djenscheed, John Dee's Obsidian Mirror, and the Head of Baphomet. Any artifact in the wrong hands can be disastrous.

The only rules governing artifacts to be offered here are these: the capability to cause virtually any effect (and Side Effect) and the ability to draw evil cultists and beings by the dozens to their location.

ENCHANTED TECHNOLOGY

Enchanted Technology is machinery powered or augmented by an occultic enchantment. Items of this nature range from computers with demonic databases updated second by second to magically silenced firearms.

Most effective in modern campaigns, enchanted technology represents modern man's strides in both science and sorcery. Like artifacts, enchanted technology can cause any effect it is constructed to cause. For PCs that possess enchanted technology, it should be nothing more than a convenience. Only villainous NPCs should possess enchanted technology of any great power (heh).

SAMPLE OBJECTS

AMULETS

The Tiger's Walk: This amulet boosts the natural stealth of the wearer. It is a tiger claw worn on a thread of woven tiger whiskers.
Ability: +2 to Stealth, IAF Amulet, Fragile, Independent
Active Cost: 4   Real Cost: 1

CHARMS

Patagonian Abacus Ring: This ring is inscribed with a stylized abacus surrounded by sigils.
Ability: Lightning Calculator, IIF Ring, Independent, Activation Roll 14-
Active Cost: 3   Real Cost: 1

Hand of Glory: This is the mummified hand of a hanged thief, used as a candleholder.
Abilities: A – Lockpicking 13-, OAF Hand, Fragile, Independent; B – Stealth 13-, OAF Hand, Fragile, Independent
Active Cost: 18   Real Cost: 4

ITEMS OF POWER

Beast's Blessing: This is the shaman's Fetish Staff's power that allows the nocturnally roaming hunter to possess a distinct advantage against their prey in the darkness.
Ability: Ultraviolet Vision, Usable By 4 Others at Range and bearer, IAF Fetish Staff, Costs END, Activation roll 14-
Active Cost: 12   Real Cost: 5

ARTIFACTS

The Deep Map: This artifact is an interdimensional hideout and spying device. It is an aerial depiction of an area with buildings and other landmarks drawn to scale. An astute observer will notice an extra building drawn in. If he peers closely to this building he will "fall" into the Deep Map and find himself in a colorless three-dimensional doppleganger of the real location. The true world can be glimpsed going about its business, dimly superimposed upon the map.

The depicted area should be imagined as a plane bisecting a cube. If the map shows an area of two square miles then an individual will enter the map a mile above the plane. An individual within a Deep Map can travel freely (i.e. fly, burrow, pass through walls) everywhere in the map except inside the extra building where the normal laws of physics apply.

The Deep Map can be used to visually spy on the depicted area of the real world no matter how far away the map itself is taken. Spirits and invisible creatures are visible when sought through a Deep Map. An individual inside the map can affect the real world at a telekinetic strength of EGO/5.

Note that the Deep Map is shielded against unwanted intrusions from the spirit realm. Despite this the steward of a Deep Map is often surprised to find unwanted tenants in his domain.

To exit a Deep Map one needs only to leave the confines of the cube, entering the white void beyond it's borders. Anyone who leaves in this manner will find themselves standing over the map, as will anyone rendered unconscious while inside. However, unless they are carried out the body of an individual who dies inside the map will be lost. In the event that the map is destroyed anyone left inside will reappear in the area of the real world corresponding to their last position in the map, unless they were inside the extra building. The fate of these individuals is unknown (GMs discretion).

Only a handful of sorcerers know the secret of Deep Map construction — it is taught only to bonded apprentices and has never been written down. The sorcerous cartographers charge dearly for their services and will die before they reveal their secret.

A Deep Map has no special defenses and unless otherwise magicked will be destroyed as easily as the material it is drawn on.
Ability: Extradimensional Movement to map's pocket dimension, and Clairsentience (Sight), and Major Transform to Spirit realm dweller.
Powers: Extradimensional movement to map's pocket dimension, 0 END Persistent, IAF Deep Map, person is automatically moved to real world when map's boundaries are passed (-¼)
Active Cost: 40   Real Cost: 22

Clairsentience (Sight), 0 END Persistent, IAF Deep Map, only to see territory represented within the boundaries of the map (-½)
Active Cost: 40   Real Cost: 20

8d6 Major Transformation (normal human to spirit realm dweller), 0 END Persistent, Transformation ends when person flies out of the map's boundaries (-¼), IAF Deep Map
Active Cost: 240   Real Cost: 137
Total Active Cost: 320   Total Real Cost: 179

Destiny Chess Set: This is an artifact of which only eight have ever existed. The Destiny Chess Set gives its user power over the fortune of others. A product of the darkest Arabian sorcery, the chess pieces are carved from the disinterred bones of real queens, kings, bishops and so on. The rooks are stone and wood from sacred or notable buildings and the bones of horses (or more eldritch steeds) figure into the knights. The board itself is non-magical.

To use the chess set a lengthy ritual must be performed over the pieces, each of which has had blood, hair or a personal item from the intended target placed upon it. The rooks have had a fragment of a particular building placed upon it. If the ritual is successfully cast the pieces will transform into perfect sculptures of the intended target, their family, friends, etc.

The owner of the board can now meddle undetected in the lives of the counterparts of the pieces. In game terms this translates as Luck or Unluck rolls. These are incurred when a piece is in danger of being removed (i.e. killed or rendered harmless) from the board. The PC (or whoever is represented by the threatened piece) suffers from a number of Unluck dice based on the piece that is threatening it on the board. If the PC or other acquaintance is the one threatening the opposition, then they gain dice of Luck. For example:

    King and Queen — 4 d6
    Bishop and Rook — 3d6
    Knight — 2d6
    Pawn — 1d6

The dice are cumulative. GMs are admonished to remember that a PC should not be slain by an Unluck roll, although NPCs could be. If a rook is removed from the board then the corresponding building is vacated or destroyed. Remember — the board cannot kill people — it can only maneuver them into dangerous situations.

PCs who have been placed on the board may experience a nagging feeling of being manipulated, especially those who are psychically sensitive. Through an effort of will (EGO of player vs. EGO of chess player) the influence of the board may be overthrown. The pieces on the board will actually rearrange themselves to reflect this shift in fortune. After a period of time (GMs discretion) the chess set will reassert itself and the game will continue.

The user of the board must observe two rules when he plays or the cumulative Unluck of the remaining pieces will descend on him. First, a new game cannot be started more than once every thirty-two years. Second, a game must be played through to the end without stalemate. If the pieces are disturbed by an outside agency the game is considered over. Thus, it is unlikely that the board will be left sitting in the villain's drawing room.
Ability: 12d6 Mind Scan, 0 END, IAF Destiny Chess Set and personal items as mentioned above, Gestures throughout (-½) (chess moves), Extra Time: 1 hour (-2 ½), Concentrate ½ DCV (-¼)
Active Cost: 90   Real Cost: 21

4d6 Luck or Unluck, Usable Against Others, Based on ECV, 0 END, Linked to Mind Scan, IAF Destiny Chess Set
Active Cost: 70   Real Cost: 35

THE SHADOW OF THE CIVIL WAR

"There is a period in history of palpable darkness. Years of conflict have ended; a nation counts its dead sons and weeps. Released from chains and servitude, an entire race sees the sun with free eyes for the first time. Industrialization is in a period of infancy. In a time of limited technological and social development, the greatest advances have been made by practitioners of occultism ..."

"They never went away entirely. When the war started, all the good boys dressed in their blues or greys and went off with rifles and bayonets in hand. Four years, four long years of brother killing brother. Matthew Brady and his camera brought back images of boys, just images without soul or emotion. If the world only knew that the people who stayed at home, locked in their libraries, were as soulless as Mr. Brady's images! Land of mercy!"

"Not all the bad ones were content to just research those accursed books and rituals. Walk into the Bayou or the Everglades real late at night. Don't get caught. They kill for sport. Burning sticks, drawing circles, sacrificing animals, uttering curses, it's just vileness compounded upon vileness, that's what it is. One of them talked to me one night, came right to my window. I was helpless. I was alone. I listened."

"And I learned. Oh, what I learned. The world outside, the people, so rooted to the ground. There are wonders to behold. All you have to do is learn to fly, and do what you are told. Sure there is a price. But my one eye sees more than any two eyes can ..."

PLAYERS' GUIDE TO ELDRITCH HORROR

ROLEPLAYING IN HISTORIC AMERICA

THE ERA

Madness and despair take spectral form behind the locked door of a seemingly abandoned, crumbling mansion…an evil cult conjures forth a demon train to Hell…a snake oil salesman holds the keys to eternal life and infernal death…an amateur sorcerer loses control of a summoned bog god…And you are there!

This chapter of *Horror Hero* is about America in the latter half of the Nineteenth Century. In the campaign presented here, America during and after the Civil War is the site of the last gasp of the survivors of antiquity. Battle lines are drawn between the fiends who would set back mankind's progress and the persons who oppose them. Feeding off the natural human resistance to change, the enemy blankets the country with superstition and magic. Only by returning the world to the Dark Ages can the eldritch past of America be recalled; only the PCs can help determine Her destiny, and the destiny of the world!

Almost everyone has had some exposure to the exciting era presented here, both fictional and historic. Have you ever asked yourself what *you* would do if Dracula had come to America? What would you do if your friends Willie and Henry came back from the War, ten years after their deaths? Or, if you discovered your local lodge planning to open a gateway into Hell? The Historic America campaign needs players like you to strap on their guns and deal with these menaces!

CHARACTER SKILL CHANGES

Players should consult this listing when buying skills for their Historic America character. Keep in mind the lower technological level of the era when devising new skills. Also, characters must pay 1 point for literacy in their native language

ANIMAL HANDLER: In this horse-drawn era, a very common skill.

BUGGING: Change to Eavesdropping (INT, 9+(INT/5),3/2).

COMBAT DRIVING: Animal drawn vehicles and, after 1898, early autos .

CRIMINOLOGY: This was a very inexact science until late in the era. Early lawmen may wish to substitute Interrogation and buy up their perception. Fingerprinting and other now familiar police procedures were imported from Europe in the late 1880's. Criminal records were kept but difficult to access.

DEMOLITIONS: This was a very risky profession in this era! TNT and Nitroglycerine became available late in the era, gunpowder charges and dynamite (standard fuse) or black bombs were most common. Experts were highly sought after.

ELECTRONICS: A rare and highly specialized profession. Not found in areas where electricity is unavailable.

FORENSIC MEDICINE: Performed almost entirely by morticians in this era.

MARTIAL ARTS: Eastern Martial Arts styles are still alien to the genre except in very rare circumstances. Boxing and Fencing were considered gentlemen's sports, while the lower classes might learn Dirty Infighting.

SECURITY SYSTEMS: This skill will apply to mechanical traps in this era.

SYSTEMS OPERATION: This applies to communication devices such as telegraphs and telephones. The factory machines of the era often required teams of skilled individuals to operate.

TRANSPORTATION FAMILIARITY: These include several types of animal drawn vehicles, boats, hot air balloons, bicycles and early autos near the turn of the century.

OUTFITTING THE PC

This era encompasses America's transition from an agricultural society to one based on mechanized industry. The technological strides made during this time are substantial. It began with horse drawn travel, cap and ball weapons, oil lamps and fire places, and ended with automobiles, semi-automatic firearms, electric light and central heating.

This section discusses this rapidly evolving technology as it applies to the needs of a *Horror Hero* player character. The material here is brief and should be regarded as a stepping-off point only; a complete listing of the technology of the age would fill a book of this size! Potential players of a Historic America setting should be advised that no attempt has been made to render the source material entirely accurate. Entertainment possibilities have taken precedent over history whenever a conflict arose. Those whose enjoyment of the game depends on strict adherence to established history will find additional research both fun and rewarding.

TRANSPORTATION

Travel in this era is slow and arduous when compared to the other eras covered in this book. Journeys that take hours in the modern day were major undertakings for our ancestors. The following listings will give brief descriptions and game statistics for common modes of transportation of the time.

The Horse: Everyone is familiar with horses and the role they played in American history. Statistics for this animal are on page 197 of the *Hero System Rulesbook*. Players who portray historic characters should remember that a person's horse was often their most prized possession, and not one whose safety was taken lightly. Also, horses are very sensitive and tend to panic and bolt if exposed to manifestations of the supernatural. While this may be a prudently intelligent response to a confrontation with horror instead of just plain terror, it is not within the scope of *Horror Hero* to determine this. Make an EGO roll for the horse with suitable minuses for surprise and other mitigating circumstances to find out if the horse bolts.

Horse-Drawn Vehicles: Investigators will do most of their local traveling in a vehicle of this type. These range from one horse carts to stagecoaches drawn by teams of four or six animals. The following statistics are typical of the era. For purposes of combat, assume that the SPEED and DEX of the vehicle are those of the slowest or least dexterous animal.

A quick way to determine maximum possible distance traveled in a day is to use the formula (Animal's REC x Vehicle's Move). In the most favorable conditions, the above vehicles can travel about 70 miles (112 km).

Trains: Trains were present and continually improving throughout this era. Railway construction was constant. The country was linked coast to coast in 1869, but even this feat of engineering pales beside the maze of tracks that covered the land barely a decade later. The examples given below assume one engine pulling ten cars. For every added car the locomotive will lose one point of STR and 4" of MAX MOVE.

Sea Travel: Vessels of all description plied the seas and waterways during this era, ranging from birch bark canoes to steamships. Travel time by ship was surprisingly fast; as long ago as 1838 the Atlantic was crossed in only 16 days. This length of time grew shorter until by the turn of the century the crossing took little more than a week and a half.

It is suggested elsewhere that an Eldritch Horror Campaign be limited to a small geographic area, due to the nature of the genre. If the GM decides that travel is necessary, and if the journey is uneventful, it is recommended that the trip occurs "off-screen," i.e., "You have arrived, now what?" This saves precious time and allows for a fuller telling of the horror tale without undue distractions. But remember that if the pursuit of the evil count takes a month, then his poor victim is probably lost.

NINETEENTH CENTURY AMERICAN VEHICLES											
NAME	SIZE	DCV	MASS	KB	STR	DEF	BODY	DEX	SPD	MOVE	MAX
1 Horse Buggy	1x1	0	200 kg	-1	15	3	8	15	3	12"	72"
2 Horse Carriage	3x1.5	-3	800 kg	-3	25	3	10	15	3	12"	72"
4 Horse Stagecoach	4x2	-4	1.6 ton	-4	30	3	13	15	3	12"	72"
American 4-4-0 (Circa 1855, this train engine was a wood burner)	8x2	-4	45 tons	-7	45	9	19	10	2	9"/seg	144"
Consolidation 2-8-0 (Circa 1866)	5x2.5	-5	50 tons	-8	50	9	19	10	2	12"/seg	192"
999 4-4-0 (Circa 1893)	8.5x2.5	-6	40 tons	-9	55	9	19	10	2	15"/seg	240"
One Boxcar (The STR of a boxcar is passive STR)	6x2	-4	3.2 ton	-5	35	4	15	—	—	—	—
Rowboat	2x1	-2	200 kg	-1	20	3	7	10	2	12"	24"
Skiff	5x1.5	-4	800 kg	-3	30	3	13	13	3	4"/seg	48"
Small Steamer	7x3	-5	25 tons	-8	50	4	18	10	2	36"	72"

EQUIPMENT

The monster hunting equipment available to the PCs of this era is a mixture of old and new. Almost every modern convenience had a working counterpart in the Nineteenth Century. Modern civilization was essentially in place. The old and new were used simultaneously — a town may be lit by Lanterns, gas lighting and electric arc lights, for instance.

Telegraph: Offices can be found almost everywhere; this was the fax machine of the 1800s. Investigators seeking knowledge of events in distant places can usually have an answer within minutes.

Telephones: After the 1880s telephones became more common, and by the turn of the century millions were in use. Be warned — these were party line phones. Evil masterminds could listen in on conversations easily.

Oil or Kerosene Lamps: Contrary to popular belief, these items will not explode on impact. They were designed not to explode if they fell. Only if the reservoir is made of some fragile substance will it break and make a satisfying fire.

First Aid Supplies: While comforting to have around, these are only useful if the nameless horror does not completely destroy its target. Any bets on the frequency of clemency granted by revenants?

Field lab equipment: In this day, it consists of crude little vials and dishes made of glass that hold samples for future reference.

Lockpicks: For when the suspect neglects to leave a key under the doormat for investigators.

Matches: Eminently useful for lighting pipes, barn fires, and animated scarecrows.

Magnifying Glass: For the Holmes who wants to get a really good look at the back teeth on a rampaging werewolf.

This is only a sampling of items that will come into play. Unless the gaming group decides to be history-intensive, common sense should suffice when the question of a particular item's existence arises. After all, the point of the game is to have a few hours of chilling fun, not to teach History 101. A few minor anachronisms won't damage the campaign irreparably.

WEAPON TABLE FOR THE ELDRITCH ERA									
Name	OCV	R MOD	DMG	STUNx	STR	SHOTS	CAL	YEAR	NOTES
Handguns									
Pocket Pistol	-1	-2	1d6	0	8	1	.45	1850	Cap and ball
Derringer	0	-2	1d6	0	5	1 or 2	.41	1860	
Rolling Block	0	0	1d6+1	+1	13	1	.50	1867	
Revolver (small)	0	-1	1d6	0	4	5 or 6	.36 or .38	1850	Cap and ball
Revolver (small)	+1	0	1d6+1	0	8	5 or 6	.36 or .38	1860	
Revolver (large)	0	-1	1d6	+1	8	5 or 6	.44 or .45	1845	Cap and ball
Revolver (large)	+1	0	1d6+1	+1	12	5 or 6	.44 or .45	1860	
Borchardt	+1	-1	1d6	0	8	8	7.65 mm	1893	Early semiauto
Mauser 1896	+1	0	1d6+1	0	10	10	7.65 mm	1896	Early semiauto
Browning 1900	0	-1	1d6	0	5	8	7.65 mm	1900	Early semiauto
Rifles									
Henry Rifle	+2	+1	1½d6	0	10	10	.44	1860	Lever action
Spencer Rifle	+2	+1	2d6-1	+1	10	7	.56-50	1863	Lever action
Martini-Henry	+1	+1	2d6	+1	10	1	.577	1871	Lever action
Springfield 1873	+2	+1	2d6	+1	10	1	.45-70	1873	Breech loader
Winchester 1873	+2	+1	1½d6	+1	10	15	.44-40	1873	Lever action
Sharps Express	+1	+2	2½d6	+1	15	1	.50-140	1880	Lever action
Mauser 71-84	+1	+1	2d6	+1	13	8	11mm	1884	Bolt action
Colt Lightning	+1	+1	1½d6	+1	10	8	.44-40	1885	Pump action
Lee-Metford	+1	+1	2d6	+1	13	8	.303	1888	Bolt action
Mann Licher	+1	+1	2d6+1	+1	13	5	8mm	1895	Bolt action
Shotguns									
12 gauge	0	+2	2½d6	+1	12	½/5	12ga	1860	5 shot is lever/pump action
Scattergun	+2	-2	2½d6	+1	11	½/5	12ga	1860	5 shot is lever/pump action
Heavy Weapons									
Gatling Gun	+1	+4	2d6+1	+1	n/a	40	.45-70	1874	Autofire 5 shots
Cannonball	0	+4	3d6	+2	n/a	1	var.	1800s	OCV= 0
Canister Shot	+2	-2	4d6	+1	n/a	1	var.	1800s	Reduced Pen.

MEDICINE

Bravely leaping into danger during this era is not a matter to be taken lightly. Most serious injuries of this era, if survived, usually left some kind of permanent disability. It is recommended that GMs be merciful on PCs with the debilitating effects of injury, lest the entire group be retired to "Miss Mabel's Rest Home."

Normal recovery rates should apply for this era, whether a character is hospitalized or not. GMs who wish to keep matters moving may want to allow PCs access to some form of mystical healing. If this is made available, it should be restricted lest PCs begin believing themselves unstoppable, and the frission of horror will be lost.

GMs who decide to use historical healing methods may wish to conduct additional research, paying close attention to the campaign year. Generally, treatment was confined to cleaning, stitching, and waiting. Antibiotics were not available. Reconstructive surgery was strictly experimental and not often successful.

Due to the aforementioned concerns, the suggestion that mystical healing be made available is not lightly offered. GMs are urged to make it available if they want a PC group to stay around in the campaign. But, making up new characters after each combat can be fun, too.

WEAPONRY

The weapons of this era progress from Civil War cap and ball firearms to the earliest semi-automatics used in the Spanish-American War. GMs who allows semi-automatics are urged to impose a Jamming Activation roll 14- (15–18

jams) as if the weapon were poorly maintained. Use the chart on page 198 of the *Hero System Rulesbook*.

In addition to the firearms listed here, players may wish to choose proficiencies in the Melee Weapons table on page 202 of the Rulesbook. Many other common household and farm implements may become weapons in certain situations. Most can be simulated by choosing a similar object on the Melee Weapons table. Below are a few that may not be so obvious:

GM'S GUIDE TO ELDRITCH HORROR

THE SETTING

HISTORY

This section describes how the fictional and Mythic horrors of the times were derived and reflect the real concerns and events that shaped the era's populace. Timelines and recountings of events and places are included only when pertinent; GMs needing more mundane knowledge of the time are advised to check their local libraries and other reference sources.

The gaming material in this section of *Horror Hero* has been culled from three sources: the Gothic literature of the Nineteenth Century, American history, and the annals of

MELEE WEAPON TABLE					
Weird Weapons	**OCV**	**DMG**	**STUNx**	**STR**	**NOTES**
Farming Implements					
Pitchfork	0	1½d6	0	13	2-handed, unhorse, set, Reduced Pen.
Shovel	0	1d6	0	8	2-handed, unhorse
Hoe	0	1d6+1	0	10	2-handed, unhorse
Scythe	0	1½d6	0	13	2-handed, unhorse
Tools					
Sledgehammer	-1	1½d6	+1	13	
Drill	-1	½d6 AP	-1	5	
Screwdriver	-1	½d6	0	5	
Handsaw	0	½d6	0	5	Full Phase, Must grab
Powered Saw	0	1d6	0	n/a	Found in lumber mills; Continuous, Uncontrolled
Gaff/Boat Hook	-1	1d6AP	0	8	
Miscellaneous					
Straight Razor	0	½d6	0	5	
Hypodermic	-1	1 pip	n/a	5	Syringe contents can only affect a character who takes the damage from the attack
Explosives					
Lg. Black Bomb	0	9d6NEx	0	10	
Sm. Black Bomb	0	6d6NEx	0	8	
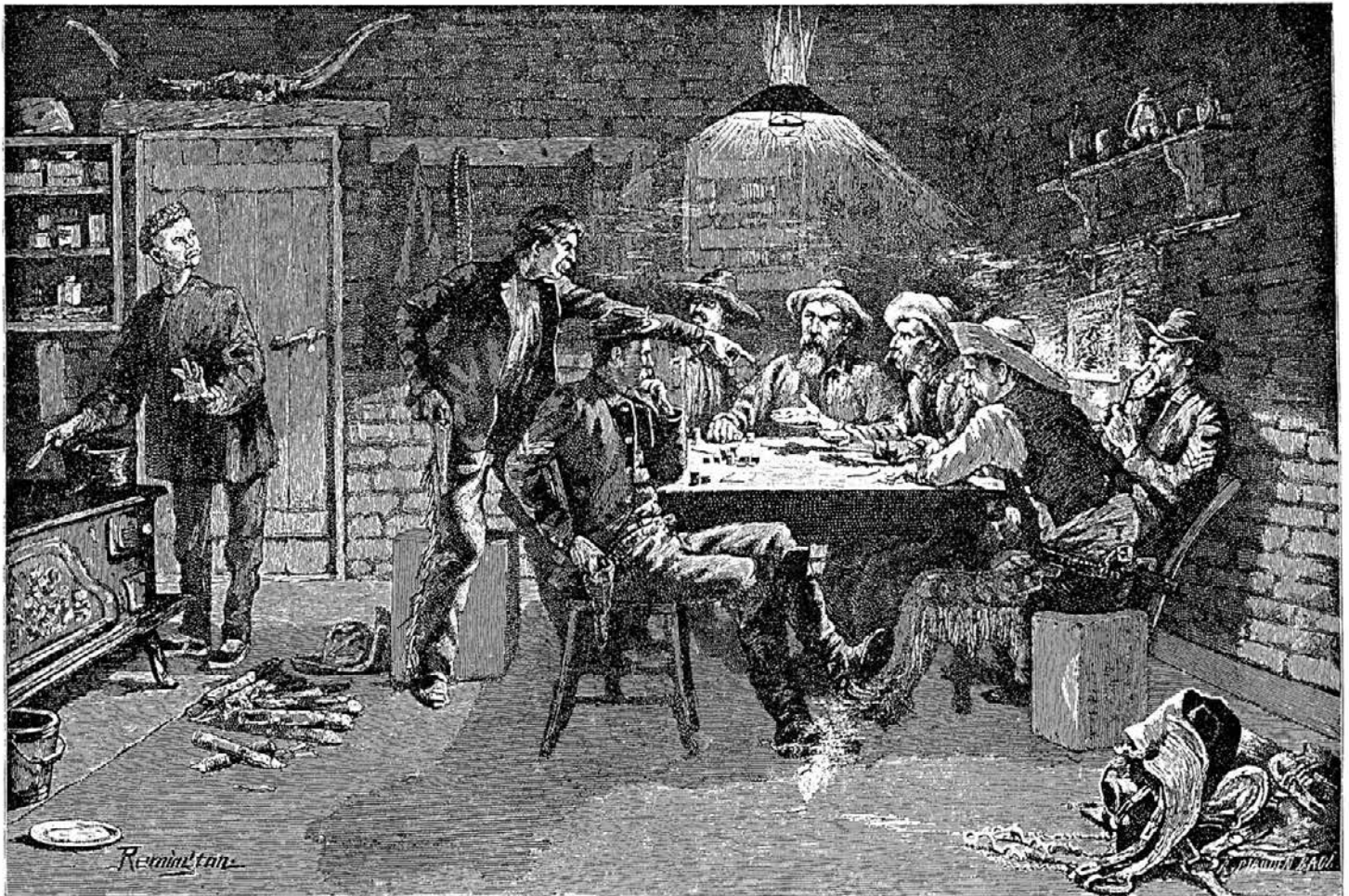
occult lore. GMs and players will find material here enabling them to recreate the eldritch horror of this exciting, colorful period of American history.

The latter half of the Nineteenth Century in America was a time of conflict. Opposing political, cultural and spiritual forces waged war for supremacy over the country. The inhabitants of America during these years felt overwhelmed by the rush of events they witnessed. Change and uncertainty were in the air both here and abroad. The seeds of revolution were planted throughout the world; political time bombs were ticking. In 1860 South Carolina seceded from the Union, followed by ten other southern states the next year. The Civil War raged until 1865; while generals pored over maps and politicians shook their fists, hundreds of thousands died on muddy battlefields. The conflict finally ended with Lee's surrender at the Appomattox Courthouse, and an uneasy peace was won.

Long held institutions had been eradicated, leaving only a void in their place. For Southerners, their way of life gone with the fall of the Confederacy, the Reconstruction was a time of bitterness and hardship. Many made scapegoats of the freed slaves, who found their tribulations just beginning as they labored to be equal citizens in a hostile land. The victorious North found the celebration cut short by the count of the dead and the assassination of Lincoln. The oppressive atmosphere of the East drove many to seek their fortunes in the Western wilderness, and the abhorrent crusade to forever eradicate the Native American cultures began in earnest, fueled by the lies of a greedy and intolerant government.

The middle years of the era produced an odd contrast. In the East, the accelerating Industrial Revolution started the urbanization of America; westward the cattleman and farmer held sway. Well-organized police forces kept the Eastern citizenry safe; lawlessness raged in the West, and justice wore a tin star and a six gun. Society dined on tea and crumpets while miners and cowboys caroused in seedy saloons.

Nearing the end of the century the country was more homogenized. The cities of the West were as civilized as their Eastern counterparts. The country was linked by railway and telegraph. Looking back at the bloody decades before, America was amazed at what had been wrought. The nation sprawled from sea to shining sea, gone from bloodshed and division to reconciliation and unity. A land of agriculture was now also a land of steam driven industry.

It seems difficult to believe, but the noisy steam engines of the 1800's held as much promise for our forebears as the superconductor does for us today. The lightning rate of invention and discovery during this time led to a rapid reordering in the minds of the country. Science, freed from religious dogma, demonstrated that many cherished beliefs may have been unsound; the works of Darwin and his fellow scientists generated a veritable flood of alternative schools of thought. But as in the closing years of our own century, the spiritual vacuum of science created a reactionary movement. In our era, this is manifested as the "New Age;" those who believe this to be a new phenomenon have not looked to the past.

The late 1800's saw America surprisingly receptive to novel ideas. The Spiritualist movement, replete with seances and tapping spirits, endures today. Occult and mystical lodges of all description peppered the landscape; almost every upright American male belonged to one, and most had a ladies' auxiliary. The Theosophical Society was founded, and a willing country embraced Eastern Mysticism for the first time. The nation's interest in the bizarre was reflected in the press, where hoaxing was considered an almost respectable activity. Fantastic tales of airships, monsters and flying men were read with half-believing astonishment by an eager public.

Readers responded to the strong moral underpinning of this breed of journalism, despite its being merely designed to sell newspapers. The public's interest in morality plays carried over into book publishing, and the Gothic romance. Gothic fiction is a broad genre, including such seemingly disparate works as the brooding romance "Wuthering Heights" and the sensationalist adventure "Varney the Vampire." The most familiar novels in the category are the influential classics "Frankenstein" and "Dracula."

Gothic literature is noted for the heavy atmosphere it conjures forth, where morality plays are cast in the purest shades of black and white, and ambiguity is all the more poignant for its scarcity. In the Gothic landscape "good" is rewarded only after tribulation, and "evil" meets swift retribution; malevolent monsters threaten the innocent, and the spirits of the dead hover near. It is a mist-shrouded landscape of brooding mansions and vengeful phantoms, charnel houses and secret treaties, vampires and lycanthropes, and the evil outcome of forbidden experiments.

Gothic horror has a large influence on the material in this chapter, but the term "eldritch" is used throughout, as a few other story styles are well served by the setting. While they are not Gothic in the strictest sense, the era of *Horror Hero* also draws inspiration from the works of Shelley, Stoker, Poe, Machen, Doyle and Lovecraft.

This, then, is the historic basis on which the Eldritch Horror campaign is built. Now it is time to step sideways and back into a past that never was, but should have been. Here, the Civil War cast a long shadow, and for many the real war was just beginning. This time the fighting would not be over flags or free trade. The bounty of this war would be dominion over the souls of Mortal mankind.

CHOOSING A START DATE

A new set of challenges awaits the GM who chooses to set a campaign in Historic America. As the era spans over fifty years, the GMs first task is for him and his players to decide the year in which to set the campaign. The material in this section of *Horror Hero* has been designed for use in adventures set during the Civil War and all the way to the turn of the century.

Player Character creation may be affected by which campaign year is chosen. Consideration of race, gender and political orientation should be made. The relationship between a Connecticut Yankee and a Georgia Belle would be quite different in 1865 than in 1899. Not that inter-character tension is in itself a bad thing. The sense of disquiet generated when PCs are not sure whom to trust adds depth and humanity to the proceedings, and the moments when antagonists ally themselves to battle the common enemy are wholly satisfying.

If the GM is not sure which year he wants to place his campaign in he may wish to consider the following suggestions. Both can contribute to his idea mill.

First, the GM should consult his players. An agreement should be reached about the desired level of technology. Do the players want their characters to carry black powder, cap-and-ball weapons or six-guns? This is not a matter to take lightly — the monsters in this book are tough.

Another good way to schedule the campaign is to look for historical occurrences that can be used as springboards for scenarios. Disasters always make good stories, and this era had its share. The riverboat Sultan explosion (1865), the Great Chicago Fire and even more deadly Peshtigo firestorm (on the same day in 1871), the Yellow Fever epidemic (1878), the Haymarket Square bombing (1886 — could it have been the Black Dawn?), the Great Blizzard of 1888, the following year's Johnstown Flood — how many of these tragedies were the work of agents of Iniquity? Other good bets for scenarios that can be found in history are political scandals, true reports of the supernatural and the wars that waged during this time.

No matter how a start date is chosen, either through intelligent decision or by picking a date out of a hat, all involved should remember that the purpose of the game is to have fun. GMs should not allow armchair experts to ruin the game by insisting on slavish adherence to history. If the GM wants to rewrite history to accommodate his campaign then he should feel free to do so.

Note: The sample campaign for this Genre is set in the year 1888.

CHOOSING A LOCATION

Next the group should decide where they wish to set the campaign. Most gaming groups will wish to set the campaign near to where they live, and this is heartily encouraged. The local legends and folklore that the players grew up with can then be incorporated into the framework of the tale as real monsters, haunted houses, etc. When a player is not using all his imagination to visualize a scene but already knows the setting, roleplaying is easier and suspense becomes tangibly real.

A group who decides to portray characters who travel around the country or who wish to adventure in a location other than their own will find that each section of Historic America has much to recommend it. The contrast between the Eastern Seaboard, the Midwest, the Deep South and the Wild West are more pronounced in the past than they are today.

An Eastern campaign provides an opportunity to utilize the rich history of the area. European superstition and legend play a prominent role in the lives of the inhabitants. From the witch-haunted seaports and hamlets of New England, beloved by horror writers past and present, to the teeming masses of the great metropolises, the East is the traditional setting for Eldritch Horror.

Consider the South, with mysterious plantations deep in the pines and endless tracts of unexplored swampland. The brooding mystery of the Great Smokey Mountains, the unplumbed depths of pellucid caverns, and the Caribbean magic of New Orleans may be perfect for a campaign.

In the Midwest, players may explore many mysteries. The deep woods surrounding the Great Lakes, the Indian Mounds of the Ohio Valley, the dark waters of the Mississippi, what

ravening horrors inhabit these places? In addition to its still-considerable wilderness, the Midwest offers huge cities and industry for the urban-oriented campaign.

While not usually considered a horror setting, the Wild West is a milieu of great promise. Who knows what mighty fortresses have been secretly built in the barren wastelands? With colorful cities such as San Francisco to adventure in, and Amerindian and Oriental magic to provide mystic atmosphere, a *Horror Hero* campaign of unique character can be created. As a bonus for groups who choose it, the Western setting is covered in detail in 'Western Hero' from Hero Games.

CONDUCTING THE CAMPAIGN

ESTABLISHING THE TONE

In an Eldritch Horror campaign, atmosphere is often the prime consideration for the GM; the mood of palpable dread that keeps players on the edge of their seats is sometimes difficult to conjure up and sustain. This section is intended to help the GM hone his talents in this essential aspect of Eldritch Horror in Historic America.

This is horror at its most traditional level. Taking advantage of the bad reputations that cling to certain locations standard to the genre helps establish an eldritch sense of dread. Decaying mansions, eerie graveyards, treacherous swamps, and forbidding forests are all standard props used in historic American settings. Using locales such as these will enhance early games without undue effort on the GMs part. These settings allow players to concentrate on roleplaying, as they are familiar and easily visualized.

GMs may wish to use standard monsters and villains like vampyrs, werewolves, phantoms, and evil sorcerers in the early scenarios of the campaign. The rationale behind this is much the same as that for using familiar settings — quick establishment of atmosphere, ease of visualization, and allowance for player character development.

Two other quick atmosphere enhancers are weather and time. Violent thunderstorms, dense fog, torrential rains and raging blizzards are perfect complements to supernatural events. Monsters in this genre always strike at night. During the first few scenarios, nothing outré should occur during daylight hours. Players should begin to dread sundown and the terror it presages.

Finally, the GM may wish to engineer circumstances designed to forcibly remind players that they are in the past. The sense of being part of history is an essential element of Eldritch Horror, and the sooner that players realize this, the better. The GM may accomplish this by having an eavesdropper on the primitive party-line telephone or by forcing the players to travel a distance, illustrating how long the journey takes. Basically, deny them a convenience or resource taken for granted in modern times.

Later, the campaign will gain momentum and expand to other locations, less familiar monsters, and less traditional situations. Players will have gained knowledge and experience, and will know their characters better. The tone of the campaign will have been set, and characters and events rather than mere settings will provide the thrills for these hardened warriors.

CAMPAIGN SCALE

Travel in the era presented here is arduous and time-consuming. In light of this, and according to the parameters of the genre, it is suggested that the geographical radius of the campaign be kept small. Eldritch Horror works best if PCs are cast in the role defenders rather than explorers. Of course, GMs can always allow whatever their players desire. If they wish to journey about the world, let them. Travel in roleplaying can be accomplished by simply saying "You leave; you arrive," or the details of the trip with encounters can be played out as they happen. The world is an exciting place during this period, with game-worthy locales such as Victorian England, mysterious China, and the dark continent of Africa ready to challenge PCs.

The mounting sense of doom so essential to the atmosphere of Eldritch Horror is best accomplished in settings the PCs have a vested interest in protecting. The immortal souls and physical well-being of family, friends, and homestead are endangered more dramatically than those of strangers. No matter how grandiose the villain's plot may be, the landlady's innocent daughter is of more immediate concern. In short, Eldritch Horror is the mundane invaded by the incredible, and by allowing the outré to slowly filter into the familiar, the horror is more potent.

The campaign setting for this genre is one that spans the country, providing players an opportunity to explore America from coast to coast.

THE ELDRITCH HORROR CAMPAIGN

THE BLACK DAWN

The Black Dawn are an eldritch-style organization serving evil beings from the dark pit. The Black Dawn campaign focuses upon styles of Horror popular in the eldritch/gothic milieu — featuring ceremonies to evil beings, murderous cultists and sorcerous rituals. This material is for GMs eyes *only* ! Players — don't ruin the campaign for yourselves. Read no further.

THE LEGEND OF THE BLACK DAWN

As long as there are tyrannical establishments, there will be revolutionaries. As long as there are engorged, conceited upper classes there will be dissatisfied, rebellious lower classes. As long as there is good there will be evil, as the day turns to night. These are facts with which the supreme powers of malevolency and the diabolical are well acquainted. Therefore, waging the age old struggle against light and order can be found...The Black Dawn.

The Black Dawn is the most mysterious and certainly the most reviled cult in existence today. Their long history of violent anarchy and superior alchemical prowess is cloaked in a veil of ambiguity that has only recently been partially lifted. The cult has committed assassination and atrocity against church and state for centuries; the records place them as far back in time as the fall of Imperial Rome (which they take credit for with customary modesty). Many times their enemies have declared them disbanded, and destroyed. The tenacious Black Dawn has always reemerged, more powerful than ever, the mysteries of their existence still unanswered.

THE CULT OF THE BLACK DAWN

The burning questions that have bedeviled the foes of the Black Dawn might be posed by a modern journalist in this manner. Who is their leader? While each individual cell, or Dominion, of the Black Dawn has a chief who relays instructions and mixes chemicals, the identical nature of widely separated Dominions proves the reality of a central authority. What is their agenda? This at least is superficially answerable. They seem bent on the promotion of anarchy and religious disorganization, showing no bias toward any particular moral stance held by their targets. When was the Black Dawn formed? Due to the apocryphal nature of the records, this will likely never be answered. Where is their headquarters? This question is of course linked with the mystery of their leadership. The revelation from China that their empire had its own Black Dawn, with identical aims and alchemical weaponry, did nothing toward solving this riddle. Finally, why have the political, religious, and occult forces trained on the solution of these enigmas been unable to provide an answer until just recently? Only with the events of the late Seventeenth Century that prompted the founding of the Fortunatii Operatii (q.v.) was the truth finally made known. The unmasking of the true villains in the matter have offered no solution, but merely magnified the threat to humanity.

The Black Dawn, worldwide, receives its orders straight from the powers of The Pit. Their leaders are the network of Incarnate demons (q.v.) who have plotted the downfall of mankind since antiquity. This is not to imply the presence of an Incarnate in every Dominion; those beings are too few, and the powers of the Inferno employ other useful agents. Tempter demons (q.v.) relay instructions between the dimensions, and Oracles (q.v.) reveal hidden knowledge to expedite the foul work of the Black Dawn. Only in a climate of political unrest can the powers of darkness truly flourish, as progressive systems of government and benevolent rulerships create an atmosphere of prosperity in which the moral strength of the populace prohibits most base temptation. To maintain chaos, with the final goal of worldwide anarchy, the Black Dawn was created to seduce the dissatisfied elements of society to lawlessness and demon worship.

As noted, the demonic patronage of the Black Dawn opens avenues of information that the Cult, composed of mostly lower class elements, could not normally utilize. Each Black Dawn Dominion is serviced by an Oracle demon, whom they can summon and dispel without the usual strictures. The Oracles teach their leader the art of alchemy, and relay information to the cult that men of their class would not normally be privy to, such as the daily schedule of a targeted ruler. Occasionally the leader is an Incarnate demon, and the others have been known to be possessed.

A special dagger, known as the Hand of Night, is the symbol, calling card and coup de gràs of the Black Dawn. The dagger has a five pointed blade forged in the shape of a stylized sunrise, and the hilt is a coiled serpent, hollowed in the center to hold poison. It is constructed of unearthly materials. Each can be consecrated to the death of an individual target, and after a successful kill will corrode at the same rate as the decomposition of the victim.

A Gamemaster requiring a dirty deed to be performed can find many eager candidates in the Black Dawn. This group can be the nemesis of a PC group through a campaign, as the survival nature of the group and their powerful patrons can keep them in a campaign for a long time. These loonies can show up anywhere. Remember that most Black Dawn members are criminals, but anybody who is evil can be a member. And if the Black Dawn is around the Fortunatii Operatii won't be far behind.

LUTHUR STEWARD

The entries below describe three American Black Dawn Dominions. All are under the control of an Incarnate named Luthur Steward. Steward lives in Washington D.C. and is a railroad tycoon. More specific details are unnecessary — it should be a long time before the PCs meet Steward, except maybe in a social milieu. The GM is encouraged to customize the leader to his own campaign.

EVIL ENDEAVORS

THE DEAD SOUL DOMINION

Many occult investigators have made the critical error of supposing that all Black Dawn cultists are rowdy criminals and their plots deal only with the imminent execution of murder and destruction. Doctor Arthur Barrosmythe, the architect and leader of the Dead Soul Dominion, does his part to encourage such mistakes. His dominion is almost invisible, yet has done the devil's work for nearly two centuries. The more attention focused elsewhere, reasons the Doctor, the better.

The Dead Soul Dominion is unique in that, save for Barrosmythe and his assistants, the membership consists solely of individuals possessed by the phantoms of Black Dawn cultists. The Dominion, currently a score strong, has grown quickly since the advent of the Spiritualist movement made the procedure easier. Barrosmythe has allied himself with the chapel house of the Inner Circle of the Astral Elect in order to further his plans.

The goal of the project is to secretly control the major power brokers in the Northeastern Unites States. This is but a small piece of a larger plot to embroil the nations of the world into a global war.

The phantom possessions are enabled in this manner. A wealthy or influential member of society is invited to sit in a seance at the ICAE chapel house. The masked medium (Dr. Barrosmythe) calls upon the spirit of a lost loved one to materialize, but it is the shapechanged phantom of a Black Dawn cultist who appears. The victim is allowed to interact with the phantom, who then follows the victim home. Note that phantoms summoned in this manner are not bound to a specific place or item. Then, after studying the life and routines of the victim, the phantom slowly and carefully possesses him. Thereafter, all that the new member of the Dominion does is in the service of the Black Dawn.

GMs should note the following items. First, possessed individuals need not be under the phantom's control at all times. He may believe that his occasional blackouts and the reports of activities he cannot remember are the result of dementia. Second, if the phantom totally possesses his host, he may become reclusive lest he be judged mentally incompetent. Psychics and animals will sense the phantom.

The presence of the Dead Soul Dominion adds several interesting wrinkles to a Black Dawn campaign. Sometimes the identity of the invading spirit is the main point of interest. Any of the great villains of history — Caesar Borgia, Sir Francis Drake, Benedict Arnold — may have been Black Dawn cultists. The spirit may be that of a cultist slain by PCs.
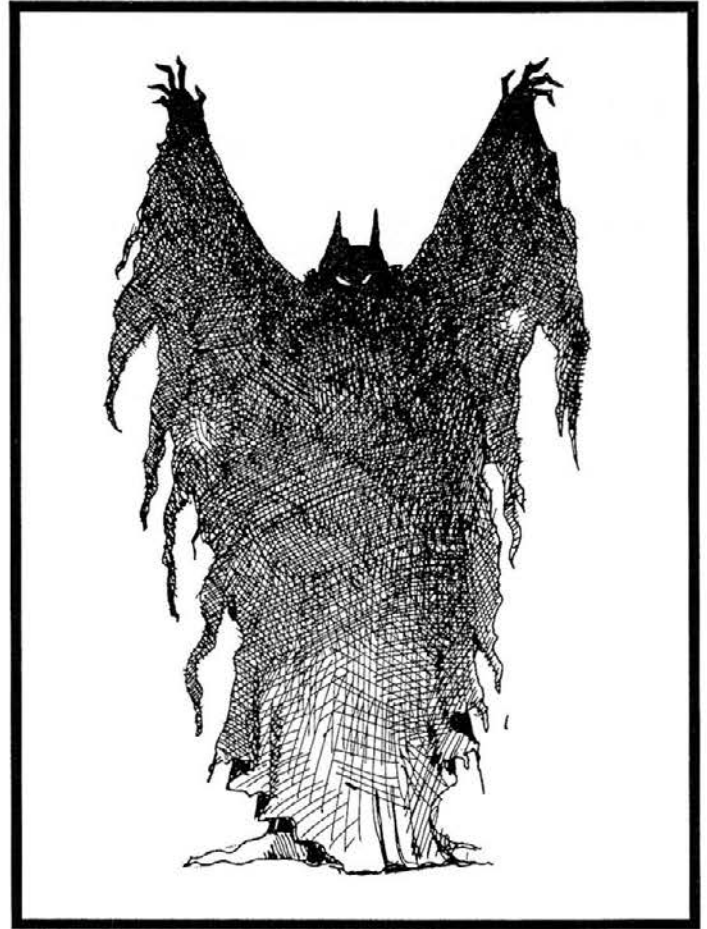
A long standing NPC of irreproachable reputation may actually be a ravenous phantom. After "helping" the PCs against their enemies the revelation he is a monster is sure to be a show-stopper. GMs should read the entries on Dr. Arthur Barrosmythe, the Phantom and the chapel house of the ICAE before devising a Dead Soul Dominion scenario. Here are a few ideas to start with:

If the Black Dawn need a person possessed fast they will skip the seance and just kill the victim. Then the body will be animated until it either fulfills its purpose or falls apart.

The presence of a phantom is noticeable in several ways — images, cold spots, footsteps, etc. A potential possessee may call on PCs to rid himself of the ghost.

The Dead Soul Dominion hold black mass once a month in the basement of the chapel house of the Inner Circle of the Astral Elect. On special occasions it may be conducted elsewhere, and the comings and goings of members of many disparate levels of society may be noticed.

A PC may be the target of the Dominion. If he does not notice the tell tale signs of a phantom's presence …

One final note — The individual members of the Dead Soul Dominion are *tough*. Two at once are mind-boggling. A GM who pits more than this against his players should be shot. If big groups are your game, develop an artifact or similar object to give PCs an edge!

THE HELLMINE DOMINION

In recent years the scattered dominions of the Black Dawn have cooperated to an unprecedented degree. The exact reasons for this disquieting development are presently unknown; it is feared that their plans are coming to a head. Nowhere is this theory better supported than in the events surrounding the Hellmine Dominion at Fort Blaze in the Arizona Territory.

The leader of the Dominion is Colonel Midas Caine, US Cavalry. Thanks to the considerable political clout of his Incarnate master, more than half of Caine's company are Black Dawn cultists. The remainder, a rough crew, are prospective recruits.

Primarily, the reason for the large Black Dawn presence is the proximity of the Conquisto Diablo mine. Hidden in the rocky hills south of Growler Pass, the Conquisto Diablo is the only place in the world that nonamite, the metal out of which the Hands of Night daggers are forged, is found. The mine is protected by a dangerous gang of Comancheros, Apaches, Papago, and Mexicans. Caine's lieutenant at the mine is his son, Icarus. Icarus is a Cambrion, and only the Black Dawn hierarchy knows of his relationship to the Colonel. See "The Hands of Night" "Midas Caine", "Icarus Caine" and "Fort Blaze" for more.

The mission of the Hellmine Dominion is threefold. As alluded to above, Caine is responsible for the protection of the mine. Should an outside force attempt to storm the mine the cavalry are sure to come to its rescue (imagine the PCs' surprise!)

Dominion members have inherited the onerous task of training the carrion legion that is kept in the mine. The walking cadavers are trained to mine and fight. The training includes taking the undead into the desert to conduct exercises, usually against troops in Caine's company who did not qualify for the Black Dawn, and the occasional raid of a remote village. Future uses of the legion are anybody's guess, but informed sources suggest trained cadavers are being shipped to Dominions around the country. Possibilities of a simultaneous, coordinated attack upon centers of population are disturbing at best.

The final mission of the Hellmine is to train living Black Dawn cultists to fight. The hills south of Fort Blaze teem with crazed cultists. This is a fairly recent development, and one that occurs periodically in Black Dawn history. Once trained, the cultists are sent to their respective Dominions. The fact that many now have feelings of loyalty to Caine is not lost on him or his Incarnate master.

This Dominion and its attendant locations provide the GM with the opportunity to run Old West scenarios. It is strongly recommended that the Hellmine Dominion be unveiled slowly. The city of Tucson is close by and could be the setting of several adventures before the clues point to Fort Blaze and the Conquisto Diablo mine. Here are a few ideas:

The PCs could be sent undercover to infiltrate the Dominion and learn its secrets. This is a good chance to have PCs prove themselves to the Fortunatii Operatii or some other employer. Maybe they will find that they are not the *first* group to be sent on this mission.

Perhaps a government official, like the Arizona territorial governor, has disappeared in the area. He could be held hostage, or maybe he was a cultist who made a mistake and is now toiling in the mine.

For a change, the GM might run a few wild (wild) west scenarios, taking advantage of the Fortuantii Operatii's predilection for gadgetry and the Black Dawn's tendency toward grandiose plots.

A lot of miners are abducted from Tucson and the surrounding areas. The Black Dawn preys on travelers, throwing them off trains or snatching them from stagecoaches. Hopefully, PCs witnessing one of these incidents will investigate.

If the PCs have encountered Doctor Barrosmythe, they can be pointed toward Fort Blaze as part of a continuing campaign. Barrosmythe ships skeleton guards and constructs to the mine regularly; the PCs may have learned of these shipments.

Of course, time honored Western plot elements like warring land barons, unsmiling gunfighters, Native Americans (called Injuns in those days) and cattle drives (and stampedes) work well with a horror spin.

THE HANDS OF NIGHT

Perhaps nothing better symbolizes the Black Dawns deranged evil than their assassination weapon of choice — the multibladed dagger called the Hand of Night.

A Hand of Night resembles an Indian *katar* with five fixed blades and a standard hilt. The blades are grooved to carry poison. The knife is weighted for throwing. Varios sizes are made; the largest is about a foot long.

Most Hands are non-magical except for a defense mechanism detailed below. Even non-magical Hands are fearsome weapons of murder.

The greater Hands are designed to function mainly as assassination devices and have additional abilities of mind control and resurrection. These abilities come into play after an ordinary Hand is ensorcered to target a single individual. After this is done a mere nick of the blade brings all the target's darker traits to the surface. In other words, he becomes evil. In this condition the target will willingly follow orders issued by the wielder of the Hand. These orders are usually designed to bring ruin on the target — he will be effectively neutralized.

Next, the Hand is used as a devastating killing weapon. The hilt is hollow to hold poison.

If the corpse is stabbed it will arise as a Walking Cadaver under the thrall of his murderer. After the victim is dead the Hand is considered 'used'. It will corrode at the same rate as the decomposition of the body. As a final insult the Black Dawn usually buries the used Hand at the victim's gravesite.

After a Hand is consecrated to an individual, a curious side effect manifests — the target will sense his approaching doom. In weaker-willed men, this is often enough to destroy their mental well-being. The sense of doom strengthens as the Hand draws nearer.

The magical properties of a Hand of Night cease when the weapon is exposed to sacred objects or hallowed ground.

All Hands have circular grooves in the serpent carved hilt which house spring loaded blades which are magically triggered when the dagger is held by an individual who is not wholly evil (gripping a Hand is part of the Black Dawn initiation ceremony). An individual injured by the blades becomes evil (but not stupid!) until the wounds heal. A wholly evil individual, cultist or not, may hold the Hand without fear.

The metal from which the Hands are forged — Nonamite — is currently mined only in the Conquisto Diablo mine. It is an inherently evil ore that is mined by the dying and the walking dead.

The story of the Hands of Night and their manufacture offer many scenario opportunities to the GM. The beginning of the story is described in the entries for Fort Blaze and the Conquisto Diablo mine. From here the PCs can trace the Nonamite ore west to Plunder Island, the lair of Silas Voltanus and the Barbary dominion.

The first leg of the journey is across the bandit infested wastes south of the Growler Mountains. The Hellminers always include demons and undead guardians among their company while making the trip, increasing the possibilities for horror scenarios.

The terminus of the night road is a small village on the Gulf of California, Porto Penasco. Here the Nonamite and other treasures (including undead, alchemical potions, sorcerous supplies, weapons, gold and hostages) are loaded onto a cargo vessel for the sail around Baja California to Plunder Island. The ship is escorted by Silas Voltanus in his alchemically powered submersible; most of the ships crew are walking cadavers possessed by the spirits of a pirate crew who perished on Plunder.

On Plunder Island Voltanus is training eight apprentices in the art of forging Hands of Night. He is the only living individual able to do so; should he perish years will pass before manufacture can begin again. The apprentices are able to forge the basic knives now but the attendant ceremonies are difficult to master, and Voltanus is a poor teacher.

Finally, the Hands are smuggled to waiting dominions around the world. Only the three described in this book know their origin. Every dominion leader or an aide is able to cast the ritual which consecrates the blade to an individual victim.

Here are scenario ideas and roleplaying hints designed around the Hands of Night.

A VIP, NPC or PC is targeted by the Dawn. He feels the blade approaching and asks for protection. Alternately, PCs may discover the plot on their own.

PCs must discover why an individual or group has turned evil (picked up or nicked by a Hand). Formally trustworthy individuals may become murderous psychopaths or bomb lobbing anarchists.

PCs must track down the Walking Cadaver of an assassination victim.

PCs attempt to hijack a Nonamite shipment.

The PCs ship is sunk by Silas's submarine and 'rescued' by the cadaver ship.

GMs should note that the Hands are sacred to the Dawn. They will stop at nothing to retrieve one.

THE ART OF THE DAWN

The school of sorcery known as the Art of the Dawn borrows from many disciplines, most notably alchemy, demonology and necromancy. In this way it resembles European Grimoire Magic filtered through a skeen of devil worship. Whatever its origins, the Art is a deadly potent form of black magic whose sole purpose is to further the ascendancy of Hell.

The two primary effects of the Art are bodily transformation and communion with spirits and demons. Bodily transformation is achieved by use of chemical agents and formulae of diabolic inspiration. It is said that summoned demons provide certain alchemical reagents of unearthly origin. The transformations manifest themselves as physical changes and temporarily gained abilities. Physical changes include metamorphosis into animals or the assumption of a demonic aspect. Temporary abilities include augmented natural abilities (STR, DEX, CON, etc.) or non-human abilities (enhanced senses, movement powers, etc.). The GM should see the Powers in the *Hero System Rulesbook* and the Alchemy writeup in Horror Magic for more ideas.

Communion with spirits and devils is reached through intricate rituals designed to appeal to the vanity of the entity. The Art of the Dawn differs from demonology in the sense that demons are predisposed to be helpful. While the old rules of conduct must be observed, it is doubtful a Black Dawn ritualist would be torn apart for a minor deviation.

High ranking magicians within the Black Dawn are able to monitor, terrorize, or harm a chosen target or puppet at a distance. These acts are carried out by demonic agents or evil spirits that are summoned and bound psychically to their charges. Sensitive information and personal articles are acquired prior to the actual casting of the blasphemous bonding ceremony.

Furthermore, each sorcerer at the head of a Black Dawn dominion has access to a roster of the true names of minor entities (demons and spirits) available for these missions. This information, made available by Oracle demons, is received by a Dominion leader upon his ascension to the head. The knowledge is secret and sacred. It is known to the leader and the Oracle, no one else.

If any of the ritual secrets of the Black Dawn were to be carelessly revealed the Dominion leader responsible would find himself in a hellish situation. The annals of the Black Dawn relate a tale of one such individual who made this error in a bid for greater power. He was torn asunder, very slowly, in front of his congregation by a group of unseen screaming entities.

ELEMENTS OF THE ART
OF THE DAWN

The following terms will help the GM flesh out his portrayals of the Art. Also included are spiritualist terms used in this setting.

Altar The Black Dawn use altars of unworked, unmortared stone for sacrifices (they are also easily dismantled). Permanent altars are usually ornately carved from black woods.

Apport An object, during a seance or demon summoning, which materializes from thin air.

Apparition See monster entry

Black Mass Devil worship ceremony performed by the Black Dawn on Saturday night. Usually climaxes with sacrifice and invocation of an evil entity.

Bowl, Magical Used by the Black Dawn to catch the blood of their victims. The Black Dawn carves their bowls from the skull of their enemies.

Candles, Magical Used to highlight portions of magical diagrams. The Black Dawn use candles made from human fat, blackened with ash.

Censer, Magical An incense burner. Held suspended in a black iron tripod.

Chalice, Magical Used for imbibing potions, blood, etc. A chalice of black iron is used by the Black Dawn.

Circle, Spiritualist Refers to the twelve participants in a seance; half are supposed to have "positive" body chemistry, the other half a "negative" chemistry.

Construct See monster entry.

Diagram, Magical A magical diagram is always used when dealing with the denizens of other spheres. The shape of a diagram often reveals its purpose. Triangles are used by necromancers to contact and bind the spirits of the dead. The double triangle (a star with six points equidistant from one point to the next) is used to bind or banish earthbound demons. The tetragram (four pointed star) is for summoning elemental spirits and for non-summoning sorcery. The pentagram (five pointed star) is used to summon and control evil entities (two points of the pentagram face north) or good entities (one point faces north). Most diagrams are enclosed in a circle.

Grimoire A black magic book detailing the proper procedures for summoning and binding devils and spirits. Historical examples include the "Grimorium Verum," the "Grande Grimoire," and the greater and lesser "Key of Solomon."

Hades Sentinel Demons that compose the retinue of Oracles. Also called Cataboligne or Sentinel Demons.

Incarnate Powerful earthbound demons who are the architects of the Black Dawn. See monster entry.

Incense, Magical Sorcerers use incense to literally charge the atmosphere during rituals. Most Black Dawn incense is made of sulfur, asafetida, and alum.

Lamp, Magical Primary light source during rituals. Fashioned of precious metals and engraved with runes, seals, and diagrams.
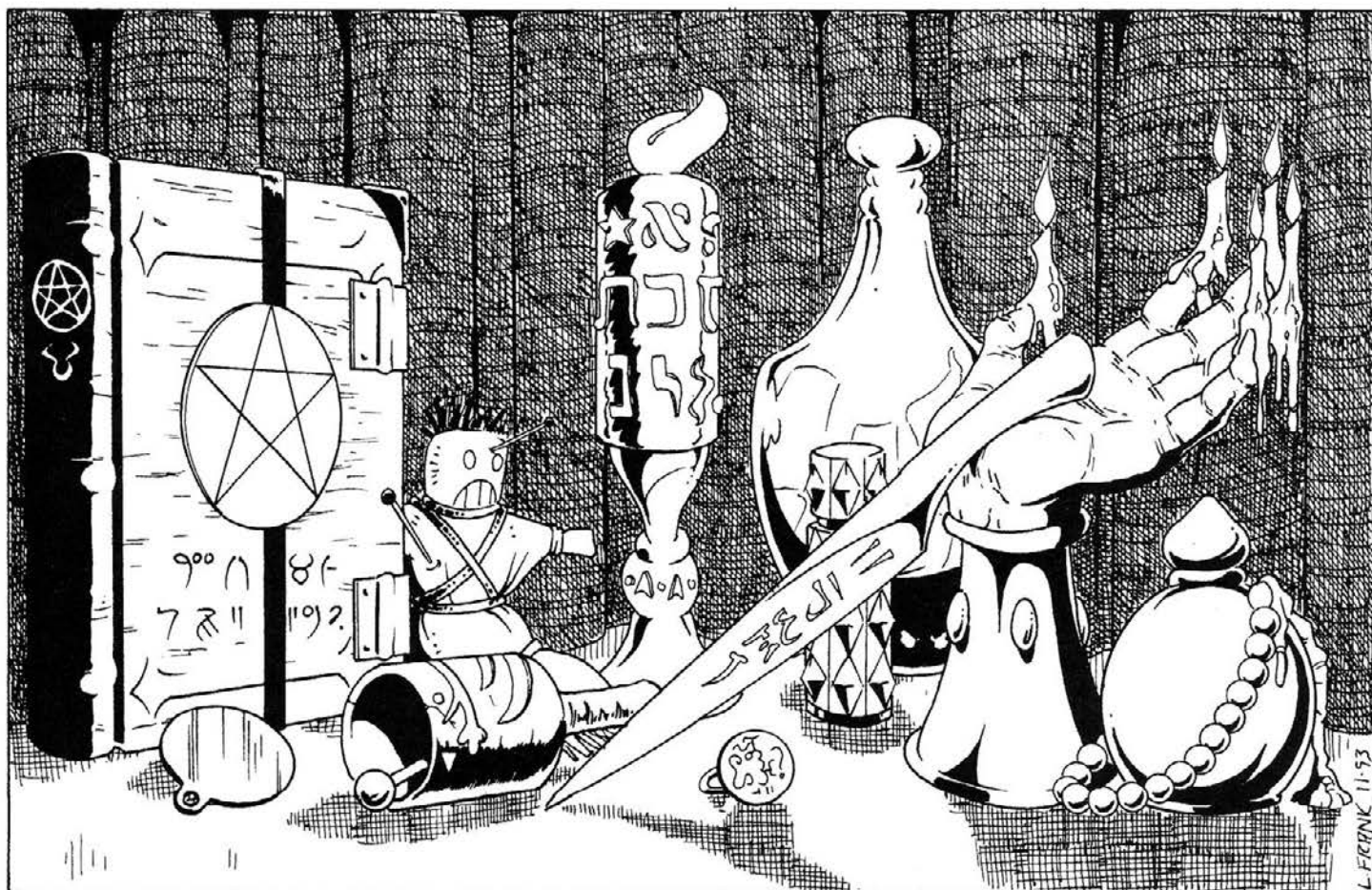
Manifestation Physical evidence that a spirit has been drawn to a seance. Common manifestation include apports, levitation of the medium, elongation of the medium (i.e., changes in height), table tipping, rapping, ghostly visions, and voices.

Oil, Magical Symbols are traced on sorcerer or sacrifice with this. The Black Dawn use a tempting mixture of human fat, corpse blood, aconite, belladonna, and nightshade.

Oracle A demon that serves as informant and demon with Hell. Every Dominion is served by an oracle. (See entry)

Phantom A powerful self-aware ghost. The possessing spirits of the Dead Soul Dominion are phantoms.

Poltergeist A malevolently mirthful spirit; often summoned and set against the enemies of Black Dawn sorcerers.

Possessor A despicable demon that is able to possess the living.

Rod, Magical Used to draw diagrams and as a self defense weapon against summoned entities. Made of almond or hazel wood, with a magnetic rod running the length of its core. Two prisms, one clear and one black, are affixed at each end.

Skeleton The animated bones of a corpse have been used as murder weapons by the Black Dawn.

Sword, Magical (or dagger) In the Black Dawn a magical sword, which serves the same function as the magical rod, is wrought of Nonamite. It is usually covered with various glyphs, symbols, and seals.

Tormentor This is the most common true demon.

Trident, Magical Replaces the sword in Black Dawn necromantic rites.

True Names Necessary to bind or control demons. Historical demon names, which number into the thousands, include: Bune, Moloch, Pluto, Leonard, Adramelech, Nergal, Baal, Belphegor, Mammon, Belial, Rimmon, Thamuz, Hutjin, Martinet, Zimimar, Gorson, Amaymon, Goap, Beleth, Agares, Leraie, Morax, Furcas, and many more.

Vestments, Magical The clothing worn by a sorcerer during a ceremony. In the Black Dawn, vestments vary according to the purpose of the ritual. Vestments for a revenge ceremony are blood red robes belted with steel, with bracelets and rings of steel, and a gold headpiece. To meddle in politics, the sorcerer wears bright red robes with a brass tablet bound to his forehead. The caster of curses or death magic wears black canvas robes and a heavy lead collar. To summon a demon a sleeveless, seamless black robe and a lead skull cap are worn. Black Dawn necromancers, when creating undead or calling spirits, wear a white linen undergarment under a black velvet robe covered with signs and symbols. On the head he wears a conical white hat.

Walking Cadaver A corpse reanimated by Black Dawn necromancy.

SAMPLE SPELLS

To summon, bind, and command a demon the caster must know the true name of the entity, possess the apparatus described under the Elements section, and draw a magical circle with a pentagram within. When his preparations are complete the caster and any assistants must begin the evocation. Depending on the strength or willingness of the entity, the procedure may take minutes to hours. If the pentagram and circle are properly inscribed the demon will be trapped within and subject to the caster's wishes. To dispel the demon it must be commanded to leave at the completion of its task. Failure to perform the summoning correctly may result in a demon appearing, but unbound by the circle. Failing to bind it properly means it can do whatever it wants. And failing to command it properly means the demon may "cleverly interpret" the instructions to its own ends. The cost of spell failure is normally an attack by the demon; Black Dawn members are first stripped of rank and privilege before being slain.

All the demons in this book (except the Incarnate, which cannot be summoned) are summoned in this manner. The cost of the spell and the END cost vary by type of summoning.

Summon Possessor: Summon Possessor Demon, Requires A Skill Roll, Extra Time: One hour, Gestures, Incantations, Concentrate 0 DCV, OAF (Magic Circle), Side Effect (enmity of unbound, free Possessor)
Active cost: 94   Real Cost: 12   END cost: 9
Magic Skill roll modifier: -9

Summon Oracle: Summon Oracle Demon, Requires A Skill Roll, Extra Time: One hour, Gestures, Incantations, Concentrate 0 DCV, OAF (Magic Circle), Side Effect (enmity of summoned, free Oracle)
Active cost: 81   Real Cost: 10   END cost: 8
Magic Skill roll modifier: -8

Summon Tormentor: Summon Tormentor Demon, Requires A Skill Roll, Extra Time: One hour, Gestures, Incantations, Concentrate 0 DCV, OAF (Magic Circle), Side Effect (enmity of nasty, free Tormentor)
Active cost: 87   Real Cost: 11   END cost: 8
Magic Skill roll modifier: -8

Summon Sentinel: Summon Sentinel Demon, Requires A Skill Roll, Extra Time: One hour, Gestures, Incantations, Concentrate 0 DCV, OAF (Magic Circle), Side Effect (enmity of summoned, free Sentinel)
Active cost: 104   Real Cost: 13   END cost: 10
Magic Skill roll modifier: -10

To create a living skeleton the necromancer must procure a complete skeleton (or corpse), draw a magic triangle and wear the proper vestments. In addition, a quantity of mud from an unconsecrated burial ground must be at hand, along with a pinch of powdered Nonamite. The mud and Nonamite are mixed with blood and the skeleton or body is completely coated; the necromancer must intone the ceremony throughout. When this is finished the caster implores the dark powers to grant him a boon and animate the skeleton. If the mud is absorbed into the skeleton, the spell was successful. The skeleton will now follow his commands. Spell failure means the caster's own skeleton will animate and do the bidding of the invoked entity!

Create Skeleton: Summon Skeleton, Requires A Skill Roll, Extra Time: One hour, Gestures, Incantations, Concentrate 0 DCV, OAF (Magic Circle and materials), Side Effect (12d6 Mind Control by invoked entity)

Active cost: 76   Real Cost: 10   END cost: 7
Magic Skill roll modifier: -7

To create a Walking Cadaver a ceremony similar to that for animating skeletons is conducted. The primary difference is the need for a greater quantity of Nonamite (a fistful instead of a pinch). For this spell the powdered metal is mixed with fresh human fat to form a paste; this is forced into the mouth of the corpse. The rest of the ceremony is similar to the skeleton ceremony with one difference. The cadaver is not subject to control or commands. It should be tied down or restrained to prevent it from eating the caster. The penalty for spell failure is the transfer of the cadaver's ferocity and hunger to the necromancer. As a twist, this essence could instead transfer to a random nearby person. While under this thrall, all of the person's faculties are intact, but they are overwhelmed by an unfightable urge; they serve as witness to their own cannibalism, the effects of which are up to the GM to determine.

Create Walking Cadaver: Summon Walking Cadaver, Requires A Skill Roll, Extra Time: One hour, Gestures, Incantations, Concentrate 0 DCV, OAF (Magic Circle and materials), Side Effect (18d6 Mind Control, one command "Start eating human flesh.")

Active cost: 76   Real Cost: 10   END cost: 7
Magic Skill roll modifier: -7

To summon a possessing phantom the caster must have the Magic Skill: Medium. If the possession is to be a secret the main portion of the ceremony must be performed beforehand. The necromancer must have a valued possession that once belonged to the spirit. A triangle is drawn and the evocation spoken. Once the phantom has appeared and expressed its willingness to proceed, a second triangle must be drawn on a parchment, paper, tile, or some other small object. The object is then passed on to the victim. Alternately, the second triangle may be inscribed on a chair, bed sheet, or other place the victim is certain to touch. A single word binds the phantom to the victim; the possession can then commence at the phantom's leisure.

This spell is unknown outside of the Black Dawn. If the phantom is not bound to the victim within twenty-four hours or if the skill roll is missed the caster suffers a relatively mild period of weakness. Please note that this is the spell used by Dr. Barrosmythe to create the Dead Soul Dominion.

Summon Phantom: Summon Phantom, Requires A Skill Roll, Extra Time: One hour, Gestures, Incantations, Concentrate 0 DCV, OAF (Magic Circle and materials), Side Effect (2d6 Drain of STR, CON, and INT)

Active cost: 140   Real Cost: 18   END cost: 14
Magic Skill roll modifier: -14

BLACK DAWN POTIONS OF NOTE

Before a battle, Black Dawn cultists imbibe this steaming brew, the effects of which cannot be predetermined. They do this for the sheer hell of it.

Demon's Luck: 4d6 Aid, Effects any one characteristic, Fade Rate of 5 Power Points per Hour, Only to a random physical characteristic (STR, DEX, CON, SPD, REC, STUN) -Â, 1 charge, IAF Potion, Independent, Side Effects: 3d6 BODY Drain when potion wears off.

Active Cost: 40   Real Cost: 6
Magic Skill roll modifier: -4

For Demonic strength, Midas Caine and other cultists drink this elixir. Rare among non-Black Dawn Cultists, the primary ingredient is a shot of Demons blood.

Demon's Might: 4d6 Aid to STR, Fade Rate of 5 Power Points per Hour, 1 charge, IAF Potion, Independent, Side Effects: 3d6 BODY Drain when potion wears off

Active Cost: 35   Real Cost: 6
Magic Skill roll modifier: -3

To insure survival during battle Turkish toads secretions and the enchaphelic fluid of unhatched cobras are mixed with fresh blood and drunk. Surprisingly, it's not fatal.

Death Resistance: 3d6+6 Aid to BODY, Fade Rate 5 Power Points per Minute, 1 charge, IAF Potion, Independent

Active Cost: 22   Real Cost: 4
Magic Skill roll modifier: -2

NOTABLE BLACK DAWN CULTISTS

DR. ARTHUR BARROSMYTHE

Background/History: The nightmares began when he was eight, in the year of our lord 1664, the year when the English came and New Amsterdam became New York. They, the nightmares, were old Reverend "Fire and Damnation" Larch's fault. For a Protestant, he had an awful vivid description of Hell. The Roman Pontiff himself could not conjure visions as terrifying as those Larch regaled his congregation with every Sunday. Young Arthur Barrosmythe, cat-torturer and church-yard vandal, knew in his soul that the eternal perdition was designed just for him. He dreamt of it every night — the black fires, the screaming, the sibilant voices telling him what he already knew. There was no room in his heart for repentance. No shame or remorse for his actions. He was Hellbound.

The hope began when he was forty, in the year of our Lord 1696, the year when the physician Arthur Barrosmythe saw a man run down by a great carriage drawn by six black horses. Wounded beyond hope for recovery, the man allowed Barrosmythe to take him to his home. As his delirium grew, he confessed that there had been witches and sorcerers in Salem four years ago, despite "Official" repentance of the Massachusetts court. In his home, the man said, was a sea trunk containing all the secrets of life and death. He implored Barrosmythe to take it and the dagger hanging around his neck, and to destroy all of it, and bring him a man of God to confess to.

So Dr. Barrosmythe took the dagger from his neck, the man's scream echoing those of his childhood dreams. Then he sat by the side of the bed and watched as the man aged before his eyes. When the withered husk could do no more than stare at him with pleading eyes, six firm knocks came at the door. Terror replaced pleading in the man's eyes as Barrosmythe opened the door. He let in a man whose great black carriage, with a sea-trunk tied to the top, waited outside...

This is how Dr. Arthur Barrosmythe met the Incarnate Luthur Steward, who revealed that he need not ever die. He told him of the Black Dawn, and of a grand reversal of mankind's fortunes, planned to occur in two centuries hence. So Barrosmythe became the Necromancer, immortal master of life, death, and resurrection.

Moving to Long Island, he supervised the digging of a grand underground laboratory, using walking cadavers as his labor. Planning ahead he established new identities for himself, so that none may ever learn his secret. His labors continue in the year of our Lord, 1888, and Barrosmythe is two hundred thirty-two years old.

Barrosmythe's home in Manhattan is plush and comfortable. Because he is often in the public eye, he does not conduct Black Dawn business there. Nor does he keep any personal items or records that reveal his true age or occult profession in his home.

During the week, he spends most of his time in the Locust Valley College of Medicine and Asylum for the Insane. He is (secretly) the owner, but publicly only a professor of Surgery. As described in the entry for Locust Valley, he also controls and performs as Medium in the chapel house of the Inner Circle of the Astral Elect.

Personality: Outwardly, Barrosmythe cultivates the impression of a serious medical man who is blessed with considerable charm and wealth. In this guise he is a pleasant enough fellow, very concerned and helpful.

As the Necromancer, head of the Dead Soul Dominion, he is a coldly calculating killer who has not a shred of goodness or charity. The only thing he values above his service to Hell is his own continued existence. This is his priority, and he does not toy with fate. Every move he makes is carefully considered and implemented with precision. If forced to rush his plans he may be prone to indecision. If seriously endangered he will most likely bolt to another identity.

Powers/Tactics: Barrosmythe is a skilled sorcerer. He knows Alchemy and Ritual magic but Necromancy is his specialty.

He wields considerable political and financial influence through his position as head of the Dead Soul Dominion. Because of the high social standing of its members he is an active player in the affairs of the elite. While having no official practice his expertise is often sought by his medical colleagues and occasional VIPs.

Barrosmythe's real work occurs in the laboratory below Locust Valley. Here he creates skeleton guards for the Conquisto Diablo Mine, calls spirits and demons, and experiments with constructs and walking cadavers. His assistants and bodyguards are graduates of the College and trained cadavers and constructs.

Dr. Barrosmythe depends on the protection of his servants and his connections in society to protect him from violence. His distaste for violence is not due to a lack of ability — he has 300 years of experience in handling difficult matters and is not above entering combat if it is required. For example, if he learns investigators are on his trail he could have them framed and arrested. Or he could have a Hades Sentinel dissuade them from proceeding. In most matters he will use subterfuge and deception to achieve his means. This is evident in his style of combat where he uses various weapons normally associated with sneak attacks.

His Achilles' heel is the Amulet he wears. He has managed to alter the original spell on it so if it is stolen or lost he will age only one year for each day he is without it. He is now "40" and could get along without it for about 40 more days before becoming seriously feeble.

Should he be killed, Barrosmythe has one trump left. He has made a pact with the Incarnate Steward that he will be permitted to return as a possessing phantom. This is why Barrosmythe always is accompanied by a young healthy man (with a weak EGO) who is usually an assistant or student.

Appearance: Barrosmythe is a fairly small man. 5'8" tall and compactly built, he is adept at blending into a crowd, but can dominate a room with his charisma if he wishes. His hair and muttonchops are black, his eyes an arresting green. His face is rather thin but handsome.

DR. ARTHUR BARROSMYTHE

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
13	STR	3	OCV: 5+
14	DEX	12	DCV: 5
13	CON	6	ECV: 7
13	BODY	6	Phases: 4, 8, 12
20	INT	10	
20	EGO	20	Costs
20	PRE	10	
14	COM	2	Char: 100 Base: 75
5	PD	2	+ +
8	ED	5	Powers: 200 Disad: 225
3	SPD	16	= =
7	REC	2	Totals: 300 300
36	END	5	
28	STUN	1	

Cost	Powers	END
9	Magic Skill: Ritual Magic 16-	
9	Magic Skill: Alchemy 16-	
45	Spells: Chose from the following; Summon Possessor Demon, Summon possessor Phantom, Summon Oracle, Summon Sentinel Demon, Create Skeleton, Create Walking Cadaver	
2	Life Support: Immunity to aging, IIF (Amulet)	

Skills

3	Climbing 12-
3	Concealment 13-
3	Conversation 13-
3	Deduction 13-
3	Paramedic 13-
3	Stealth 12-
5	Shadowing 12-
3	Acting 13-
3	Bribery 13-
5	Disguise 12-
3	High Society 13-
3	Oratory 13-
3	Persuasion 13-
3	Seduction 13-
3	Tactics 13-
3	Sleight of Hand 12-
3	Cryptography 13-
1	Lockpicking 8-
5	Forgery 12-
5, 5	Riding (Horses) 13-, Combat Driving (Carriages) 13-
2	TF: Boats, Hot Air Balloons
7	WF: SmArms, Melee, Thrown, Garrote, Blowgun
3	+ 1 level w/ Pistols
5	+ 1 level w/ Blades
4	+ 2 levels w/ Blowgun
3	+1 level w/ Garrote
3	PS: Surgeon (INT) 13-
3, 3	PS: Medium (INT) 13-, PS: Necromancer (INT) 13-
10	Perk: Lodge Member (High Ranking)
3	Scholar
5, 5	KS: Necromancy 16-, KS: Demonology 16-
5	KS: Alchemy 16-
4, 4	KS: Magic Lore 15-, KS: Magic Items 15-
4	KS: Poisons 15-
3	Well Connected (PRE—Based)
2	Contact: Governor of New York 13-
2	Contact: Society Debutante 13-
2	Contact: Attorney 13-

75+	Disadvantages
10	Public I.D. : Barrosmythe
15	Secret I.D. : Necromancer of the Black Dawn
15	Secret I.D. : Masked Medium
5	Susceptibility: Must have Amulet (Unique(5 pts), 2d6 Body / Month (non-recoverable, 0 pts), AGING)
15	Hunted : Fortunatii Operatii (AsPow, NCI, Harsh, 8-)
10(15)	Watched: Luther Steward (MoPow, NCI, Harsh, 14-,x½)
20	Psych Lim: Arrogant (V.Com, Str)
5(10)	Psych Lim: Fear of losing Amulet (UnCom, Str)
10	Reputation: Necromancer (occult world), 11-, Extreme
5	Reputation: Masked Medium (Psychic circles), 11-
115	Villain Bonus

NECROMANCERS' PERSONAL DOMINION TROOPS

This entire dominion is made of his students who are also Black Dawn Cultist.

13	STR	14	DEX	13	CON	10	BODY	10	INT
8	EGO	13	PRE	10	COM	6	PD	5	ED
3	SPD	6	REC	26	END	24	STUN	31	COST

Skills: Combat Driving (Carriages) or Riding (Horses, et al.) 12-, Demolitions 11-, PS: Medical Student 12-, PS: Cultist 12-, WF: Small Arms, Melee Weapons, +1 w/Pistols or Blades. Cost: 19

50+ Disadvantages: 0

COLONEL MIDAS CAINE

Background/History: Midas Caine was born in West Texas in 1836. At an early age he learned to take charge and use positions of power to his advantage. His wealthy family, proud of their Army background, sent the boy east to be educated in military academies. Upon his graduation and commission, he was assigned to explore and patrol the western frontier. When the Civil War broke out he served the Confederacy as a cavalry captain. His clever stratagems, colorful exploits and bloody victories won him laurels from the South, but a notorious reputation from their Northern enemies. When it was over he surrendered reluctantly.

At his war crimes trial Caine met his benefactor, the mysterious rail baron Luthur Steward. Through clandestine string pulling and generous bribes, Steward not only won Caine a full pardon but also had the Major reinstated in the army. When pressed for an explanation for his intervention, Steward explained to Caine that there was far, far more to the established powers than could be imagined. There were greater things afoot and Caine was being offered an opportunity to participate in it, to overthrow the nations of the world and squeeze the fruits of his labors to the fullest. He took Caines bitterness and pointed it to a new horizon — the Cult of the Black Dawn. Soon, his initiation into the shadow empire behind him, sword in hand, Midas Caine was ready for duty in the army of the night. Now he served two masters and two armies.

His destiny took him back to the Southwest, where for many years he occupied his time waging war against the Indians and siphoning the spoils of war for the unseen masters of his higher cause. As a reward for his professionalism and patriotism he was promoted to full Colonel and given his own command — Ft. Lowell, near Tucson in the Arizona Territory. It was here that the second major turning point of his life occurred — he met his son, the outlaw called the Snake-eye Killer. The moment he saw the Killer, a dream he had almost forgotten exploded into his mind as a true, horrible memory.

He remembered standing next to a darkened Indian village, and Luthur Steward standing beside him...somehow flying over the desert...a guttural chuckle from Steward...a million stars...and Luthur's eyes glowing like hot brands. There had been a gorge, cliffs and a cave. Luthur had smiled diabolically and shoved him in. He remembered worse things now. Walking through a torchlit, winding tunnel...an immense cavern...sensing the presence of dead bones all around him...and, atop a bone-strewn bier, a beautiful Indian girl. Nakedness...golden eyes...hellish lust...claws...and he ran screaming, his mind contorted from the realization of what he had been with, and the awful transformation of the maiden's shape.

Now, his son and Luthur Steward watched appraisingly as Midas Caine stood and gazed evenly at his dark master — his sons grandfather. His eyes shining from the cleansing madness, he said, "All right. What's our next move?"

Personality: Colonel Caine exudes an aura of brooding military presence. He can be polite, courteous, an educated man with a relentless obsession for power, a man of many human evils, and a man of few redeeming qualities. Caine is a true son of classic villainy, vowing never to bow down to defeat.

Powers/Tactics: By the powers commissioned to his authority, the Colonel employs all of his military, political, or civilian allies. He enjoys being the tactician controlling (or interfering) with other people's lives. Whenever his evil machinations fail and he finds himself in personal combat he obliges the antagonists with his military might. Caine is a cunning, seasoned veteran of many campaigns who has dirty tricks up his sleeve and a black heart under his coat. Relishing his leadership role, he will be found at the forefront of any conflict, usually from a position of superior power. Should he be severely wounded he will fall back and lead from the rear, using all available resources to destroy the opposition. He controls a cavalry company, a fort, a gang of Comancheros, the town of Brimstone and its inhabitants, and above all a Black Dawn Dominion; he is not afraid to use any of them.

Among his favorite maneuvers are softening up the target with an artillery barrage or small arms fire (whichever is available) and then mowing them down under a cavalry charge. Black Dawn potions and any other special items he may have will be used to augment the troops or sway the battle in his favor. If Colonel Caine should face superior forces he will do all the above plus enlist the aid of any demons he may have access to via his Oracle or call upon any entities he has discovered wandering out of the Conquisto Diablo Mine. He will mobilize the undead army secreted in the depths of the Conquered Devil.

Colonel Caine is capable of using many weapons with deadly precision. He wears a pair of .44 Remington revolvers and always carries his ornate cavalry saber. The saber is very dear to him, for it symbolizes his career. He uses it to dispatch downed enemies and to conserve ammo. He also carries a double barreled derringer, a boot knife and a pair of potion phials, Demonic Might and Death Resistance. He is never unarmed.

Once a week, Caine reports to Luther Steward through the Oracle demon assigned to his Dominion. This occurs at the Black Dawn's shrine hidden in a secret cavern at the Conquisto Diablo Mine. Unlike most Dominion leaders, Caine is limited to utilizing only independent magic items and was taught to call the Oracle only in the shrine. If the need for a Sentinel demon should arise, Caine must deal directly with the Oracle for permission each time. In the event that Caine's Dominion should suffer defeat or the Hellmine operation be in jeopardy the Colonel will contact the Oracle and send an emergency message to Steward, provided Caine can make it to the shrine. Steward will send advice or aid if possible. If natural or supernatural reinforcements do not arrive in time to save the Hellmine operation the PCs will have earned the undying enmity of an enraged Incarnate (if they have not done so already).

Appearance: The Colonel is 5'11" and 180 pounds. His close cropped hair and full mustache are grey, matching his flint colored eyes. Being in the Southwestern sun has tanned his skin to a leathery bronze. He walks with a limp due to a shrapnel wound to his right leg. A long scar on the left side of his face glows an angry red when he is in a rage, purplish when in his other moods. Both wounds are Caine's "badges of honor" from the Civil War.

COLONEL MIDAS CAINE

Val	Char	Cost
13	STR	3
14	DEX	12
13	CON	6
13	BODY	6
18	INT	8
18	EGO	16
18	PRE	8
12	COM	1
6	PD	3
4	ED	1
3	SPD	6
6	REC	0
32	END	3
30	STUN	3

Combat Stats

OCV: 5+
DCV: 5
ECV: 6
Phases: 4, 8, 12

Costs

Char:	76	Base:	75
	+		+
Skills:	116	Disad:	117
	=		=
Totals:	192		192

Cost	Skills
5	Perk: Black Dawn member (middle)
3	Bribery 13-
3	Bureaucratics 13-
3	Concealment 13-
3	Conversation 13-
3	Cryptography 13-
3	Deduction 13-
3	High Society 13-
3	Interrogation 13-
3	Persuasion 13-
3	Riding (Horses) 13-
3	Streetwise 13-
3	Tactics 13-
3	Breakfall 12-
3	Combat Driving (Carriages) 12-
3	Stealth 12-
3	Weaponsmith 12- (Slugthrowers)
3	Demolitions 11-
3	Navigation 11-
3	Survival 11-
3	Scholar
2	KS: Black Dawn 13-
2	KS: US Military 13-
2	KS: Western/Southwestern
	Native American Cultures 13-
3	Traveler
3	AK: Fort Blaze/Brimstone Mine 14-
2	AK: West/Southwest American Territories 13-
1	AK: United States 11-
2	CK: Tucson 13-
1	CK: Washington DC 11-
3	PS: US Army Cavalry Fort Commander 13-
2	PS: Black Dawn Dominion Leader 13-
3	Spanish Language, Completely Fluent (3 pts)
8	WF: Small Arms, Melee, Missile, Gatling Gun, Cannon/Mortar
5	+1 Level w/US Army Weapons
2	+1 OCV w/Saber
10	+1 Overall Level

75+	Disadvantages
15	Psych Lim: Refuses to admit defeat (Com, Str)
15	Psych Lim: Fear of Paul Voltanus (Unc, Tot)
10	Psych Lim: Hates Silas Voltanus (Unc, Str)
10	Enraged by failure (11-/11-)
10	Rivalry with Silas (Professional, w/Superior)
15	Reputation: Ruthless, relentless, obsessed with victory, sadistic, prone to fits of rage (Extreme Rep) 11-
15	Watched: Demonic Forces (MoPow, NCI) 14-
15	Hunted: Fortunatii Operatii (AsPow, NCI, Harsh) 8-
10	Dist Feature: Scar on left side of face from brow to jawline
2 (10)	Physical Lim: Bad right leg (old cannon wound) running reduced -2"
0 (3)	Package bonus — Soldier

COLONEL CAINES' PERSONAL DOMINION TROOPS

15 STR	14 DEX	13 CON	10 BODY	8 INT
8 EGO	13 PRE	8 COM	6 PD	6 ED
3 SPD	6 REC	26 END	25 STUN	31 COST

Skills: Combat Driving (Wagons) or Riding (Horses) 12-, Demolitions 11-, PS: Cultist 12-, Streetwise 11-, WF: Small Arms, Melee Weapons, +1 w/Pistol or Blades. Cost: 19

50+ Disadvantages: 0

Note: These troops are for use with Colonel Caine as his soldiers and with Icarus Caine as his Comancheros. Note that all should be considered to be well armed at all times.

ICARUS CAINE

Background/History: The Western gunfighter has always enjoyed a reputation forged more from legend and exaggeration than the actual truth. But for a while the saloons and campsites of the Southwest buzzed with tales of a fearsome villain they called the Snake Eye Killer, or Snake Eyes. Here was a gunfighter who was actually stronger, meaner and stranger than any whiskey-inspired tall tale. The truth, in the Killer's case, was more unbelievable than the legend.

He was found, wrapped in goatskin, after an early morning storm. The peaceful Papago Indians who found him named the infant Black Dawn in honor of the ferocity of the storm which heralded his discovery. Years later the tribe's aging shaman, alarmed at the ever more pronounced social and physical peculiarities of Black Dawn, contacted his spirit guides to learn more about the youth. He learned things which were so shocking that Black Dawn, thirteen years old, was exiled.

The exile wandered the wasteland for two years. During this time he acquired an eldritch advisor, a huge black dog which spoke to him of mysteries and darkness, principalities and powers. The dog (the Incarnate Luthur Steward) taught him to steal and to kill to survive. He taught him the use of the weapons he'd snatched from remote dwellings. Finally, he told him of the white man's world. The booze, the comforts, the women, the gold — all the things which could be won by a gunman with a lightning draw and a sharp eye. It was time to go to town.

And so the legend, the varnished truth, began. The Snake Eye Killer slew for money and spite. He robbed banks and trains. He rustled cattle and terrorized honest settlers from their land so the railroad could go through. Then, at the very height of his infamy, a wanted man in Mexico and two Territories, he vanished.

He was not, as many hoped, dead. Following a dream as the Black Dog advised, the Snake Eye Killer drifted to Tucson. There he encountered Colonel Midas Caine and Luthur Steward. Luthur proved that he was the black dog and that Caine was Snake Eyes' father. "Your mother," the Demon revealed, "is my daughter." The name given him by the Papago proved to be a name of power, an omen. His gunfighter name was just a description. His new name, bestowed by Midas Caine, is an honor and a caution — Icarus can fly and achieve greatness but should ever 'ware the Sun.

Personality: Icarus Caine shares with most Black Dawn cultists the less than stellar traits of greed, covetousness, arrogance, deceit and cunning viciousness. True to his lineage, he is a domineering bully. He is, after all, a devil and a son of Caine.

Powers/Tactics: Icarus commands a gang of the renegade bandits known as Comancheros. They pillage and loot over a vast territory from their hideout at the abandoned Indian Pueblos near the Conquisto Diablo mine. Although a vile and bloodthirsty lot, they are not true Black Dawn members. The Comancheros have cut a mutually beneficial deal with the Dawn and Icarus has his eyes on select members for recruitment into the arms of the dark cause. Enjoying any opportunity to cause mayhem, he rides along on important and strenuous ventures. Any member who swerves from the goal of the cambion comanchero is dealt with directly by Icarus's six-guns. He has no time for dissent. The bandits have become somewhat used to the hellish manifestations that plague the mine; that, or they fear Icarus more.

The bandits attack with small arms and explosives from horseback in a lightning swift coordinated assault. They frequently take hostages which are turned over to the Black Dawn for various purposes. Other loot is theirs to keep; Icarus always gets the biggest share.

Though he is not a true Dominion head, he is authorized to lead Black Dawn troops at his father's bequest. Naturally, because of his diabolic origin, he is a full member. He has an uncanny knowledge of the inner workings of the cult which exceeds his father's. He has access to all of this Dominions facilities and hardware.

Unbeknownst to Colonel Caine, Icarus has found out how to summon the Oracle Demon in the mine's Shrine. He uses this venue to research his precognitive dreams and to contact his Incarnate Grandfather. There is a growing camaraderie between Icarus and the Oracle that would cause the elder Caine much unrest did he know.

The hellish son of Caine is an accomplished expert with many weapons and a deadly combatant. His weapons of choice are a pair of Colt .45s with many notches counting the victims of his numerous showdowns. He is fast, a professional gunslinger. He especially enjoys gunfights in the dark where his ultraviolet vision gives him the winning edge. He is hard to surprise due to his superior hearing and enhanced senses. When in a sporting mood during a showdown he may allow his foe to fire first, relying on his powers of regeneration for healing after he has gunned down his adversary. He will never act this way when expecting to face multiple opponents.

Icarus's demonic heritage has bestowed on him powers he neither understands or can control. Under physical duress or during hand-to-hand combat he may experience an involuntary surge of strength. When frustrated or angry he sometimes delivers a mental blast which can affect objects in the area. His most astounding power is the precognitive dreams which are alluded to above.

Appearance: Icarus's appearance has grown stranger as he ages. He has copperish skin, fangs, vestigial horns and the vertically slit pupils which earned him the moniker, Snake Eyes.

ICARUS CAINE

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
15	STR	5	OCV: 6+
18	DEX	24	DCV: 6
15	CON	10	ECV: 5
14	BODY	8	Phases: 4, 8, 12
14	INT	4	
14	EGO	8	Costs
18	PRE	8	
14	COM	2	Char: 86 Base: 75
6	PD	3	+ +
6	ED	3	Powers: 227 Disad: 238
3	SPD	2	= =
7	REC	2	Totals" 313 313
40	END	5	
32	STUN	2	

Cost	Powers	END
14	3d6 Ego Attack, Area effect (1 Hex), Does KB, Only when angered, No Conscious Control	7
5	3d6 Aid to STR, Only when cornered or wounded, No Conscious Control	1
13	Clairsentience: Sight & Hearing, See into future, No conscious control, 3 Charges	[3c]
6	UV Vision, Ultrasonic Hearing	
6	Life Support: Intense Heat, Hellish effects of the Atmosphere of the Conquered Devil Mine	
6	Immunity to all poisonous reptile venom	
4	Regeneration 1 BODY/Day (-1¼)	
3	Ambidexterity	
3	Bump of Direction	
7	Fast Draw 15-	
3	Lightsleep	
4	+2" Running	1/5"
9	+3 Perception rolls	

	Skills
3	Breakfall 13-
3	Climbing 13-
3	Combat Driving (Carriages) 13-
3	Conversation 13-
3	Interrogation 13-
3	Persuasion 13-
3	Riding 13-
3	Stealth 13-
3	Streetwise 13-
3	Trading 13-
3	Concealment 12-
3	Paramedic 12-
3	Tactics 12-
3	Tracking 12-

	Skills
5	Weaponsmith 11- (Slugthrowers & Muscle-Powered Weapons)
3	Demolitions 11-
3	Navigation 11-
3	Survival 11-
3	Mechanics 11-
3	Animal Handler 11-
3	Shadowing 11-
3	KS: Local Indian Cultures 12-
3	KS: Local Legends 12-
2	KS: Black Dawn 12-
3	Traveler
2	AK: Fort Blaze/Brimstone Mine 12-
2	AK: Southwest U.S. Territories and N. Mexico 12-
2	AK: Sonoran Desert 12-
3	PS: Bandit Leader 13 -
3	PS: Gunslinger 13-
4	Spanish Language, Native (4 pts)
3	English Language, Fluent (3 pts)
3	Apache Language, Accented (2 pts)
3	Papago Language, Fluent (3 pts)
2	TF: All Ground Vehicles
8	WF: Small Arms, Melee, Missile, Gatling Gun, Cannon/Mortar
16	+2 Levels w/ Combat
2	+1 OCV w/ Colt Single Action Army Revolver
10	+1 Overall Level
5	+1 Level w/ General Skills

75+	Disadvantages
20	Vulnerability: 2x STUN Vs. Magic/Holy Weapons (Com)
20	Vulnerability: 2x BODY Vs. Magic/Holy Weapons (Com)
15	Watched: Luther Steward (MoPow, NCI) 14-
20	Hunted: Fortunatii Operatii (MoPow, NCI, Harsh) 8-
15	Hunted: U.S. Marshals/ Federalies(LessPow, NCI, 11-)
25	Dist Feature: Copperish skin, Fangs, Vestigial Horns, Vertically slit pupils (Not Conc, Extreme)
13	Enraged: Symbols / Representatives of "Good" Religions (14-/11-)
25	Psych Lim: Hatred of opposing faiths (V.Com, Total)
25	Psych Lim: Cruel, Vicious (V.Com, Total)
20	Susceptibility: Holy Items (V.Com, 1d6/ Turn)
20	Reputation: El Diablo Yanqui (Extreme, 14-)
5	1d6 Unluck
15	Villain Bonus

SILAS AND PAUL VOLTANUS

Background/History: Even the most infamous of organizations harbor individuals of evil reputation exceeding their own. The renowned Silas Voltanus has achieved such a level of distinction in the Black Dawn. The question of his personal involvement is usually the first to arise at word of Black Dawn activities, and an answer in the affirmative gives rise to great dread. Silas Voltanus, the only Black Dawn member in all history to have received acquittal for failure, is destined to forge a mighty weapon for his Evil Masters, an instrument to lay waste the governments of the world. He is the key to their plot to violently usher in a new world order.

Silas Voltanus has many enemies, but none so great as the benevolent wizard-agents of the Fortunatii Operatii. They have investigated his past with hope of finding a lever against him, and privately circulate a monograph containing their findings. It reveals that Silas and his "brother" Paul are the sons of a deceased Budapest noble, whose name was not Voltanus after all. Silas' murderous career began at his birth; his mother, already weakened by the delivery of his twin, Paul, lacked the strength to survive the violence with which Silas came bawling into the world. Their cruel father died in a duel when they were six — Silas chose the pistol his father used. The next unexplained death was that of Paul Voltanus, who fell through thin ice on a frozen lake. His body was never recovered. A grieving Silas, deeply affected, fashioned a wooden mannequin which he named Paul, and used his ventriloquism to carry on conversations with it.

The elder Voltanus had died defending the family honor. His forefathers were accused of dealing with evil powers. In an occurrence that perhaps preceded Paul's death, Silas found that the rumors were true. A secret sub-basement with an occult library, an alchemical laboratory and a temple dedicated to something called The Black Dawn was discovered by the boy, who immersed himself in study. Unknown to Silas, he was being observed by an invisible presence trapped in a pentagram on the floor.

After the unexpected death of his stepmother from a tumble down the basement stairs, Silas was separated from his treasures and sent to an academy. The Fortunatii Operatii do not know where he was following the night he ran away from the school, but rumors of robbery, insurrection and prison breakouts prevail. It is known that under an assumed name he was one of the last great Barbary Coast pirate captains. Upon his return to Budapest he avenged the death of his father, then was captured and sentenced to execution by firing squad.

Amazingly, he survived the first volley, and, as the captain advanced to administer the death blow, a wild horde of madmen surged over the wall and massacred the soldiers. Silas had been rescued by the Black Dawn. They bore him back to the deserted mansion, where he used his alchemical apparatus to heal himself, and was reunited with his beloved Paul. He held the wooden doll to his breast and spoke to it. The cultists made excuses to each other and left the two alone. Then came the moment when the last vestiges of rationality still existing in the mind of Silas Voltanus were blown away, as the little carved head looked up at him and two living eyes opened. "Hello Silas," said Paul. "I've been waiting so long for you."

Silas, exultant with the return of his brother's spirit, never noticed that the pentagram on the floor had disappeared.

Personality: Silas is hot tempered, domineering, arrogant, vengeful and unpredictably violent even by Black Dawn standards. While he has no appreciation of others' work, he is surprisingly artistic. The constant companionship of Paul has only reinforced his guilt over his brother's death, and his gratitude at having Paul's spirit with him now has blinded him to certain peculiarities exhibited by the mannequin. Paul himself is a vicious creature. He murders indiscriminately, and is feared by the Black Dawn members under Silas' command. Silas and Paul function as a unit. They scheme, fight, and conduct research, talking and arguing constantly. Paul has promised Silas that when the aims of the Black Dawn are fulfilled, he will be restored to life in the flesh.

Powers/Tactics: Never content to serve any but the Masters of the Pit, Silas is now leader of his own Black Dawn Dominion, a mixture of his own hand-picked men and the survivors of a San Franciscan Chinese dominion. Silas' group is currently in California, but is for hire anywhere if the deed is in the Inferno's best interest. His primary responsibility is the forging of the Hands of Night on Plunder Island.

Silas learned well in his years of studying the library hidden in his father's house. He has fully mastered the alchemical and ritual arts, although he seldom utilizes the latter as Paul has an uncanny knack for it.

During the years before he met the Black Dawn, Silas acquired many martial skills which, combined with his own natural ferocity, renders him a deadly combatant. He is a crack shot, and an able swordsman, but his knife fighting skill is legendary, second to none in the world. His natural brawling prowess compounds the danger. He is never caught without weapons, and usually carries around certain deadly gadgets he has devised. Through his association with the Black Dawn he has learned demolitions, and his ability in this field is growing constantly. Players encountering Silas for the first time might get a laugh at his expense, as the man *does* carry a doll around. Of course, after the doll has jumped at them and slit a few throats it isn't funny anymore. Clever players who try to prove to Silas that Paul is not really his brother will find that the argument falls on deaf ears.

Paul himself is a danger not to be underestimated. His small wooden body serves him well, as he is strong as a grown man and very dexterous. He is in fact a possessor demon, and may employ any of the abilities of that species. That he does not merely underscores the importance of maintaining Silas' belief that he is his brother. The abilities he does exhibit in front of Silas are his strength and speed, his ability to use magical potions, and his skill at contacting the Oracle demon that serves this particular Dominion. He suffers the same weaknesses any other possessor does. These he hides from Silas through clever lies. He is able to use any weapon built to his scale. Paul has the same stats as a Possessor demon (q.v.), with these additions: Shrinking (one level, 0 END Pers, Always On), Summon Oracle Demon, WF: Melee Weapons and Small Arms. Also, the wooden body has STR 15, BODY 8, and PD 4 (2 PD is Damage Resistant) while the Possessor is inhabiting it.

Appearance: Silas and Paul are consumed by darkness, and this is reflected in their appearance. Both dress theatrically, often with cloaks or capes, always in black.

Silas is a huge man, over six feet tall and built like a bull. His extremities are large even on him — he can strangle a man with one hand. His black hair and beard frame a hawkish, intelligent face. Dark brown eyes of unusual intensity complete the picture.

Paul is thirty inches tall, with the proportions of a ventriloquist's dummy. He is fully articulated, and Silas is always working on improving him. His head is the only part that has not been replaced many times. Paul can, at will, alter the aspect of his painted-on eyes so that they appear to be real. He usually affects this change for emphasis, either when arguing with Silas, barking orders to the Black Dawn, or just before delivering the killing thrust to his victims.

SILAS VOLTANUS

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats			
20	STR	10	**OCV:** 6+			
19	DEX	27	**DCV:** 6			
18	CON	16	**ECV:** 7			
15	BODY	10	**Phases:** 4, 8, 12			
18	INT	8				
20	EGO	20	**Costs**			
20	PRE	10				
10	COM	0	**Char:**	116	**Base:**	100
8	PD	4		+		+
8	ED	5	**Powers:**	263	**Disad:**	279
3	SPD	1		=		=
8	REC	0	**Totals:**	379		379
40	END	2				
38	STUN	4				

Cost	Powers	END
11	Magic Skill (Alchemy) 17-	
9	Magic Skill (Ritualism) 16-	

	Skills	
10	Perk: Black Dawn member (high)	
40	Followers 64 50 pt. Black Dawn cultists	
10	Money: Wealthy	
3	PS: Cult Leader 13-	
3, 3	Brawling; Combat Sense 13-	
5, 3	Defense Maneuver; Fast Draw 13-	
3, 3	Lightsleep; Resistance +3	
5	Streetwise 14-	
3, 3	Acrobatics 13-; Breakfall 13-	
3	Climbing 13-	
3	Combat Driving: Boats 13-	
3	Concealment 13-	
3	Combat Riding: Horses 13-	
3, 3	Conversation 13-; Persuasion 13-	
3, 3	Bribery 13-; Interrogation 13-	
3, 3	Inventor 13-; Stealth 13-	
3, 3	Tactics 13-; Paramedic 13-	
3, 5	Cryptography 13-; Ventriloquist 12-	
3, 3	Demolitions 11-; Forgery 11-	
4	Weaponsmith: Melee and slugthrowers 11-	
3, 3	Gambling 11-; Mechanics 11-	
3, 3	Navigation 11-; Shadowing 11-	
8	SC: Alchemy 18-	
7, 3	KS: Black Dawn 17-; KS: Ritual Magic 13-	
5	PS: Woodcarver 14-	
3	PS: Pirate 12-	
4, 3	AK: Hungary 14-; AK: West Coast 13-	
5	Fluent Languages w/Literacy: Latin, English, Spanish (Hungarian is native)	
16	+ 2 Levels w/Combat	
20	+2 Overall Levels	
6	WF: Small Arms, Melee Weapons, Common Missile	
3	TF: Balloons, Carriages, Horses	

100+	Disadvantages
30	Berserk when Paul is "injured" or "slain" (14-/ 8-)
25	Psych Lim: Crazed (V.Com, Tot)
25	Psych Lim: Protective of Paul (V.Com, Str)
15	Psych Lim: Casual Killer (Com, Str)
15	Distinctive Features: Crazed madman (Not conc, extreme reaction)
15	Extreme Reputation (Black Dawn leader, to KS: Occult World only) 14-
5	DNPC, Paul (AsPow, useful skills) 14-
15	Watched by the Evil Masters of Hell (MoPow, NCI) 14-
25	Hunted by Fortunatii Operatii (AsPow, NCI) 14-
5	Unluck 1d6
104	Villain bonus

Silas Voltanus carries a number of potions of Restorative Elixir and Demon's Luck with him at all times to insure his continued survival. These potions can be found in the Art of the Dawn.

SILAS' PERSONAL DOMINION TROOPS

15 STR	14 DEX	13 CON	10 BODY	8 INT
8 EGO	13 PRE	8 COM	6 PD	6 ED
3 SPD	6 REC	26 END	26 STUN	31 COST

Skills: Transport FAM (all water craft) or Riding (Horses, et al.) 12-, Demolitions 11-, PS: Cultist 12-, Streetwise 11-, WF: Small Arms, Melee Weapons, +1 w/Pistol or Clubs. Cost: 19

50+ Disadvantages: 0

GREG 93

CREATURES

DEMONS

The wise magician Newton stumbled onto a great universal constant when he wrote his third law: "For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction." Logical extensions of this principle include "every light can cast a shadow; every yin is accompanied by a yang." Therefore every good births an evil, every angel has a demon. And the annals of religious lore everywhere show that every beneficent deity is opposed by a malign entity.

Only vague generalities may be made regarding the dark dominion. The enemy camp is a real place in a physical sense, inhabited by the spirits of the damned and by the demons, bodily incarnations of corruption. It is governed by a chain of command based on power, ranging from lowly tempters to the pre-eminent demon lords. The goal of The Inferno is the debasement of all that is good and noble in mankind.

Fortunately the powers of The Pit are constrained by maxims of cosmic law. A demon cannot travel between The Dark Valley and Earth unless summoned by a human. Demons cannot be damaged by most human weapons, but have no special immunity to magic. The core of a demon's power is its true name; commands issued to it by this name cannot be disobeyed. The greatest law is that forbidding a demon to prove to the world at large the existence of The Pit, for this action would nullify faith, and there is no redemption or damnation without faith.

Demonic intervention in human affairs is a rich vein to mine game ideas from, as the agencies of Hell are resourceful and seemingly motiveless. Care should be taken not to parade demons up and down in front of players like targets; these entries should be regarded more as GM tools than simply monster encounters. The only real "monsters" are the Incarnate and the Tormentor. A campaign will be scarier if the demons are kept in the background.

Statistics for demon lords have not been presented in this Sourcebook, consequently, but excellent statistics for these and other types of demons may be found in the *Fantasy Hero Companion*, which is well worth a look.

THE TORMENTOR

Background/History: The vast majority of demonic sub-species in the Abyss are collectively known as Tormentors. Millions of these beings exist, and none are identical. In their home country they function as soldiers, servants, and tormentors of damned spirits.

Sorcerers have found the Tormentor the least hazardous type of demons to summon and command. While the greater parameters of the magic required to achieve this are identical to those of Oracle summoning, the behavior of the Tormentor should the spell fail is different. An inept magician who fails to bind or dismiss a Tormentor is still doomed, but the Tormentor lacks the ability to return to its place of origin. It is then loosed on the Earth.

A Tormentor stranded on Earth finds itself in a precarious situation. It will know that powers that guard the Earth will destroy it if there is no danger of human notice. A marooned Tormentor will always immediately seek powerful allies and offer its services to them. The preferred master is an Incarnate demon (q.v.), but Tormentors have been encountered in association with vampyr lords, powerful sorcerers, and the Black Dawn.

Powers/Tactics: The Tormentor is the least powerful of the true demons. Each possesses an insidious knack for inflicting pain, and all possess a limited power of invisibility.

TORMENTOR DEMON

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats			
23	STR	13	**OCV:** 5			
15	DEX	15	**DCV:** 5			
20	CON	20	**ECV:** 4			
13	BODY	6	**Phases:** 4, 8, 12			
10	INT	0				
13	EGO	6	**Costs**			
20	PRE	10				
6	COM	-2	**Char:**	91	**Base:**	100
10	PD	5		+		+
12	ED	8	**Powers:**	194	**Disad:**	185
3	SPD	5		=		=
9	REC	0	**Totals:**	285		285
40	END	0				
40	STUN	5				

Cost	Powers	END
15	Physical attack power — GMs discretion	
25	Energy attack power — GMs discretion	
20	Movement power — GMs discretion	
25	Mental power or bonuses to PRE — GMs discretion	
10	25% Physical Resistant Damage Reduction, not vs. silver, holy items (-½)	
45	Invisibility to normal sight, No fringe, 0 END	0
28	Images to all sight, one hex, -5 to PER roll, no range	2
20	Universal Translator	
3	Interrogation 13-	
3	PS: Torturer 12-	

100+	Disadvantages
10	Vuln: 2x Effect from holy items
20	Psych Lim: Must obey those who summon it properly and know its true name (Com, Tot)
20	Physical Lim: Repelled by holy items (Frequently, Greatly)
15	Secret ID (True Name)
120	Monster bonus

Each Tormentor employs a special mode of travel — some fly, others may tunnel, many will run at lightning speed. The unique physiognomy of each provides a special form of physical attack — stinging, biting, or pummeling. The magical nature of these demons manifests itself in spell abilities — fire, ice, or force attacks.

Tormentors can utilize limited illusionary skills to appear as humans, animals, or inert objects. The mind powers of a Tormentor may be encountered as telekinesis, telepathy, or remarkable communication skills like magically enhanced conversation, oratory, persuasion, or seduction. Those Tormentors with seduction abilities are known as incubi or succubi.

Appearance: A true form of a Tormentor is unique with each individual. Forms encountered range from hundred-legged winged centipedes to seemingly normal humans. Their illusionary powers permit particularly eldritch Tormentors to temporarily alter their appearance into mind-shattering impossibilities.

GREG '93

THE ORACLE

Background/History: These are demons called up by magic to be interrogated. Those reckless enough to attempt such a sorcery reap great reward, but the risk is appallingly great.

There are three steps to the procedure. First the demon must be summoned. To accomplish this the demon's true name must be known, and a magic circle drawn with great ceremony. A lengthy evocation is then chanted. If the circle is drawn correctly then the second step of binding is accomplished. The dialogue with the creature is then conducted. The final step is dismissal. If the proper dispellations are cast, the Oracle bears no enmity toward the caster, and the wizard is enlightened.

Powers/Tactics: A properly ensorcered Oracle is eminently useful. Many secrets are known to the denizens of the Inferno, and they often display an astonishing knowledge of human affairs. These demons regard it as an honor to be precisely summoned. Beware, however, for an Oracle considers a clumsy invocation an umbrage to be severely avenged. While sometimes the summoner is slain outright, often the demon will play along and lie to its offender. Then it will pretend to be successfully dispelled. It will then arrange among its kin a campaign of terror that will culminate in the destruction of its victim. The primary agents of this undertaking will usually be Tormentor demons.

Appearance: A very important stipulation of a correct summoning is that the demon will obey the command to appear in an aesthetically pleasing form. This is both vital to the sanity of the sorcerer and pleasing to the vanity of the Oracle.

ORACLE DEMON

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
20	STR	10	**OCV:** 5
16	DEX	18	**DCV:** 5
13	CON	6	**ECV:** 7
12	BODY	4	**Phases:** 3, 6, 9, 12
18	INT	8	
20	EGO	20	**Costs**
20	PRE	10	
10	COM	0	**Char:** 102 **Base:** 100
8	PD	4	+ +
8	ED	5	**Powers:** 153 **Disad:** 155
4	SPD	14	= =
7	REC	0	**Totals:** 255 255
30	END	2	
30	STUN	1	

Cost	Powers	END
50	10d6 Ego Attack, Requires eye contact (-1)	10
15	1d6 HKA (2d6 w/ STR) [Claws]	1+
45	Shapeshift, any form, 0 END	0
5	UV Vision	
20	Universal Translator	
11	KS: Occult World 21-,	
6	KS: Activities of subject of query 16-	

100+	Disadvantages
10	Vuln: 2x Effect from holy items
20	Psych Lim: Must obey someone who uses proper summoning rituals and knows its true name (Common, total)
20	Physical Lim: Repelled by holy items (Frequently, Greatly)
15	Secret ID (Oracle Demon's true name)
90	Monster bonus

In a specific conjuration the demon may appear in animal or angelic guise, or even perfectly human. If the spell is botched, the form is limited only by the evil imagination of the Oracle, which is a long and broad imagination indeed.

The Oracle is mentioned often in this book. They are intended for use as a GM's tool, a way to rationalize the secret knowledge evil forces always seem to possess. The summoning of an Oracle is an act of evil, and should player characters attempt it the GM should enforce all the summoning requirements, and show no mercy for failure. The dice should be rolled out of players' sight so that they do not know whether or not all conditions were met, and even a successful attempt should be so harrowing that they never do it again.

A final word of caution — only the most powerful villains should be able to summon Oracles; if every opponent knows everything about the PCs they will more than likely get very disgusted with the campaign. Don't overdo it!

THE POSSESSOR

Background/History: Evil conjurers in the service of the Pit are sometimes called upon to commit the ultimate betrayal of humanity — the summoning of a Possessor demon. Such a behest is considered a great honor by a depraved wizard and is easily accomplished. The diabolical Possessor is never bound and goes out into the world promptly. The wizard's responsibility in the matter is at an end. He remains with his reward and a colder heart.

The Possessors are the most reviled of Hell's legions, ironically due to circumstances when total occupancy was not achieved. The familiar symptoms of demonic possession are a sign of failure on the part of the fiend, whose goal is to take a human host without outward indication.

When a Possessor fails to completely sublimate the personality of its host, the battle of wills manifests itself as horrible physical and mental aberrations on the part of the victim. A Possessor is often quite content to remain in the body and inspire terror, hopefully killing a few would-be exorcists along the way.

A successful possession enables the demon to meddle in human affairs undetected. The mission of a Possessor may be subtle or explosive, lasting a minute or a human lifetime. The targets of the hellish saboteur are usually religious or positively aligned occult institutions.

POSSESSOR DEMON

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
*	STR	0	**OCV:** 5
15	DEX	15	**DCV:** 5
23	CON	26	**ECV:** 8
*	BODY	0	**Phases:** 3, 6, 9, 12
23	INT	13	
25	EGO	30	**Costs**
23	PRE	13	
2	COM	-4	**Char:** 138 **Base:** 100
*	PD	0	+ +
10	ED	5	**Powers:** 178 **Disad:** 216
4	SPD	15	= =
5	REC	10	**Totals:** 316 316
50	END	2	* These Stats are equal to host
+20	STUN	13	body's characteristics.

Cost	Powers	END
90	12d6 Mind Control, 0 END	0
24	STR 16 Telekinesis	2
37	6d6 Aid to Any Physical CHAR	3
7	1d6 Major Transformation, Cumulative (normal person into demonic servant), power is usable once per day (-2)	1
20	Universal Translator	

100+	Disadvantages
20	Vuln: 2x Effect from holy items
20	Psych Lim: Fear of failure (Com, Tot)
15	Psych Lim: Hatred of clergy and holy items (Com, Str)
15	Psych Lim: Overconfident (Com, Str)
20	Physical Lim: Dispelled by death of host body (Freq, Fully)
30	Susceptibility 3d6/phase from holy ground (Common)
20	DNPC, Host body (Normal) 14-
76	Monster bonus

Powers/Tactics: The true mission of the Possessor is to commit its atrocities undetected and unsuspected. Should a Possessor be forced into conflict, however, it is a formidable opponent. Besides its powerful telekinetic ability, the Possessor can alter and augment the physical capabilities of its human host, even to the extent of transforming the body itself into horrifically deadly shapes.

Exorcists and psychic investigators are hampered in conflict with Possessors by the knowledge that the innocent within may be destroyed if great violence is used to subdue the demon.

The host, once freed of the demon, retains only vague impressions of his ordeal.

Appearance: The outward symptoms of a partial possession are familiar enough to preclude the need for elaboration. A complete possession has no outward sign save for odd behavior on the part of the possessee. As with all demons, the Possessor cannot bear the sight of holy items wielded by believers. Nor can they enter consecrated areas without suffering damage.

CONSTRUCTS

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
35*	STR	20	**OCV:** 4
13	DEX	9	**DCV:** 4
20	CON	20	**ECV:** 3
21*	BODY	20	**Phases:** 4, 8, 12
8	INT	-2	
10	EGO	0	
20	PRE	10	**Costs**
8	COM	-1	
8	PD	2	**Char:** 87 **Base:** 100
4	ED	0	+
3	SPD	7	**Powers:** 113 **Disad:** 100
11	REC	2	=
40	END	0	**Totals:** 200 200
46*	STUN	0	*Char from Growth added in

Cost	Powers	END
9	+3d6 Hand Attack	1
15	25% Physical Resistant Damage Reduction	
4	PD Damage Resistance (8 PD)	
7	Growth, 0 END, Pers, Always on	0
20	Regeneration: 2 Body/turn	
21	Life Support: No need to breathe, eat, sleep, excrete, immune to aging and disease	
2	+1" Running (7" total)	1/5"

	Skills	
3	PS: Former profession 12-	
2	KS: Past hobby 11-	
2	Familiarity w/two skills	
9	Three talents or skills, variable	
10	Two skills at +1	
5	5 pt skill level	
3	Weapon familiarities	
1	1 Basic Language	

100+	Disadvantages	
15	Psych Lim: GM chosen fear or phobia (Com, Str)	
10	Psych Lim: Encroaching insanity (Com, Mod)	
20	Distinctive features: Size (Not conc, Major reaction)	
55	Monster bonus	

THE CONSTRUCT

Background/History: Little did Mary Shelley realize it, but when she penned "Frankenstein" she set fire to the imagination of sorcerers across Europe and the Americas. They took it as a challenge to duplicate the experiment described in the book without the detrimental events which ensued. While simple animation of the dead, i.e. zombification, was commonly known, the construction of a superior being capable of thought and self-direction had not been achieved.

These endeavors and the methods utilized met with varying success. Surgery, necromancy, science and alchemy were all brought to bear on the experiment. Using corpses stitched together worked, but often the brain retained memories of its past life, and the construct tended to wander off and terrify grieving relatives. Growing bodies worked better, but it took years to educate the creation. The most successful result came with the brain of an amnesiac and an alchemically grown body. This creature rebelled against the evil plans of its maker and is now a valued and apparently immortal agent of the Fortunatii Operatii.

The experiments continue and these creatures are still met with occasionally. It is feared one day the perfect construct, a being of great intelligence, strength, and ambition, will be made capable of procreation. Humanity's dominion on Earth would be ended. The great failure of the construct is its lacking of a soul; it must be taught good and evil.

Powers/Tactics: The construct may be of varying intelligence, but all are immensely strong. They are capable of using many weapons. Any phobias possessed in life tend to be magnified intensely.

The life force of a construct does not always depend on the proper functioning of internal organs. This makes them difficult to kill. They can lay dormant for years and rise again. The Fortunatii Operatii agent mentioned above, Adam Clay, allowed himself to be frozen in ice for a year and emerged undamaged. Their regenerative power is legendary.

Appearance: A construct may appear as a normal human or as a hideously stitched-together parody of humanity, depending on the materials used. Having no soul, they often emit an air of great tragedy.

WALKING CADAVER

Background/History: The hellish metal Nonamite is a substance of many properties, all of them evil. It is an essential part of necromantic rituals designed to reanimate the dead. In large enough quantities it will animate the dead without rituals! An intact corpse brought back to life by Nonamite, by ritual or proximity, is called a walking cadaver.

Powers/Tactics: Whatever identity it had in life has fled by the time a walking cadaver is made. The creatures know no emotion save craving and frustration. They are as intelligent as a bright dog.

A newly resurrected walking cadaver is a wild beast whose sole thought is to feed on living flesh. It will not rot as long as it can feed. Evil necromancers have learned that walking cadavers are quite trainable. Some villainous groups, the Black Dawn in particular, have gone so far as to train armies of undead.

To train a cadaver it must first be trained, or more precisely, broken. Only after the wild spirit has been beaten out of them are they ready to learn a task. With patience and a supply of fresh rewards, they can be taught fairly complicated (Skill roll 11-) procedures. The cadavers even seem to gain satisfaction from performing their jobs.

WALKING CADAVER

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
10	STR	0	**OCV:** 3
10	DEX	0	**DCV:** 3
10	CON	0	**ECV:** 2
10	BODY	0	**Phases:** 6, 12
5	INT	-5	
5	EGO	-10	**Costs**
10	PRE	0	
6	COM	-2	**Char:** 7 **Base:** 75
6	PD	15	+ +
4	ED	9	**Powers:** 127 **Disad:** 64
2	SPD	0	= =
4	REC	0	**Totals:** 134 134
20	END	0	
0	STUN	0	

Cost	Powers	END
24	Life Support: Total (-¼) Must eat raw meat or decompose)	0
35	Sense Life: Detect bought as Sense, Targeting, Range, Discriminatory, +3 to Perception Roll	0
3	+ 1d6 Hand Attack	
8	½d6 HKA (1d6+1 w/ STR) — Bite	1+
45	Takes No Stun	
12	Skills as taught by particular Master	

75+	Disadvantages
20	Physc Lim: Must obey master (Freq, Fully)
20	Distinc Features: Corpse (Conc w/ effort, Extreme)
5	Dependence: Raw meat (V.Com, 1/week, 1d6)
14(15)	Watched: Current Master (MoPow, NCI, 14-, x ½)

Among the tasks they can learn are mining, factory work, housekeeping and field work. They are most commonly used as guards and fighters. They use melee weapons well, and have a vicious bite. Guns require extra training, but are learnable if the mechanism is not too complicated.

Cadavers lose their speaking skills but understand their native language. If their vocal cords are in good enough shape they can be taught to speak haltingly. Their vocabularies run to about fifty words.

The strangest aspect of a walking cadaver is the fact that it does not use any of its organs, musculature, or nervous system. While it eats, it does not digest or excrete. It sees, but put out its eyes and it can still sense warm flesh. It can even differentiate between individuals while "blind." If its head is cut off or its spine severed it can still walk. The only way to stop a walking cadaver is to destroy it.

Appearance: The walking cadaver is just that. They can be rotted to almost any degree and still move about. A fresh walking cadaver is noticeable by the lack of life in its eyes.

SKELETONS

Background/History: The common perception of the reanimated skeleton as a fragile construct of mindless aspect is accepted at great peril. A notable solidity is imparted upon the creation by the mighty spells necessary for fabrication.

The magical field animating a skeleton allows it to reknit breakage and reconstruct itself if it is undone. The individual bones can be prevented from rejoining the whole if they are crushed, burned, or dissolved in acid.

Also, skeletons are frightfully quick and agile. They possess uncanny awareness of their surroundings. If their creator desires, the skeleton may use any normal weapons.

Powers/Tactics: Among the fruitful but dangerous undead creations a sorcerer can call up is the skeleton. The ease by which a number of skeletons can be transported, simply by ordering them to disassemble, enriches their status as the undead slave of choice.

Drawbacks are the difficulty of the glamour required, and the danger, common to this and zombie creation, of ghosts of the deceased seeking vengeance for the umbrage committed on their former bones. The drain on the sorcerer prohibits the control of more than a few skeletons at a time.

Appearance: Skeletons are simply that — a framework of bone. They are almost always human, although some animal skeletons have been noted. Tricky sorcerers will animate the skeleton inside a fresh cadaver or otherwise disguise the skeleton.
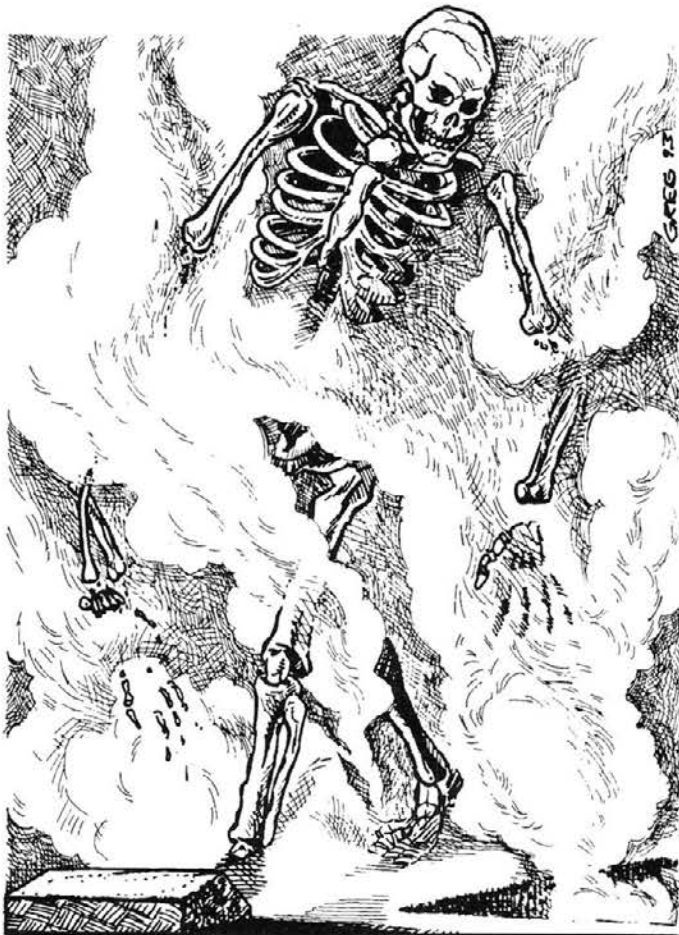
SKELETON

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats		
15	STR	5	**OCV:** 5		
16	DEX	18	**DCV:** 5		
10	CON	0	**ECV:** —		
10	BODY	0	**Phases:** 4, 8, 12		
5	INT	-5			
—	EGO	—	**Costs**		
15	PRE	5			
0	COM	-5	**Char:** 44	**Base:**	100
5	PD	12	+		+
5	ED	12	**Powers:** 206	**Disad:**	150
3	SPD	2	=		=
0	REC	0	**Totals:** 250		250
0	END	0			
—	STUN	—			

Cost	Powers	END
17	1d6 HKA (2 x 1d6 w. STR), 0 END, Reduced Penetration	0
7	0 END Cost on STR	0
60	Automaton — no STUN, does not bleed	
36	25% Resistant Physical Damage Reduction, not vs. magic (-¼)	
16	Regeneration 2 BODY/turn, not vs. magic (-¼)	
30	Life Support: Full	
35	Spatial Awareness, 360 degrees	
4	WF: Melee Weapons, Missile Weapons	
1	Climbing 8-	

100+	Disadvantages
25	Psych Lim: Must obey orders of its creator (V.Com, Tot)
20	Distinctive features: Skeleton (Conc w/disguise, Extreme reaction)
105	Monster bonus

THE INCARNATE

Background/History: Stalking red-handed through occult history, leaving vanishings and destruction in their wake, go the Incarnate demons. They are the ultimate agents of The Inferno on Earth. The mission of these Earth-bound fiends is easily deduced by the wreckage of their passing — the systematic elimination of the enemies of the Pit.

Oracle demons have revealed the small amount of knowledge of the origin of the Incarnates. Millennia ago in a long-vanished country a coven of sorcerers gave themselves over for possession by a powerful type of demon in exchange for eternal life. As the centuries passed the demonic infusions exerted themselves and the original human personalities were lost. If queried to the fate of these human souls, the Oracle only utters a dry chuckle. The Incarnate goes on, assuming new identities through the centuries, doing its awful work.

INCARNATE DEMON

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
30	STR	20	**OCV:** 6
18	DEX	24	**DCV:** 6
23	CON	26	**ECV:** 6
20	BODY	20	**Phases:** 4, 8, 12
13	INT	3	
18	EGO	16	**Costs**
18	PRE	8	
10	COM	0	**Char:** 151 **Base:** 100
14	PD	8	+ +
14	ED	9	**Powers:** 315 **Disad:** 366
3	SPD	2	= =
11	REC	0	**Totals:** 466 466
50	END	2	
60	STUN	13	

Cost	Powers	END
30	Multipower (30 pt pool) — Demonfire Control	
3u	2d6 RKA [Demon Fire]	3
2u	1d6 RKA, Area Effect 4" Cone, No Range [Demon Breath]	3
20	4d6 RKA, Explosion, No Range, 1 Charge, only when demon is slain (-1)	[1c]
24	18" Flight only in winged form (-½)	1/5"
10	Damage Resistance (6 PD/14 ED)	
27	Life Support: All except still must sleeping	
81	Summon Oracle Demon (255 point creature)	
20	Multiform to normal human 100 points	
10	Multiform to black hound 100 points	
35	Spatial Awareness 360 degrees	
13	Detect Magic w/ Range, Discriminatory	

Cost	Skills
20	Universal Translator
3	Lightsleep
7	High Society 14-
5, 5	KS: Occult World 14-, KS: Secret Societies 14-

100+	Disadvantages
20	Vuln: 2x Effect from holy items
20	Accidental Change — cycles through all 3 forms while sleeping 14-
15	Psych Lim: Fear of discovery (Unc, Tot)
10	Psych Lim: Gluttony (Unc, Str)
30	Susceptibility 3d6/phase from holy ground (Common)
10	Watched by its Evil Masters in Hell (MoPow, NCI) 8-
15	Secret ID (Alter ego human form)
246	Monster bonus

An Incarnate has made a precarious change in its existence. To its advantage it can now revel in all the fleshy vices it was heretofore denied. It is still a being of tremendous capability, and enjoys an envied status among its demonic peers. Human beings cannot exercise mastery over it by learning its true name. It cannot be summoned or dispelled.

Its mortality is the most obvious drawback to the Incarnate's existence. Now it is susceptible to violent death. Icons of light still hold power against it, and holy ground causes it harm. Lacking other physical needs, it still must sleep. Worst of all, it is still one of a select few who are closely monitored by their Evil Masters.

Powers/Tactics: Incarnates operate as deep-cover agent, procurer, and executioner. Establishing human identities and blending itself into society, it ingratiates itself into occult and mystical circles seeking out people or magics that endanger the machinations of The Pit.

Years of combating the resourceful agents of good have taught the Incarnate the value of subtlety in its mission. Initially an Oracle will be consulted to ascertain the viability of using ordinary medical or legal channels to defuse the threat. Failing this, the Incarnate will mobilize the Black Dawn, its network of human and monstrous operatives, to accomplish the deed. Only in the most extreme circumstances will the awesome might of the Incarnate itself be brought into play. Violent death and an inferno of destruction are the usual result.

In the unlikely event an Incarnate faces doom, it will take grim satisfaction from the knowledge that The Pit has a final avenging trump to play. The tremendous demonic energies squeezed into its human form impart on it the nature of a bomb that explodes with devastating might upon death (e.g., Chicago 1871).

Appearance: Incarnates have three forms, which they cycle through each time they sleep. One is the human host body, sometimes grotesquely obese from centuries of high living. One is a horrible demonic shape, bipedal and winged. Finally there is the fear-inspiring great hound form. This form is always as black as sin with glowing red eyes.

THE HADES SENTINEL

Background/History: Hades Sentinels, also known as Sentinel Demons and Cataboligne, are the personal servants of Oracle Demons and the Black Dawn dominion to which they are attached. In this capacity, the Sentinels act as messengers, spies, intimidators and repossessors of items. As noted in The Art of the Dawn, a Dominion head is given the true names of all Hades Sentinels under his command. Oracles keep close watch on the activities of their Sentinels and have been known to rebuke Dominion heads who carelessly abuse their services. In extreme cases a Dominion head may lose his access to their services, his position in the Black Dawn, and in extraordinary cases of wanton, wasteful abuse, he may be hideously slain.

The reason Oracles guard the true names of their own so jealously is that they neither want nor will stand for dissent among the ranks of their personal aides. Magical enslavement by a rival faction or another demon is a possibility that could seriously undo the Oracle's schemes (and its ego and status).

Powers/Tactics: Hades Sentinels are very specialized demons. Forbidden to kill unless thrice offended, their main mission is to cause fear and pain. They bring to this mission an undeniable enthusiasm and an impressive bag of tricks.

For example, an individual might steal an artifact and defect from a cult. The leader of the cult calls up an Oracle and is granted leave to "borrow" a Sentinel. Its mission is to find the individual and persuade him to return the item. The Sentinel will find its target and haunt his dwelling, moving furniture and moaning until it is noticed. Then it will relay its message in a sepulchral voice. Refusal will send the demon away.

Now the demon is told to increase its frightening activities and to hurt the target mildly. The thief will find himself tripping on staircases, being bitten in his sleep, etc. A second defiance of the Sentinel's request will be followed by instructions to the Sentinel to cause severe injury to the target. This could include house fires, attacks on innocent acquaintances, public embarrassment, etc. The Sentinel, as mentioned, loves its work and is very imaginative. But it wants that third refusal, for then its most impressive power can be used.

Once scorned for a third time (or having failed for a third time) the Sentinel can approach its victim and open a gate between its present location and the locale of the magical diagram that permitted it entrance to this world. In the example, the orders were to retrieve an item. It can now merely transport the item away, leaving the thief without his prize. If the Sentinel wishes to kill its victim, it can only do so in the presence of its Oracle.

Appearance: Sentinel Demons are totally invisible until they have drawn blood. They come in a variety of shapes and sizes; the listed individual is an average specimen. All are capable of flight, whether winged or not. They are eloquent and talkative when harassing a victim.

HADES SENTINEL

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
20	STR	10	**OCV:** 6
18	DEX	24	**DCV:** 6
18	CON	16	**ECV:** 5
12	BODY	4	**Phases:** 3, 6, 9, 12
15	INT	5	
15	EGO	10	**Costs**
18	PRE	8	
6	COM	-2	**Char:** 110 **Base:** 100
10	PD	6	+ +
10	ED	6	**Power:** 260 **Disad:** 270
4	SPD	12	= =
8	REC	0	**Totals:** 370 370
50	END	7	
35	STUN	4	

Cost	Powers	END
20	20 STR Telekinesis, fine manipulation, 2x END	4
31	Teleportation, extra phase to use, ½ DCV, 1,310,720" (1489 Miles) 1 fixed location (point of origin), 2x Mass, 1 Charge, Only to recover victim or Item or for self preservation (-½)	10
20	Universal Translator	
6	Damage resistance (10 PD/10 ED), Not vs. silver/ Magic/Holy items, etc., (-½)	
29	UV Vision, Ultrasonic Hearing, Tracking/Discriminatory Smell, +2 PER	
45	Flight 15" (x8 non-combat, 90")	1/5"
22	1d6 HKA (1 ½d6 w/ STR), AP	2+
5	Mind Link (Summoner)	
5	Mind Link (Oracle Demon that it serves)	
40	Invisibility, No fringe, vs. all sight, 0 END, Does not work in Holy/Sacred Areas (-½)	0
11	Life Support: Immune to Intense Heat/Cold Environments, Aging, May Breathe unusual atmosphere (Hades)	

	Skills
3	Concealment 12-
3	Conversation 13-
3	Interrogation 13-
3	KS: Occult World 12-
3	KS: Subject hunted 12-
3	Persuasion 13-
3	Shadowing 11-
3	Stealth 13-
2	WF: Melee Weapons

100+	Disadvantages
20	Vuln: 2x STUN from holy items (COM x2)
20	Vuln: 2x BODY from Holy Items (COM x2)
20	Psych Lim: Fear of failure (Com, Tot)
15	Psych Lim: Hatred of clergy and holy items (Com, Str)
15	Psych Lim: Sadistic Taunter (Com, Str)
25	Psych Lim: Limited by code (All time, Fully)
30	Susceptibility 3d6/phase from holy ground (Common)
125	Monster bonus

While specifically intended for a Black Dawn campaign the Sentinel can be used anytime a sorcerer deals with an Oracle. By no means should the GM let players know the Sentinel cannot kill until thrice thwarted — let them work for that knowledge. Sentinels do not hurry unless specifically ordered to; a harassment by one may take several game sessions.

LAIRS AND LOCATIONS

LOCUST VALLEY, NEW YORK

This small hamlet on the westward end of Long Island houses an incongruous pair of buildings. Built on opposite sides of a heavily wooded hill, the Locust Valley College of Medical Science and Asylum for the Insane and the chapel house for the Inner Circle of the Astral Elect have been known to inspire amusement in passers-by: "If the patient dies at the hospital then the doctor can go to the Spiritualist and apologize to the fellow in person!" But the forbidding aspect of the two stifles most jocularity, and sensitive people feel a chill when passing by here.

This is the domain of Doctor Arthur Barrosmythe. Both the College and the chapel house are under his secret command. In the college he operates as Professor of Surgery; at the chapel house he conducts seances, his features cloaked by a silk mask. But while both locations provide Barrosmythe ideal conditions under which to practice villainy it is that which a passers-by does not see that contains the starkest horror. For beneath the oddly hemispherical hill is a labyrinth of unknown origin that Barrosmythe has fashioned into a necromantic laboratory without peer.

GMs using Locust Valley as a location for their campaign will find much fuel for scenarios. By no means should PCs be allowed to traipse about the place at will. Locust Valley and its denizens should be hinted at in the beginning; the town should be the hidden center of the campaign before PCs arrive.

The College is little-known and held in contempt by the medical community. Both physical and mental care are taught here. The curriculum also includes such dubious subjects as phrenology (psychic analysis by reading the shape of the skull), mesmerism (healing by hypnosis and magnetic waves), and the use of Electricity as Cure-all. Many of the students here either failed to pass muster at more prestigious schools or are from low income families. A fair percentage showed an inordinate pleasure in conducting surgery while studying elsewhere. A few are even Black Dawn cultists enrolled in a special curriculum. Drunkenness and medicine abuse are epidemic among the student body.

The T shaped College is in the center of a heavily wooded lot that is enclosed by a ten foot high wall. The building is four stories tall and constructed of black brick. The top floor holds dormitories for the students. The second and third floors are classrooms and laboratories. The ground floor consists of offices. The rear section of the College (the stem of the T) is a lunatic asylum. Conditions here are appalling, and woe to the enemies of the Black Dawn who end up here.

The entire complex is gaslit. Electricity is used only in the laboratories and Asylum. The basement houses a huge wood furnace that provides moderate heat in the winter. The chief administrator of the College and Asylum was appointed by Barrosmythe. He is Sears Tattersall, a Dead Soul Dominion member possessed by the spirit of Pious Freeman, a 17th Century alchemist who was a contemporary of Barrosmythe's. Tattersall is a morphine addict.

Barrosmythe's office has a secret hatchway leading past the basement into an underground complex. Here, in stone chambers built by walking cadavers over two centuries ago, Barrosmythe conducts hellish necromantic and medical experiments. Many of the undead he creates here are sent to the Conquisto Diablo mine in Arizona Territory. His servants are walking cadavers, constructs, and telekinetic spirits. An entire chamber is set aside for Black Dawn ceremonies.

The complex has two other entrances. One is inside a boathouse three miles east on Long Island Sound. The tunnel is navigable by rowboat for about two miles inland. A coach drawn by cadavers provides passage for the last mile. Guarding the tunnel entrance are hired thugs; the tunnel itself is patrolled by the undead. The other entrance leads into the wine cellar of the chapel house of the Inner Circle of the Astral Elect.

Built ten years ago on the foundations of a 17th Century farmhouse, the chapel house is a fine example of Italianate Victorian architecture. It is surrounded by well-tended but somewhat colorless lawns and gardens. The house itself is slate grey with black and violet trim.

The GM can use the chapel house of the ICAE for scenarios based on the Spiritualist movement, which is hugely popular at this time. The house belongs to its only (living) permanent resident, the widow Grace Whippett. Almost eighty years old, Whippett has the charm and energy of a young girl; her connections in society are extensive and persuasive. Only Barrosmythe and the Dead Soul Dominion know that she is in fact a devil worshipper and ritual magician of the darkest order. GMs should portray her as a charming lady without a hint of sinisterness.

Save for its fortune telling parlors and the seance room where the spirits of the dead are manifested, the mansion is unremarkable.

Seances are held nightly. Whippett and her two assistants perform most seances, but on certain nights the Spiritualist seekers are graced by the presence of the mysterious nameless medium, who always conducts the ceremony wearing a mask (Barrosmythe). The identity of this individual is unknown, and a topic of much debate.

Locust Valley offers many scenario themes. The College can be the focus of stories about body snatchers (fresh cadavers are difficult to come by in this time), eldritch medical experiments, escaped lunatics, "Frankenstein" scenarios, the walking dead, and other stories dealing with life, death, and rebirth. Remember that the College itself does not need to appear in each story.

The chapel house of the ICAE could inspire scenarios dealing with the Spiritualist movement. Plot elements here include speaking with the dead, casting fortunes, possessions, separating the gullible from their money, and the working of black magic.

Locust Valley is an important location in the context of a Black Dawn campaign. Barrosmythe is one of the three greatest Dominion leaders in America, a position he takes dead seriously. PCs should not be able to disrupt his work easily — he is over two hundred years old and did not live this long by being foolish. Given an opportunity he and Whippett will go so far as to betray their underlings before forcing a direct confrontation with PCs. They will do their best to convince players they are on the side of the righteous.

When the PCs finally discover the secret of Locust Valley, Barrosmythe and Whippett will flee to Fort Blaze or Plunder Island, California if possible.

FORT BLAZE

Fort Blaze and its environs are located in the beautiful yet terrible southern deserts of the Arizona Territory. The temperature is extreme; blistering daytime heat turns to stark chill at night. Only the hardiest of species inhabit this inhospitable land: the rattlesnake, the eagle, the scorpion, the tarantula, and the coyote. But the hills and mountains here are rich in minerals and precious metals, so man is also here. And wherever man goes, violence and conflict follow.

The jagged peaks of the Growler mountains rise out of this forbidding landscape like the exposed spine of a monstrous beast. Running north and south for almost sixty miles, the mountains can only be crossed at Growler Pass (elevation 453). On the desert floor a mile west of the pass the Spanish built a Presidio that passed to the United States with the Gadsen Purchase of 1853.

The heavily fortified Presidio is now United States Cavalry post 66, commonly known as Fort Blaze. Its commander, Colonel Midas Caine, his lieutenants, and about three-fourths of the company are Black Dawn Cultists. Despite this, a government inspector would be hard-pressed to find anything amiss here — Caine runs a tight ship. For this reason, PCs probably will not find anything suspicious here.

A half mile west of the Fort is the town of Brimstone. With silver mines being found to the north of the Fort a boomtown was inevitable. While currently fairly small in terms of permanent residents (around 100) the transient population of miners, cowboys, travelers, and prospectors numbers in the hundreds. The sheriff, old Billy Winston, is a drunk who keeps his nose out of Black Dawn business in exchange for silver dollars and his continued existence. The town has saloons, barbers, bordellos, assay offices, and all the standard "western" locations. Hidden in the town is a Fortunatii Operatii safe house.

Overall, Brimstone is a dangerously woolly place. Not only do the nearby silver mines attract crooks and swindlers out for a fast buck, but the off-duty soldiers run wild with impunity. PCs who do not keep their wits about them could perish here before encountering anything supernatural.

Six miles south, hidden in a cul-de-sac, yawns the entrance to the Conquisto Diablo mine. The mine and surrounding hills are rich in occult history. Thousands of years ago, Hohokam shamans bound a powerful demon (If necessary for stats use an Incarnate to represent this creature, but it has a true name and can be dismissed) deep within the natural cave here. For centuries, until their extinction, the Hohokam kept guard over the site. But with their passing the essence of the buried demon began to assert itself, and now the lower levels of the cavern extend into the frontiers of Hell itself.

The mine was rediscovered by Midas Caine a few years after the Civil War. This is also where his son Icarus was conceived. The Incarnate, Luthur Steward, discovered the interdimensional properties of the cavern and identified it as this century's source of Nonamite. The cave system has been mined by kidnapped slaves and walking cadavers ever since.

Anyone who dies while mining Nonamite (as all eventually do) is resurrected as a walking cadaver. The unused side passages are packed with carrion legions awaiting shipment to Dominions worldwide. The Black Dawn has even brought horses into the poisonous mines to provide undead transport for cadavers.

This army consists of over one thousand walking cadavers that function as infantry. Four hundred of them are called the Hades Guard and are trained to use rifles and bayonets. Two hundred are trained as cavalry and are equipped with undead horses and appropriate weapons. Two hundred skeletons serve as light infantry; forty of these are also given undead mounts and use whatever weapons they are told to use. These arrived courtesy of Doctor Barrosmythe in boxes and are stored in the mine at various locations. Any prisoner taken from a battle and fit enough will be sentenced to labor in the mine, where he will eventually die and join the army of undead. Important prisoners are saved for whatever purposes the Black Dawn has for them. Those weak or wounded are executed outside the mouth of the Hellmine. Colonel Caine enjoys watching his son Icarus gun them down.

The outlaw membership of the Hellmine Dominion live in the abandoned cliff dwellings built under the overhanging rim of the cul-de-sac. Their steeds are stabled in a large cavern just inside the mine.

The mine has six levels; each is dug directly beneath the one above. The small amount of Nonamite mined annually yields enough ore to forge about a hundred Hands of Night.

Gamemasters can use this location in several ways; by no means should all the mysteries here be solved in one scenario. The presence of the demon has leaked evil magical force from the mine throughout the area, which means that monsters, sorcerers, etc., unconnected to the Black Dawn may be drawn here. An old West vampyr, werewolf, or evil sorcerer can make for a good scenario and added mystery.

Walking cadavers are wild until tamed — it is possible that one could escape and need to be caught. Or one of the mine slaves, on the verge of being overwhelmed by Nonamite, may seek help for his "condition" from the PCs.

The church in Brimstone is under Black Dawn control. The minister there will implore PCs to leave, but will not volunteer information (Caine has had a Hades sentinel assigned to the preacher; he is not even safe in the church, which has been unconsecrated.)

Since the atmosphere in the mine is poisonous to humans, all interior guards are animated skeletons sent from Locust Valley, New York by Arthur Barrosmythe. The skeletons generally rest in pieces, reconstructing swiftly when intruders approach.

The PCs will have to be clever to get in the mine. A straightforward assault is doomed to failure, with all of the outlaws, cadavers, skeletons, and cavalry to oppose an attack.

A good finale for the Hellmine Dominion would be the release of the entombed demon. This demon is opposed to the Black Dawn due to their "mining" of its evil essence. Release of the demon would cut off the entrance to Hell and the supply of Nonamite. The PCs merely have to deal with a really angry demon to end the threat of the mine once and for all.

PLUNDER ISLAND

The Black Dawn haunt the night like bands of insane specters. Not for them are green meadows and busy boulevards; rancid tunnels and midnight alleys are their domain. The names of their lairs are a litany of deranged obsession — Locust Valley, Brimstone, Conquisto Diablo. But the ultimate den of Black Dawn terror has an exciting name which conjures visions of treasure, sea breezes and hearty buccaneers — Plunder Island. But those who come here expecting adventure had best take heed — the Plunder here is not gold but men's souls. He who escapes this place unscarred may count himself lucky.

Plunder Island was first inhabited by a man the inquisition erased from history. Carlos de Tarantula and his group of followers built a Moorish style castle here in 1686 as a safe haven wherein to practice their diabolical rites. The colony of Devil worshippers was short lived; all vanished after a late season hurricane in 1700. The Island, 15 miles west of Tiajuana, soon become a source of local legend. All who stayed here met with madness and damnation. The Welsh pirate Wythyr was killed here by authorities in 1762. His crew, judging by their condition, had been eaten alive. In 1800, strange lights pulsed in the sea off Plunder, and forever after the fish here were vicious and unfit to eat. Fifty years later a band of Jesuit Brothers ventured forth to bless the Island, its castle and the surrounding waters. All vanished save one. He was found three years later, his mind gone, in a Taiwanese Opium Den. That, as far as the world knows, is all history tells of Plunder Island. But there is more.

Silas Voltanus and his brother Paul came here several years ago from the Mediterranean Barbary Coast. The combined forces of a San Franciscan Chinese Dominion and his own band of cut throats were required to tame the bloodthirsty spirits dwelling here. The survivors banded together, with Silas as Dominion head. The haunted Island is now the ultimate safe refuge for the Black Dawn. When the forces of sanity smash a Black Dawn operation it is here to which the survivors flee, to plot anew. Here is where Silas Voltanus forges the Hands of Night. Here, hidden in a sea cave, is a small fleet of vessels captured by Silas and his murderous Dominion. Of greatest importance is the meeting held here every six years by the Incarnate masters of the Black Dawn. Truly, should a band of saints be strong and clever enough, the despicable organization could be smashed here forever.

The Island and its defenses are arrayed in this manner. The landmass itself is small (about 50 acres) but forbidding. Except for the sea cave entrance and a small beach below the castle the entire Island is encircled by cliffs (-2 to Climbing Skill rolls). The rugged topside is grown over with wild grasses and cacti. A dying apple orchard surrounds the castle. There are several caves hidden amongst the rocky outcroppings and ravines scarring the Island.

The castle itself is in bad need of repair. The four towers are crumbling and uninhabited by the living. The ground floor, where Silas holds court, is in reasonably good condition. The interior walls are painted in a veritable catalog of blasphemies; the floor is strewn with stolen treasures, opulent rugs and decadent furniture. Torches and oil lamps provide murky illumination.

At the end of the main hall is an ornate, carved throne. This is on a swivel and conceals a staircase. The Apartments below are hewn from solid rock. Silas, his Dominion and their guests dwell here. Below the apartment level is a large grotto dominated by an imposing forge. This is where Silas forges the Hand of Night. He is currently teaching this skill to several apprentices. The fire in the forge never goes out. It was here when Silas arrived, and the spirits on Plunder hint that should the fire be extinguished the Island will sink beneath the sea.

Three caverns branch off from the forge grotto. One leads into the sea cave where the fleet and Slias submersible are docked. The roof of the cavern is high enough to permit the entrance of all but the tallest masts. The second passage leads into a temple. Silas holds Black Mass here. This is where the Incarnates conduct their conferences. The final passage delves deep beneath the Earth to a labyrinth of cells and chambers. Prisoners and captured monsters are kept here. The torture chamber here would shock the most fanatical Inquisitor.

Now a word about the diverse inhabitants of the Isle. The Black Dawn Dominion, who are often away, share the Island with a menagerie of creatures. The waters off shore are inhabited by the spirits of de Tarantula and his cult. They serve the Black Dawn by possessing sea creatures (including a few unknown to science) and discouraging trespassers. Wythyr and his crew are now spirits inhabiting the Walking Cadaver crew of the smuggling ship. On the Island are dozens of Spirits of all types. Silas has managed to bar those inimical to the Dawn from entering the castle and associated areas. The others are free to come and go as they please. Several tormenter demons call Plunder home; they are in charge of the torture chamber. Silas has enlisted a few monsters on his travels to be caretakers in exchange for the safety it offers. A Vampyr lives in one of the towers; a werewolf and his pet wolves roam the Island, feeding off interlopers and the native goat population. Walking cadavers are numerous and perform assorted functions.

Finally, there is the sentient Forge Flame itself. It is firmly in the camp of Hell. It takes no action against Silas and his allies. Any other mortal on the island is subject to a constant, cumulative mind control (1d6/ Hour on the island) by the Flame. Eventually, trespassers will become homicidally insane (until they die or leave the Island). Anyone who attacks the forge directly will be met by tendrils of flame that cause whoever they touch to vanish utterly (random teleport to any location on the Earth — remember the Jesuit Priest in Taiwan).

THE FORGE

–	STR	11	DEX	–	CON	12	BODY	8	INT
8	EGO	15	PRE	0	COM	–	PD	4	ED
4	SPD	–	REC	–	END	–	STUN		

Skills & Powers: 1) Teleportation (1 floating location), range x1,310,720" (1489 Miles), usable against others (tendrils of flame), Cost: 220; 2) Mind Control 1d6/hour, range of the island, cumulative, 0 END, persistent, always on

Disadvantages: The forge will take damage from attacks versus the flame as follows:

Bucket of sand	-½d6 KA
Gallon of water	-½d6 KA
Gallon of Blessed/Holy water	-1d6 KA

If PCs think to use explosives to extinguish the flame, treat the explosion as a normal attack, hence the ED stat above. Note that the forge possesses no armor versus the explosion, this is a tactic that may well beat the forge but the resultant explosive damage could be lethal to PCs.

• • •

Plunder Island is fairly easy to work into scenarios. If the PCs are actively pursuing the Black Dawn the GM may wish to have the Incarnate meeting getting ready to happen.

A West to East campaign might start here. In that case have the PCs investigate the island *before* going there. This is a tough location. Beginners will not survive it.

PCs can be lured here by promises of treasure.

The GM can play up on the Jules Vernian angle with Silas as mad inventor.

The GM may wish for the PCs to first visit Plunder when the Black Dawn aren't home. This will help them plot an effective sortie against the island and its inhabitants.

The Black Dawn and it's allied monsters will not kill a PC at first. Any NPC is GM bait, but PCs should be captured and chained in the Dungeon. (Give 'em time to escape).

THE OPPOSITION

THE FORTUNATII OPERATII

Organization Background: The mortal inhabitants of the planet Earth for the most part are content to allow accident to carry them through to their final destination. Their existence is dictated by larger events; they do not struggle in the invisible tides of chance that sweep them into hardship and misfortune. The average man will merely shrug his shoulders and blame fate, and drift on with life. Little does he realize the fearsome powers behind the scenes, directing the motion of humanity toward doom; never does he suspect that "fate" is not a random element at all, but the result of machinations beyond his comprehension. But sometimes the masks slip and he is faced with the awful truth lurking behind them. And it is then, when the chips are down and the cards come up empty, he may catch a fleeting glimpse of a laughing figure, a man who can thwart the dealer. This man will confront the supernatural menace head on, not stopping for thanks or compliments. The common man may then realize that perhaps he *can* affect destiny, and having met the real enemy, he can be the arbitrator of his fortune. He has seen a larger world, courtesy of those who are not content to let themselves up to the foibles of destination, those agents of fortune, the Fortunatii Operatii.

It began sometime in the late seventeenth century. A certain man had caught the ear of the British crown, and plans were festering that would spell eventual doom for the Isles. A midnight raid by the Arcanum Royale produced several powerful artifacts that proved responsible for the malign influence, and the leadership of the Arcanum considered the matter closed. But it was not, argued several members of that august body, the plans of the fiend were still being implemented. Enraged at what they perceived as weakness and indecisiveness by their superiors, this small group became the first ever schism of the Arcanum. Perceiving the need for magical aid, they approached the small lodge of benevolent wizards known as the Miraculum Operari, whose existence was endangered by the new policies issued from the monarchy. A new organization came into being soon after this meeting, a marriage of the vast occult knowledge of the Arcanum Royale and the magical adeptness of the Miraculum Operari. A nonsensical pseudo-Latin name for this group was coined — they would call themselves the Fortunatii Operatii. Thus, the vagaries of evil fortune itself came to create a group whose sworn purpose is to be the agents of its downfall.

The Incarnate demon, for such he proved to be, was swiftly vanquished. In the flush of success the newborn Fortunatii Operatii composed their charter and set about to accomplish the task they set before themselves. The aims of this new organization were not only to monitor the events of the occult realm, or to experiment with sorcerous abilities, but to play an active role in the outcome of unseen history by tipping the scales of fate in a direction inimical to the forces of darkness whenever and wherever possible. Their theater of operation is primarily based in Europe, but is even now expanding to the far corners of the world, particularly to America where a huge upsurge of the malevolent seems to be developing.

Organization Abilities: Men who live on the edge of chance enjoy the company of their kind; the Fortunatii Operatii are no exception. They are organized in the manner of an occult lodge, holding regular and frequently raucous meetings, and actively recruiting new members. Most Operatii possess magical abilities, especially the upper echelon. The breach with the Arcanum Royale has healed over the years, and the two groups enjoy a cordial relationship, despite the difference of their philosophies. This benefits the Operatii in that those who fail to pass the stringent requirements for Arcanum membership are often ideally suited for the more active Operatii.

This is not to imply that the Operatii is careless in the drafting of members. Often possible candidates are monitored for years before being approached. Those with evil tendencies or an excessive portion of ambition are marked for surveillance and passed over. In some ways they are quite lenient — a vampyr and a construct are counted in their number, which has appalled certain members of other groups. At any rate, once a targeted individual has accepted membership in the Operatii, the veil of secrecy is lifted, and he will enjoy the camaraderie of the occult elite.

The one trait that sets the Operatii apart from similar groups is their attitude. These men and women truly enjoy their confrontations with evil! Getting their hands dirty in mortal combat with the fiends of The Inferno is to them like fine wine is to a connoisseur; something to be taken dead seriously but enjoyed as fully and as often as possible.

The Fortunatii Operatii looks forward to the day when their services are no longer needed with mixed feelings. On one hand, they will miss the exciting adventures they have shared. On the other hand they yearn for the time to come when mankind takes the reins of his fortune and throws off the yoke of diabolic oppression. To this end they have invested heavily into scientific research. They are always on the lookout for improved weapons and technology, and through their patronage have often utilized new inventions years before the public learns of their existence.

Finally, a note on the sole great failing of the Fortunatii Operatii — an obsessive concern with the malevolent cult, The Black Dawn. This intense hatred reaches all the way back to the initial conflict with the Incarnate demon that occasioned the founding of the Operatii, and it shows no signs of abating. Fully half the original membership fell to the knives of the Dawn before the Incarnate leader of the cult was foiled, and the Operatii has never forgotten that. The Black Dawn is their total antithesis, and any news of activity on their part will prompt an Operatii to drop his current investigation immediately and rush to the scene. This unfortunate fixation has tragically led to the death of innocents who the Fortunatii Operatii had sworn to protect.

Dark Secrets: The Fortunatii Operatii's occult lodges are hidden throughout historic America. An Operatii member may drag a PC group into a confrontation with a demon or an investigation into suspected Black Dawn activity. Any active involvement with an Operatii member is certain to end with some flashy dramatic conflict.

PARSON WILLIAM CHANDLER

Archetype: Occult Investigator

Personal Details: Age: 45 Height: 6'0" Weight: 160 lbs Hair: Brown (Receding Hairline), Eyes: Brown

Background/Personality: A man's faith in God is often shattered by an encounter with the uncanny, but when a young student named William Chandler observed an exorcism in 1862, his strong religious beliefs were strengthened by the tangible proof of the Adversary. The incident inspired a lifetime of studying the occult, magic, and the nature of evil.

Born in New York City, young Chandler was a brilliant but introspective student. His love of scholarly pursuits has stood him well through life, and his anonymous writings are hailed as works of genius. His inherited wealth has provided him the means to travel wherever he wishes and to collect one of the finest occult libraries in America.

Chandler's travels have taken him throughout Europe and Asia, and he maintains correspondence with dozens of learned friends in these locations. As noted, he frequently publishes his findings for his occultist peers. All of these activities and the location of his library are secrets known only to a trusted few. This is because William Chandler is leading a double life.

During his lifetime Chandler has been a Buddhist priest, a Jesuit missionary and is now a respected Methodist parson. None of his congregation suspect that their God fearing shepherd is actually an Agnostic occultist. Chandler has no illusions about the nature of Good and Evil. His conviction is that an ultimate power of Evil exists which a faithful servant of the omniscient Good is compelled to oppose — it is a

PARSON WILLIAM CHANDLER

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
10	STR	0	OCV: 4
13	DEX	9	DCV: 4
13	CON	6	ECV: 4
10	BODY	0	Phases: 4, 8, 12
20	INT	10	
13	EGO	6	Costs
20	PRE	10	
10	COM	0	Char: 54 Base: 75
6	PD	4	+ +
5	ED	2	Powers: 69 Disad: 48
3	SPD	7	= =
5	REC	0	Totals: 123 123
26	END	0	
22	STUN	0	

Cost	Skills
3	Contact: Occult Publisher 12-
1	Contact: Arcanum Royale 8-
1	Perk: Minister
3, 5	Resistance +3, Deduction 14-
3, 3	Bureaucratics 13-, Conversation 13-
3	Paramedic 13-
1, 1	Cryptography 8-, Persuasion 8-
3	Scholar
7, 2	KS: Occult 18-, KS: Supernatural Creatures 13-
5, 5	KS: Demonology 16-, KS: World Religions 16-
2, 2	KS: Occult Areas 13-, KS: Occult Items 13-
2, 2	KS: Occult Personalities 13-, KS: Ritual Magic 13-
2	PS: Occult Investigator 11-
3, 2	Linguist, Latin, Completely fluent
4	Languages: Nepalese; Ancient Greek; Sinhalese (All Fluent); Mandarin (Basic)
1	WF: Rifles
3	+1 w/PER Rolls

75+	Disadvantages
10	Psych Lim: Code Vs. Killing (Com, Mod)
10	Watched, The Supernatural (Mo Pow, NCI) 8-
5	Age 40+
5	Distinctive Features: Parson (Conc, Noticed)
15	Secret ID (Chandler's occupation as Occult Investigator is generally not known)
3	Package Bonus

man's faith which is important, not the name of his god. He believes that no one is past redemption, but his reluctance to kill does not extend to supernatural creatures.

Chandler cuts an imposing figure, and his stern appearance reflects his personality. He is always formal and reserved; only his closest associates know that his dour exterior masks a considerable sense of humor.

Chandler is useful as an NPC because of his extraordinary KS: Occult. The GM in need of an exorcist may wish to buy him a Magic Skill roll and the appropriate ceremonies. Chandler will never reveal his secret without extreme provocation.

1ST LT. SEAN O'LEARY

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
10	STR	0	**OCV:** 5+
14	DEX	12	**DCV:** 5
13	CON	6	**ECV:** 4
10	BODY	0	**Phases:** 4, 8, 12
13	INT	3	
13	EGO	6	**Costs**
10	PRE	0	
10	COM	0	**Char:** 39 **Base:** 75
7	PD	5	+ +
4	ED	1	**Powers:** 64 **Disad:** 28
3	SPD	6	= =
5	REC	0	**Totals:** 103 103
26	END	0	
22	STUN	0	

Cost	Skills
3	Fast Draw 12-
10	Martial Arts — Indian Wrestling

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
Punch/Kick	+2	0	4d6 Strike
Throw	0	+1	2d6+v/5 Strike, Target falls
Grab	-1	+1	Grab +10 STR to hold

Cost	Skills
3	Concealment 12-
3	Deduction 12-
3	Riding 12-
3	Stealth 12-
3	Tactics 12-
3	Tracking 12-
3	Navigation 11-
3	Shadowing 11-
3	Survival 11-
2	KS: Indian Tribes 11-
0	AK: Maryland 8-
2	PS: Soldier 11-
2	PS: Schoolteacher 11-
2	SC: General Science 11-
2	SC: Geology 11-
3	Apache Language, Completely Fluent
2	Spanish, Fluent
1	TF: Carriages
5	WF: Small Arms, Melee, Bows
3	+1 Level w/Pistols

75+	Disadvantages
15	Psych Lim: Protective of others, will sacrifice self (Com, Str)
10	Psych Lim: Confident (Com, Mod)
3	Package bonus — Soldier

FIRST LT. SEAN O'LEARY

Archetype: Soldier

Personal Details: Age: 28 Height: 5' 9½" Weight: 150 lbs. Hair: Brown (Bearded) Eyes: Brown

Background/Personality: Sean came from a long distinguished line of naval officers. Growing up within a stone's throw of the Naval Academy, his entire future was planned.

But Sean was different. He enjoyed the outdoors, camping, hiking, and especially horseback riding. So without his family's knowledge he applied to and was accepted at West Point. When his family found out he was disowned and has never looked back.

After graduation he was posted to the Indian Territories and served with distinction; that is until a sergeant under his command went on a rampage in a village. Sean's last image of the battle was the sergeant aiming at him with a rifle.

The following investigation absolved him of any wrong doing, but the stigma was a burden, so he resigned.

After traveling about the west for awhile, he chose to become a school teacher and settled in a small quiet town. He had only been teaching about a month when one of his students was killed by a Vampire. This exposure to the unknown convinced him to once more become a soldier, this time for a better cause.

DR. JAMES LEONARD TIPSWORD

Archetype : Magic Wielder

Personal Details: Age: 40 , Height: 6'4", Weight: 180 pounds, Hair: Black (Bearded), Eyes: Hazel

Background/History: The fog of London shrouds the old city and all of the buildings that comprise this sprawling center of civilization. Shadows gain a life of their own, and mothers tell recalcitrant children who refuse to sleep that these fog-spawned specters will bear them off into the night to the land of the fairy folk, a place where they will be tormented and spooked by all manner of wee beasties.

They stop believing in these stories when they attain the proper age, where cynicism blends with the demands of day to day life. Losing the childhood innocence for most was nothing more than a passage to adulthood.

Not so for James Leonard Tipsword. The shadows still came to life and tormented him. Early in life, the shadows led a curious little boy down a path of exploration. When the man returned, he had seen a side of life few believe exist. Creatures of darkness cavorted with men who had the power to summon and control these beings. A lifetime of careful study and painstaking cultivation of knowledgeable contacts brought Tipsword the satisfaction he had sought since his youth.

DR. JAMES LEONARD TIPSWORD

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
13	STR	3	**OCV:** 4
13	DEX	9	**DCV:** 4
13	CON	6	**ECV:** 5
10	BODY	0	**Phases:** 4, 8, 12
13	INT	3	
14	EGO	8	**Costs**
13	PRE	3	
12	COM	1	**Char:** 55 **Base:** 75
6	PD	3	+ +
6	ED	3	**Powers:** 111 **Disad:** 91
3	SPD	7	= =
7	REC	2	**Totals:** 166 166
40	END	7	
24	STUN	0	

Cost	Skills			
35	Magic Wielder Spells: Shield, Demonfire, Sense Magic, Dispatch & Air Mastery			
12	Martial Arts — Boxing			
	Maneuver	**OCV**	**DCV**	**Notes**
	Jab	+1	+3	2½d6 Strike
	Cross	0	+2	4½d6 Strike
	Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
2	+1" Running (7" total)			1/5"
3	Cryptography 12-			
3	Demolitions 12-			
3	Lockpicking 12-			
15	Magic Skill: Spellcasting 18-			
3	Scholar			
3	KS: Spellcasting 13-			
3	KS: Occult 13-			
3	KS: The Black Dawn 13-			
3	KS: Fortunatii Operatii 12-			
2	KS: Alchemists 12-			
2	KS: Cults 12-			
2	KS: Demonology 12-			
2	KS: Magic Legends 12-			
2	KS: Magic Tomes 12-			
2	KS: Items of Power 12-			
0	AK: England 8-			
1	PS: Historian 8-; (PS: Teacher 8- is free)			
3	Basic languages: German, Greek, Latin (English is native)			
4	WF: Small Arms, Thrown Blades			
0	TF: Carriages			
3	+1 Level w/Pistols			

75+	Disadvantages
15	Psych Lim: Curious about magic (Com, Str)
10	Psych Lim: Reckless (Com, Mod)
5	Age 40+
5	Watched, Fortunatii Operatii (As Pow, NCI) 11-
20	Hunted, Black Dawn (As Pow, NCI) 11-
10	Distinctive Features: Tall, slightly odd Englishman (Conc, Noticed)
3	Package Bonus — Magic Wielder
23	Hero Bonus

He learned the power of sorcery. The inscrutable cultists who had shared their forbidden wisdom with the inquisitive Englishman discovered in him that rarest of marvels, a Magic Wielder. He was raw clay to them, and rather than follow tradition and slay him outright, they would mold from the innocent a vessel of magic, needing only to be filled with knowledge to create a wielder of power who could someday rival the most legendary wizards. Yes, they now had someone who could bring the Order to its prophecized destiny. Dominion of the world.

They did not believe Tipsword would refuse to serve the Order. After all, they had shown him the way; how could he turn away now? Not even the most gifted men of the order had a clue regarding the sudden change in Tipsword's heart. Had they known he would steal one of their most valued grimoires and flee from Normandy in the dead of night, the Order would have slain him immediately. In their hubris, or possibly astonishment, Tipsword was not pursued across the Channel .

The small group who observed the fugitive's dance beside his grounded craft showed no astonishment at all. When the jubilant escapee ceased his capering he had been surrounded. The stern frowns encircling him chilled his heart — but was that man now smiling? To his befuddlement, Tipsword 's captors began to laugh and applaud, and moments later he was being backslapped and he was shaking hands, and he knew that he had come home. Thus it occurred that the boy who refused to grow up learned to resist the corruption of power, and by doing so passed the initiation rite of the Fortunatii Operatii.

Today, Tipsword is in America helping the small Fortunatii Operatii lodges in this war-torn land battle where the horrors erupt on all sides. He is still an eccentric, laughing figure given to jokes and bawderisms, but at his core is a rock-solid heart of goodness.

DANIEL GRAEME

Archetype: Psychic

Personal Details: Age: 37 Height: 5'9" Weight: 165 lbs. Hair: Black Eyes: Grey

Background/Personality: In a world filled with mind-shattering horrors and mind-shattered characters, their activities serving to confound and terrify the opposing powers of good, some exist solely to observe the conflict with an impassioned eye. The task is grueling, heart-rending at times, but the truth must be preserved in an unbiased form. This work falls into the domain of the Arcanum Royale's secondary mission, transcribing occult history as it happens; the job is fulfilled by many people. One of these individuals is Daniel Graeme, police inspector and roving Arcanum historian.

Few people pay Mr. Graeme any real intense notice. His normal height and bearded features are wholly unremarkable under a well-worn derby and long coat. It is his adversaries who pay this deductive genius any measure of recognition and respect. While the purpose of the Arcanum is to observe, Inspector Graeme frequently enjoys taking a more active hand in his investigations into the unknown events of the day. And the subjects of his investigations, believing themselves untouchable by the law, find themselves looking on slack-jawed as the Inspector and a pair of his worthy constables show up at a secret hideout with warrants and handcuffs at the ready.

Some of these villains are convinced that the Inspector is gifted with precognitive powers beyond his deductive and criminology skills. This is entirely false, as his wife will tell you, for he has yet to foresee an anniversary or birthday on time and have a gift in his possession when he returns home from work. Even after Mr. Graeme has calmly related the evidence he has gathered, the screams still continue. "How did you know?!" they roar in disbelief.

But Graeme merely dismisses the astonished shouts with a shrug and some type of unflattering remark about the criminal's lack of foresight or carelessness regarding evidence. He is almost totally unflappable and unperturbable in the face of even the most atrocious crime scenes. He does enjoy his investigative duties, and gets a thrill from confronting the responsible parties for a first hand account of their activities. Since many of these activities endanger the public at large, the activists can be disappointingly unwilling to talk frankly about what they have been doing. Being a reasonably intelligent man, Graeme will be certain to have assistance on hand to deal with any possible danger arising from an arrest situation. He is well-trained in the use of pistols and careful to have the backing of official warrants when confronting a suspect.

Graeme's investigative abilities are his premier talents. He has a fine knowledge of criminology and a knack for deduction bordering on the mystical. As a member of the Arcanum, he is versed in cryptography, trading, and occult knowledge. It is likely that he would be a legend in crime circles even if he did not possess postcognitive abilities, a gift he keeps closely guarded.

At a crime scene, Graeme fades into a postcognitive trance. His visions allow him to see, hear, and feel everything that has taken place during a traumatic experience in a location. Even crimes committed long ago leave a psychic residue behind that can trigger his postcognition. A keen observer, Graeme takes full advantage of the visions he sees and notes any clues left behind that he can recover after his trance. The gallows has been the last place a number of astonished criminals have wondered how their seemingly flawless crimes were found out.

GMs will note that Graeme's postcognition is limited by no conscious control and no range. Thus, PCs seeking to take advantage of his wondrous gifts will find that the information he can be coerced into parting with is rather limited and incomplete. The Inspector can be used to set PCs upon the right track in a game. Or, they can be called upon by Graeme to assist in confronting a suspect ("Look, I know you chaps have been nosing about this sorry business for some time now. Work with me, and maybe we can stop this nonsense once and for all.")

INSPECTOR DANIEL GRAEME

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
10	STR	0	OCV: 5+
15	DEX	15	DCV: 5
15	CON	10	ECV: 4
10	BODY	0	Phases: 4, 8, 12
18	INT	8	
13	EGO	6	Costs
18	PRE	8	
12	COM	1	Char: 83 Base: 100
6	PD	4	+ +
6	ED	3	Powers: 137 Disad: 120
3	SPD	5	= =
6	REC	2	Totals: 220 220
45	END	15	
29	STUN	6	

Cost	Powers	END
17	Clairsentience (Retrocognition) w/sight, 0 END, no conscious control, no range	0
15	Clairsentience (Retrocognition) w/hearing, 0 END, no conscious control, no range, linked to Sight Clairsentience	0
15	Clairsentience (Retrocognition) w/tactile sense, 0 END, no conscious control, no range, linked to Sight Clairsentience	0

	Skills
2	Perk: State Police Powers
1	Perk: Arcanum Royale member (low)
3	Resistance +3
11	Deduction 17-
5	Criminology 14-
5	Forensic Medicine 14-
5	Concealment 14-
3	Cryptography 13-
3	Trading 13-
3	Persuasion 13-
5	Stealth 13-
3	Bureaucratics 13-
3	Combat Driving (Carriages) 12-
3	Riding (Horses)12-
7	KS: Occult History 17-
5	KS: Chess 15-
3	KS: Police Procedures 13-
3	KS: Arcane Items 13-
4	WF: Small Arms, Common Melee Weapons
9	+3 Levels w/Pistols
4	+2 Levels w/Sight Perception

100+	Disadvantages
20	Psych Lim: Protective of wife (V.Com, Str)
15	Psych Lim: Curiosity (Com, Str)
5	Physical Lim: Myopic (Infreq, Slight)
20	Normal Characteristic Maxima
10	Distinctive Features: Cop (easily conc, major reaction)
15	DNPC, wife Anne (normal) 11-
10	Watched by Arcanum Royale (MoPow, NCI) 8-
10	Watched by Police (AsPow, NCI) 11-
15	Secret ID (Arcanum Royale researcher, postcognitive psychic)

SCENARIO: THE ANGLEWOOD SLASHER

Players! Read no further!

INTRODUCTION

This scenario introduces players to the Black Dawn. Only one cultist appears, but his actions set the stage for further horrors with the Black Dawn.

Clues and events are presented in the approximate order the players will encounter them. GM explanations are enclosed in brackets [ ].

The year is 1888. The specific locale is up to the GM; a small town or close-knit neighborhood is recommended. The GM should take care to provide a solid rationale for the PCs presence. The group may include a representative of the law, a local towns person or perhaps an investigator for the Fortunatii Operatti.

THE VICTIM

The scenario begins with a shocking event. At least one PC should be present. The GM should describe a typical weekday morning, taking care to stress the mundane. Children are playing, boys are hawking newspapers, blacksmiths are hammering off in the distance and merchants are moving displays outside. Everything is normal.

Then a horsecart careens around the corner, hits a rut and overturns. Driver and passenger are thrown to the street and something rolls toward a PC. The driver, an older man, mutters, 'Doctor, doctor' — beside him is the headless corpse of a young lady. At the PCs feet is her head. It has been neatly sliced off. The Anglewood slasher has claimed his first victim.

The man is Elwood Gorton, widower and local woodcrafter. He lapses into catatonia before saying more. The girl was his daughter Ellie. After a couple minutes a second cart appears. The driver reins up at the wreck. He is Dr. Justin Emory. His passenger is Jason MacGuire, Gorton's apprentice.

Emory will diagnose Gorton as suffering from shock. After Emory promises to keep him bound and sedated, the police release Gorton into his care. Jason MacGuire will volunteer to help the doctor, but wants to talk to the police first.

Jason's story throws suspicion on the father. That morning Jason had been unavoidably late for work but Gorton was not at the shop so he knocked at the house. After a minute Gorton emerged with Ellie's headless corpse in his arms (the head was bound in an apron). Muttering, 'No blood, no blood', Gorton took Jason's cart and drove off. The astonished apprentice ran across a field to Dr. Emory's adjacent house and the two rushed into town. [The story is true]

The body is at the mortician's, Joe Gates.

- The body is almost entirely drained of blood. There is no post-mortem bruising and little evidence of bleeding save a few drops on her collar. [The body was drained out by a manual pump before the head was severed]
- Gates guesses that she died right before dawn. [Correct]
- On her neck are faint, well healed scars resembling fang marks. [A vampire fed on her several weeks ago]

- A good perception roll will reveal that the incision severing her head was cut on a line bisecting two fresh puncture wounds similar to the scars but slightly further apart. [The killer is attempting to frame a vampire for the murder]

At this point the PCs have only a few avenues of investigation. They can examine the body, visit the scene of the crime or do nothing.

THE SCENE OF THE CRIME

The scene of the crime is Gorton's house, a two story brick dwelling in a wooded lot at the edge of town. His workshop is adjacent. Dr. Emory, Jason MacGuire and the unconscious Gorton are upstairs.

Jason will let the investigators in and answer any questions. He has little to add to his prior statement. He earnestly believes that Gorton is innocent. Upon reflection he has realized that Gorton was stumbling as if delirious or injured that morning. He had blood on the back of his collar. [Gorton stumbled onto the crime and was struck from behind]

Dr. Emory is ready to leave but will answer questions is asked. That morning, he was preparing his carriage to visit town when MacGuire ran up and explained what happened. Being the Gorton family physician, he and MacGuire immediately rushed to town. [He is lying. He and an accomplice — who is hiding in the basement — are the killers]

- If asked about the faded scars on Ellie's neck he will profess ignorance, as she only recently returned to his care after a few months with another physician. The other doctor is an Englishman who arrived here last year. His name is Michael Lansing. The PCs will have to ask him about the bites. [Emory wants them to visit Lansing]
- She returned with insomnia and anemia. He prescribed a sedative. [That's why she slept through the draining]

Gorton is heavily drugged and cannot be awakened. An examination will reveal a contusion on the back of his head. Emory has bandaged it. An exceptional Skill Roll (-5) will suggest that this injury was not sustained during the accident. This and a look at his laundry (his shirt has blood at the back of the neck) confirm MacGuire's story. [Emory has no intention of allowing Gorton to awaken. He was terrified that morning when Gorton made it to town. Now that that crisis has passed he is full of confidence]

A search of the house and grounds reveals:

- The kitchen door lock has a large fresh scratch on it, as if someone had broken in. [Emory and his assistant]
- The girl had been sleeping downstairs in the parlor on doctor's orders. [To make the murder easier]
- A bottle of medicinal powder on the girl's nightstand. The prescribed dose is rather high.
- A few drops of blood on her pillow.
- Outside the parlor window, in the fresh earth of a flowerbed, are footprints indicating that two men hastily exited the window. [The killers fled upon hearing MacGuire's knock]
- If dogs are used to track the footprints they will become spooked and refuse to proceed past the edge of the trees. [There is an invisible Sentinel Demon blocking their path]

By now the PCs are probably sure that a vampire or two are stalking the area. Emory's testimony indicates that the villain is Dr. Michael Lansing. They can investigate this possibility a number of ways.

Anglewood Manor — Fist Floor
(Second Floor is Empty Rooms)

Key:
w = window
D = Door
dd = Double Door
sd = Sliding Door
F = Fireplace
BR = Bathroom
$ = Secret Door

Porch

Coat Room, Storage

Waiting Room

Parlor

Lansings's Office

Hall

Up to 2nd Floor.

Library

← 2m →

BR

BR

Dining Hall

Up

Closet

Closet

To Basement

Kitchen

dd

Secret Trapdoor to Basement

Stable

N

Buried Coffin
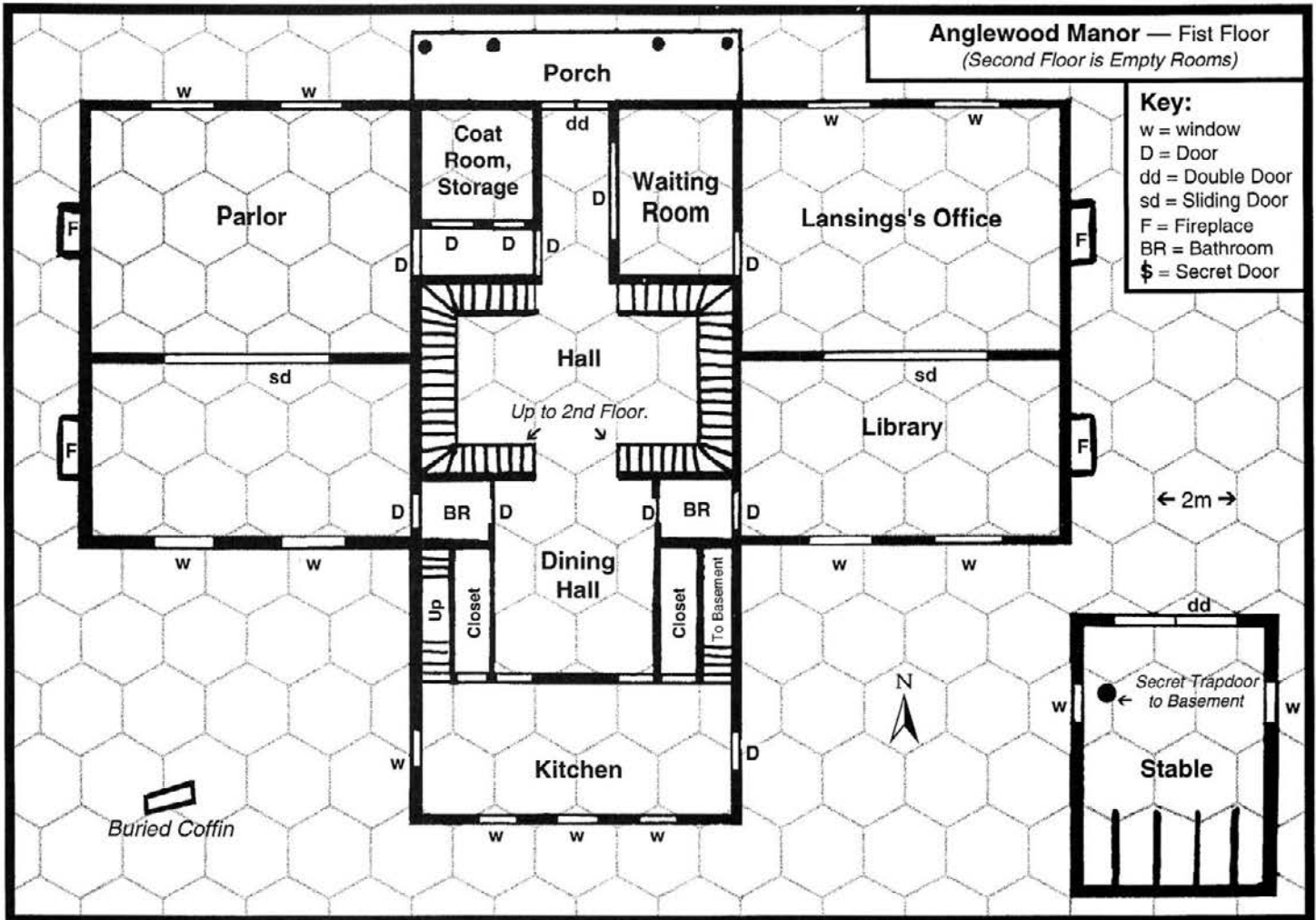
THE DOCTOR

A background check on Lansing will reveal the following. Note that unless the PCs are operating in an official capacity the townsfolk will be reluctant to speak ill of the popular Lansing.

- Lansing lived in New York City before moving his practice here last year.
- He is English, well-mannered and expensive. He is popular with the affluent citizens in town. He has been spotted at numerous social events at all hours of the day. As his denomination (the Church of England) is not represented in town, he attends no worship services.
- A successful PER roll on any of Lansing's female patients will reveal an element of embarrassment in her demeanor, as if an impropriety had occurred. [They have erotic dreams about him]
- He has a manservant, Blythe, who is his constant companion and medical assistant.
- He operates a practice from his home, Anglewood Manor. He is often out making house calls.

[Lansing has a terrible secret — he really is a vampire (use the stats for Vampyr, in the modern section). He is 448 years old and originally from Inverness, Scotland. Over the years he has rejected the typical behavior patterns of the typical Vampyr. Aged and experienced, he has mastered the bodily processes that would destroy him when exposed to sunlight. He cannot tan, but does cast shadows and reflections. He does not kill his victims or create fledglings. He drains minimal amounts from female patients during the course of the day, hence the erotic dreams.

He is by no means a good Vampire. His apparent mercy is a self-defense tactic. He will do whatever is necessary to protect his secret.

When the PCs approach Lansing he will be in his office or just arriving home from a house call. The GM is warned that the course of the scenario depends on this first meeting. How do the PCs approach Lansing? Is Lansing openly accused of being a Vampyr? Whether the PCs interrogate Lansing outright or use a sneakier method, the visit will confirm Lansing's suspicion that he is being framed (he'll have heard about the murder). [After neutralizing the PCs suspicions, his first priority will be finding the real killer]

Or do the PCs sneak into his home while he is out? If the search is conducted while he and Blythe are out the PCs will have little trouble finding the only evidence of Lansing's vampirism — a coffin in the basement. If this coffin is defiled, Lansing will retire to one buried in the back yard. Lansing will be furious. He will avenge the disruption of his life and then depart to start anew.

If the PCs are surprised by (or openly attack) Lansing at home, he and Blythe will do their utmost to kill the intruders. Lansing's veneer of gentility will drop away and he will become a vicious animal.

Anglewood Manor —
Basement

Coal, Wood Storage

Coffins

Blythe's Apartment

Stairs up to Kitchen

Ladder up to Stable ↘
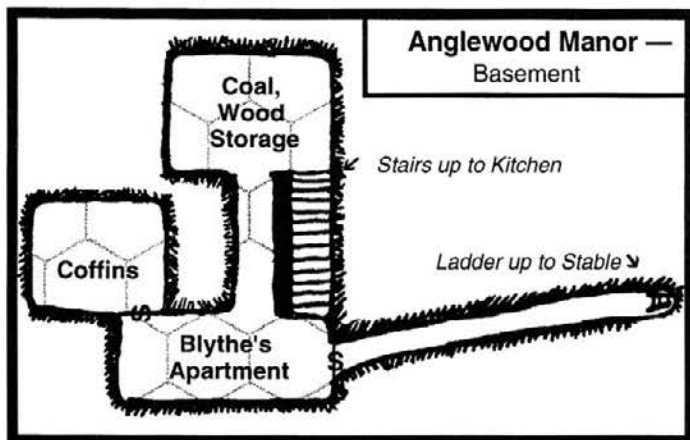
- Lansing's appearance is startling. His skin is pale and his lips are darker than normal. He dresses in practical, stylish clothing.

- Blythe is tall, stoic and dark haired. A successful PER roll reveals that he is wearing a shoulder holster.

- If approached in a friendly manner Lansing is civilized and cordial. His voice is deep, mellow and arresting. He stares right into the eyes of whoever he is addressing. He does not blink.

- He will offer tea and fine cookies to a guest. He'll sip tea but skip the cookies, saying he has just eaten. He will express concern about the events of the morning. He liked Ellie and her father very much. She returned to Emory's care for a personal reason

- Lansing could not return the love she professed for him. He is genuinely remorseful.

- If confronted with evidence implicating him as the killer he will tell PCs that he believes the real criminal is a stranger in town who is framing him.

- If he is accused of being a Vampire he will laugh and have Blythe tell an amusing story of a young boy who accused him thus shortly after coming to town. He will repeat the tests the youngster had him perform — exhibiting his shadow, reflection and ability to stand in the sun. He will put on an air of righteous indignation if the use of crucifixes is suggested, saying that the symbols of his savior are unsuited for mere parlor games. If the PCs push it he will insist that they leave at once. Blythe will stand to his defense. If Lansing is positive that he has been exposed he will arrange a few accidents for the PCs later (accidental falls, rat attacks, etc.).

- If the interview is concluded on a positive note, Lansing will offer to assist in the investigation. [The better to keep an eye on PCs]

By now the PCs should be working on some very imaginative theories. They have probably interviewed Emory and Lansing, and come to certain conclusions. But there are two more players in the melodrama. To fully understand their role in this it is necessary to look at how it all began.

THE PLOT

Lansing, while in New York, made the acquaintance of a spiritualist group called the Inner Circle of the Astral Elect. Through them he came to the attention of the necromancer, Dr. Arthur Barrosmythe. Lansing was fascinated by Barrosmythe's esoteric studies and the necromancer was eager to study a Vampyr. But the two had a falling-out over the extent of Barrosmythe's experiments, and Lansing broke contact. Soon he fled town to escape persecution from the Black Dawn.

Emory was the most prestigious doctor in town until Lansing came. The usurper quickly became a favorite of the local blue bloods, making a substantial dent in Emory's social standing. Emory became unhinged at the defection of his patients. His consuming jealousy of Lansing came to the attention of certain nefarious powers who dispatched a Sentinel Demon and a Black Dawn cultist to his aid. The two revealed Lansing's true nature and explained how he could be ruined. Now quite mad, Emory wasted little time in implementing the plan of revenge. Ellie was the first victim.

Barrosmythe intends that neither Lansing or Emory survive. His agent in this matter is Julian Register, the Black Dawn cultist. No one except Emory knows he is in town. The Sentinel Demon is under his command. He is very important if the GM wishes to use this scenario as the first in a Black Dawn campaign.

He is hiding at Emory's house. In the basement, among his belongings, is a photograph depicting a group of society types. In the back row, circled, is Lansing (He can be photographed if he chooses). The inscription is I.C.A.E., New York chapter.

The rest of Register's belongings are an impressively complete Vampire hunting kit. Besides the usual compliment of stakes, hammers, mirrors etc., the kit includes special items which can help PCs defeat Lansing. There is a crossbow with wooden and silver-tipped quarrels, two Black Bombs incorporating silver shrapnel and a hand-held sprayer loaded with holy water. Register intends to make short work of Lansing. He carries with him a Hand of Night of the lesser variety.

Register and the Demon will attack if the plot is uncovered. The Demon cannot kill unless the conditions described in that entry are fulfilled, but Register — pumped up on potions and armed with knife and pistol — is under no magical constraints. He will take great pleasure in killing a few PCs or NPCs. His final orders are to insure that neither Emory or Lansing are left alive.

The GM should be prepared to think on his feet. The following situations have all occurred during playtesting. Undoubtedly, players will come up with more.

DEVELOPMENTS AND ENCOUNTERS

The PCs search Dr. Emory's house. Unless the plot calls for Register to be out assisting Emory on another kill, he will be here. If the opportunity presents itself he will attempt to murder trespassers. Otherwise he will grab the gear and escape. If he is trapped by multiple opponents he will shout out, "Attend me!;" the Demon will arrive in one round. It will help Register by deflecting weapons, tripping PCs, etc. If Register is killed, the Demon will go on a destructive rampage through the house. The GM should play this for maximum scares.

If Register is captured, the Demon will rip out his throat in a spectacularly gory fashion. Emory will profess total ignorance concerning Register's presence in his home, hinting that Lansing hired him.

If PCs confront Emory with hard evidence of his guilt, he will claim that Lansing is framing him. He will openly accuse Lansing of Vampirism and state his case most convincingly. He will go so far as to accompany PCs to the Vampire's lair for a showdown. If he starts talking about the Black Dawn, the Demon, if still in the area, will kill him (Emory was tricked into thwarting it twice) or Gate him to Locust Valley, or a setting of GMs choice. It would be interesting to run into him later in the campaign.

If the PCs take no action on the first day, Gorton and MacGuire will be killed in the same manner as Ellie. Emory will drop a handkerchief with the initials M.L. at the scene.

Finally, if the Vampire is killed and Emory escapes justice, Register will slay the doctor in ritualistic fashion and return home, his job well done.

STATISTICS

For Lansing, use the statistics for Vampyr in The Shapeshifters International Conspiracy, with these changes — Remove his Disadvantages associated with sunlight. Give him skills to be a physician.

DR. JUSTIN EMORY

10 STR	11 DEX	10 CON	10 BODY	13 INT
11 EGO	13 PRE	10 COM	3 PD	3 ED
3 SPD	4 REC	20 END	20 STUN	12 Cost

Skills: Combat Driving (Carriages) 11-, Paramedic 12-, Stealth 11-, PS: Doctor 12-, PS: Surgeon 12-, KS: Locals 12-, AK: Setting of Town 12-, WF: Shoulder Arms, Blades. Cost: 23

35+ Disadvantages: 0

JULIAN REGISTER

13 STR	14 DEX	13 CON	10 BODY	10 INT
8 EGO	13 PRE	10 COM	6 PD	5 ED
3 SPD	6 REC	26 END	24 STUN	31 Cost

Skills: Riding (Horses, et al.) 12-, Demolitions 11-, KS: Medical Student 12-, PS: Cultist 12-, WF: Small Arms, Melee Weapons, +1 w/Pistols. Cost: 19

50+ Disadvantages: 0

BLYTHE

20 STR	14 DEX	18 CON	13 BODY	10 INT
10 EGO	18 PRE	8 COM	7 PD	7 ED
3 SPD	8 REC	36 END	35 STUN	66 Cost

Skills: Combat Driving (Carriages)12-, Stealth 12-, PS: Manservant 12-, WF: Small Arms, Melee Weapons, Missile, Brawling, +2 w/Combat. Cost: 34

75+ Disadvantages: Loyal to Lansing (V.Com, Total)

BEATING IT TO A PULP

"There is a period in history of glorious adventure. The War To End All Wars is over; a new world has risen from the carnage. Shining cities soar upward to a sky filled with aeroplanes; motorcars speed around on a network of highways. Modern civilization has weathered the storm and emerged triumphant. But, scattered across the globe, realms of evil darkness still endure..."

"Man can travel from New York to London in record time, but he may take forever to learn the lessons of the last forty years of the Nineteenth Century. I learned one great lesson myself; I learned to fly, and to see with one eye all the shadows that a two eyed man never notices. And when I fly, I find the same evil, the same yearning hungry darkness that I encountered just a few decades before."

"This era is a lantern to all the adventurous souls in the world, drawing them, moth-like, to the uncaring dance of a fire. Adventure! Even when tribal wise men speak of horrors in the unexplored Dark Continent, they plunge onward. 'Damn the travails, mount up and move forward!' While the witch doctors of hidden tribes in the Amazon basin can deter their followers from passing the sacred stones with a look, their warnings are ignored by the stalwart adventurers of the world. 'Just stories. Don't give them a thought. We're not afraid of fairy tales, are we?'"

"Moths to a flame. A scream doesn't travel too far across the South Pole, just far enough to let the next victim know he should make peace with his soul. I thought the cults were bad enough. The capability of mankind for evil is one thing. What do you call the natural impulses of a creature inimical to humans? Sociopathy? Psychosis?

"I know one thing to call it. Terror. Terror of the unknown becoming real, and all the time it takes is a heartbeat."

PLAYERS GUIDE TO PULP HORROR

Twisted minds hatch fiendish plots in labyrinths beneath the sea...Famed adventurers emerge raving madly from the steaming jungles ...Eldritch cities pulse with strange life in the forgotten corners of the world...Ancient gods demand sacrifices from modern worshippers...And you are there.

ROLEPLAYING IN 1900 – 1945 AMERICA

THE ERA

The gaming material in this section of *Horror Hero* owes its tone to the wonderful pulp fiction of the Twenties and Thirties, with a element of cryptozoology and occult history stirred in. Many monsters in this section are reputed to exist in real life, and *Horror Hero* has cast them into the shapes of Pulp Horror. The enclosed campaign, The Cult of Taxlan, covers but one corner of an age teeming with adventure and horror; the resourceful GM and his lucky players have the entire planet at their disposal!

During their heyday, the pulp magazines published every type of fiction known. Many tales originally found in the pulps are now acknowledged classics. The majority, while vastly entertaining, were as disposable as the poor quality paper they were printed on. Still, between those lurid covers lurked some of the darkest horror and highest adventure ever to be unleashed on a public eager to forget their woes. Here were breathless tales of weird menace, cosmic horror, evil monsters, mad scientists, lost worlds, occult detectives — the list is endless. *Horror Hero* has drawn on the adventure pulps also, giving the setting an international flavor. The evil criminals and exotic lands, all routine to the likes of Doc Savage©, The Shadow©, G-8©, or The Spider©, become apparitions of stark horror when confronting ordinary adventurers.

Horror Hero looks on this era and asks, What did those pulp writers know? Did they learn of horrors so Earth-shattering that they had to disguise their warnings as fiction? What *really* happened to those adventurers who vanished from the face of the Earth? Were those legends and fables heard in the dark corners of the world actually the awful truth?

Welcome to the Age of Adventure, the Pulp Horror campaign. Here your stalwart heroes will explore the jungles of South America, chase monsters through city streets and investigate a deadly cult in the Caribbean. The Pulp Horror campaign will span the Atlantic, bringing to light the constant variety of adventure and horror.

THE PULP PLAYER CHARACTER

Pulp adventures are most enjoyable when everyone involved has had an exposure to this brand of fiction. The easiest way to familiarize yourself with the pulp ethic is through the Indiana Jones films.

CHARACTER SKILL CHANGES

When creating a Character for a Pulp era campaign players should bear in mind the following guidelines for buying skills. First, remember that the electrical devices of the day were often bulky and difficult to transport. A character specializing in this field should not count on being able to carry devices along on adventures unless the GM is very lenient. Second, check with the GM and see how realistic he intends the campaign to be. He may wish to portray an 'anything goes' milieu or he may require players to completely document everything they carry, down to the loose change in their pockets

The changes listed for the Pulp era are as follows:

BRIBERY: A must for world travelers.

BUGGING: Players buying this skill should remember that electrical gear during this era was bulky and difficult to hide.

COMBAT PILOTING: This would include all planes, autogyros, and dirigibles.

COMPUTER PROGRAMMING: This skill does not exist.

DISGUISE: Hollywood has made great progress in this field; a complimentary PS: Makeup Artist can be purchased.

LANGUAGES: The GM should be aware that too much leniency with the language chart in the rulesbook will detract from the horror in many scenarios.

MARTIAL ARTS: Pulp Adventurers were famous for studying esoteric arts in foreign lands, but only a few possessed a form of weaponless combat. A PC who has traveled in the East may be permitted karate, jiu-jitsu or kung-fu . Other two fisted adventurers can buy boxing or dirty infighting. For simplicity, a +1d6 Hand Attack may be all a PC needs

SECURITY SYSTEMS: The security systems of the time were fairly primitive compared to today. Usually the complexity of a lock determined the complexity of the security, and only wealthy individuals or important, negotiable-handling businesses had electric alarms.

SYSTEMS OPERATOR: This is used for telegraph/telephone operators, radio operators and for radar and sonar near the end of the era .

OUTFITTING THE PC

TRANSPORTATION

The Vehicles of this Era traverse a gamut; from the earliest planes to the Messerschmitts of the Reich. Below are examples of several means of ground, air & sea transportation.

EQUIPMENT

This Era is an age of invention; a time when the secrets of radio waves, electrons and even the atom were brought to light. The following list of items are to familiarize Players with the genre.

Telegraph: Offices can be found almost everywhere; this was still in use through most of the Era. Investigators seeking knowledge of events in distant places can usually have an answer within minutes.

Telephones: After the turn of the century millions were in use. By now these were only party line phones in remote or rural areas. A character could find a phone in the most unlikely places.

Oil or Kerosene Lamps: These items were still in use, whether by farmers in Idaho or Jungle explorers. The design had not changed over the years, so all the previously listed advantages and disadvantages still apply.

PULP ERA VEHICLES											
Vehicles	**SIZE**	**DCV**	**MASS**	**KB**	**STR**	**DEF**	**BODY**	**DEX**	**SPD**	**MOVE**	**MAX**
Cars											
Model "T"	2Âx1.25	-2	1.6T	-5	35	3	8	10	3	9x4	108
Stutz	3x1	-3	1.6T	-4	30	3	9	15	3	20x4	240
Sedan	3x1.5	-3	3.2T	-5	35	3	10	10	3	15x4	180
Touring Car	3.2x1.6	-3	3.2T	-5	35	2	11	10	3	20x4	240
Motorcycle	1.25x.5	0	200Kg	-1	15	2	6	10	3	15x4	180
Planes											
Sopwith Camel	2.5x1.25	-2	800kg	-3	25	1	8	15	3	23x4	276
PW-9C Bi-plane	2.5x1.25	-2	800kg	-3	25	2	9	18	3	33x4	396
Ford Tri-motor	5x2.5	-4	12.5T	-7	45	3	10	15	3	21x4	252
Lockheed P-38	4x2	-4	6.4T	-6	40	3	19	18	4	36x8	1152
Messerschmitt	4x2	-4	6.4T	-6	40	4	15	20	4	50x8	1600
Boats											
Rum Runner	4x2	-4	6.4T	-6	40	2	9	18	3	9x4	108
U.S.N. PT	16x8	-8	400T	-12	70	2	22	10	3	11X4	132
U.S.C.G Cutter	20x10	-8	800T	-13	75	5	23	10	3	7x4	84
Freighter/Liner	25x12.5	-9	1.6KT	-14	80	6	24	8	2	4x4	32
USN Destroyer	32x16	-10	3.2KT	-15	85	10	25	8	2	11x4	88

First Aid Supplies: These are useful for Jungle Doctor types and for PC's ease of mind. Bear in mind that in the fast paced Pulp era most characters will not have the luxury of extended rest.

Field lab Equipment: Much improved by this Era, portable complete labs were available for a fair sum of money. All bonuses for lab & accessories should be allowed by the GM if one of these is owned by the PCs.

Lockpicks: Still a favorite style of entry for thieves, P.I.'s, and PCs with a curious streak.

Magnifying Glass: This is more popular for professor types and a few of the more older style detectives.

This is only a sampling of items that will come into play. Unless the gaming group decides to be history-intensive, common sense should suffice when the question of a particular item's existence arises.

WEAPONRY

With two World Wars in the first half of the century, weapon technology improved drastically. Below is a sampling of firearms from the beginning of the Era to near the end. Please note that a complete list would require a text more immense than this book could hold.

WEAPON TABLE FOR THE PULP ERA									
Name	**OCV**	**R MOD**	**DMG**	**STUNx**	**STR**	**SHOTS**	**CAL**	**YEAR**	**NOTES**
Handguns									
Browning .25	0	-1	Âd6	0	5	6	.25ACP	1906	
Walther P-38	+1	0	1d6+1	0	8	8	9mm	1938	
M14 Nambu	+1	0	1d6	0	8	8	8mm	1925	Japanese
Tokarev M1933	+1	0	1d6+1	0	8	8	7.62mm	1933	Russian
Colt Police	+1	0	1d6	0	8	6	.38 Spec.	1907	
S&W # 27	0	0	1Âd6	0	8	6	.357	1935	
Submachine Guns (All may autofire)									
Owen MK1	+2	0	1d6+1	0	10	33	9mm	1941	Australian
Vz23/25	+1	0	1d6+1	0	10	40	9mm	1948	Czech
MAT-49	+1	0	1d6+1	0	13	32	9mm	1949	French
MP18-1	+2	0	1d6+1	0	10	32	9mm	1916	German
Mauser M32	+1	0	1d6+1	0	10	10/20	.30 Mauser	1932	German
MP40	+2	0	1d6+1	0	13	32	9mm	1940	German
Beretta M38A	+2	0	1d6+1	0	10	40	9mm	1938	Italian
M-45	+2	0	1d6+1	0	10	36/50	9mm	1945	Swedish
PPsh-41	+1	0	1d6+1	0	10	35/71	7.62mm	1941	Russian
Sterling L2A3	+1	0	1d6+1	0	10	34	9mm	1943	British
Rifles									
KAR-98K	+1	+2	2d6+1	+1	10	5	8mm	1935	German
FG-42	0	+1	2d6+1	+1	10	20	8mm	1942	German
MP-44	+1	+1	2d6	0	13	30	7.92Kurz	1943	German
Arisaka 99	+1	+2	2d6	+1	10	5	7.7	1939	Japanese
Mosin-nagant	+1	+2	2d6+1	0	13	5	7.62R	1930	Russian
SKS	+2	+1	2d6	0	10	10	7.62Short	1945	Russian
Enfield #4	+1	+2	2d6	+1	10	10	.303	1941	British
Heavy Weapons (All may autofire)									
MG-08	+2	+4	2d6+1	+1	*	250	8mm	1908	German; *mounted
MG-34/42	+1	+2	2d6+1	+1	13	50	8mm	1934/42	German
Type 99	+1	+2	2d6	+1	13	30	7.7mm	1939	Japanese
DP	0	+2	2d6+1	+1	15	47	7.62R	1928	Russian
SG-43	+2	+4	2d6+1	+1	13	250	7.62R	1943	Russian
Dsh KM 38/46	+2	+4	3d6	+1	*	50	12.7mm	1946	Russian; *mounted
Vickers MK1	+2	+4	2d6	+1	*	250	.303	1912	British; *mounted
Lewis MK1	+1	+2	2d6	+1	13	47	.303	1914	British
Bren MK II	+1	+1	2d6	+1	13	30	.303	1938	British
BAR 1918	0	+2	2d6	+1	15	20	30-06	1918	U.S.A.

MEDICINE

This is still the age of invention. But for the intrepid horror character, these things pale when compared to the items that might save a life. For purposes of healing PCs should be allowed normal healing when out in the "field" and 1½ x healing if hospitalized or under close medical supervision. This still does not prevent infection by "Mystical diseases."

GM'S GUIDE TO PULP HORROR

THE SETTING

HISTORY

The early decades of the Twentieth Century saw the world remade. The first decade saw social and scientific developments so rapid that mankind could hardly keep up. Then came ten years of constant turmoil. After World War One, America emerged as a world power. The decade following the conflict was a time of fantastic prosperity — The Roaring Twenties. This is the era of Prohibition and speakeasies, gangsters and revenuers, Harding and Coolidge and Hoover, Jazz and the Blues, radio and movies, and everyone agreed that life had never been better.

On October 24th, 1929, the bottom dropped out. America and the world were thrust into the Great Depression. The gulf between the classes grew larger until it seemed that society included only the very rich or the very poor. The Roaring Twenties, just over, seemed a fleeting dream. The twin realities of hunger and homelessness took command of the worlds' consciousness. But not all was darkness. Human nature proved generous and indomitable. The world coped, and grew stronger through adversity. As the decade ended the cyclic nature of history asserted itself; the world breathlessly watched as storm clouds began to gather yet again …

The decades of sharp contrast shared one common distinction — transportation technology had rendered the planet open for exploration, and intrepid adventurers rose to the challenge. The last great era of earthly discovery had come. Far off jungles were awakened by the roar of an aeroplane for the first time; flags were planted on virgin mountain tops. And as heroes plumbed the graves of pharaohs and stumbled across lost cities in the Amazon, they found that here, far away from home, the world was stranger and more terrifying than they dreamed.

After the start of the Great Depression, Congress passed a number of acts that led to the regulation of industries like securities trading and communication. Anti-depression measures begin to turn the country back on a course of recovery.

But elsewhere in the world, men motivated by a lust for power began to implement ambitious schemes in Germany, Russia, and China. Perhaps these individuals have been influenced by outside agencies more evil than themselves?

CHOOSING A START DATE

This era, spanning the years 1900 - 1945, offers a wide variety of opportunities. Pulp campaigns may be set in either of the two World Wars, during the giddy Twenties or during the dark years of the Great Depression. The choice of a start date will have a great effect on the tone of the campaign. Decade by decade, here is what the Pulp Era has to offer.

1900-1910: This was the age of transition. Campaigns set during this period will be an interesting mix of Pulp and Eldritch, with monsters and motorcars sharing the scene. All over the world the political scene was in turmoil, with assassinations the order of the day. This was the last great empire building era, the English, Dutch and Japanese all made forays into other lands, only to discover that such behavior was rapidly becoming intolerable. Across the globe native people began to fight for independence.

Great disasters of the time include the San Francisco earthquake (1906), the Monongah, W. Virginia coal mine explosion (1907), the New Orleans Yellow Fever epidemic — a Wu plot? (1905) and the unexplained disappearance of the steamer *Waratah* with 300 aboard (1909).

Notable advances in roleplaying-related technology and exploration include the wireless, the widespread use of submarines and airships, the rapid development of the airplane and automobile, Hans Meyers's Andean expedition in 1903, the first motion pictures, the New York subway began construction in 1900 (who knows what they found down there?) and opened in 1904, Teddy Roosevelt starts a national ju-jitsu craze, Roald Amundsen navigates the Northwest Passage in 1906, the trans-Atlantic steamship record is set by the *Lusitania* — 5 days, 54 minutes. Hiram Maxim invents the silencer in 1908, Peary reaches the North Pole in 1909, Halley's comet fails to destroy the Earth in 1910 and finally, after being commercially available for three years, airplane sales to private individuals total five.

1911 - 1920: The decade of constant warfare. Pulp campaigns set during these years may feature a strong military content, with sorcerers and cultists working to sway the war in opportune directions. The United States sent troops to Mexico, China, Cuba, Nicaragua, Haiti and finally to Europe for World War One. Tarzan and Fu Manchu become literary sensations in the now-popular 'Pulp' format (for which we all should be eternally grateful).

Disasters and other scenario-inspiring events include the Triangle Shirt Factory fire, the Yangtze river flood which killed 100,000 and the eldritch 100 degree weather in London (all in 1911). In 1912 the *Titanic* sinks (on Taxlan Day). Multiple train crash in Switzerland kills 227, Italian Earthquake kills 30,000 and the *Eastland* capsizes, all in 1915. Disasters continue through to the end of the decade, the most notable being an influenza epidemic in 1918-19 that kills 20 million worldwide. The next-greatest disaster is manmade: WW1 casualties are estimated at 11.6 million dead and 11.8 million missing or imprisoned.

Exploration and technology kept up with the constant warfare. Notable advances in roleplaying-related technology and exploration include the automatic pistol, the Lewis machine gun (usually mounted on airplanes), Amundsen's successful expedition to the South Pole in 1911, the first parachute jump and seaplane (both in 1912), the Stefansson and Anderson expedition to the Canadian Arctic (1912), the Shackleton Antarctic expedition in 1914, Stein's discovery of Marco Polo's lost city of Etzina in South Mongolia (1915), First transcontinental phone call in 1915, plastic surgery developed (after 1916 villains were never quite the same), the Tommy Gun in 1916, Hall and Woolley begin excavations in Babylonia (1918), First trans-Atlantic flight in 1919 and finally, the first London to South Africa flight across the Sahara was made in 1920.

1921 - 1930: Here it is — the first decade of the Pulp Era as it is popularly reckoned, The Roaring Twenties! The country became a land of lawlessness. A vocal minority managed to convince the government to pass the Volstead Act and Prohibition became the law. This had the immediate result of opening the nation up to exploitation by organized crime. After the war, people wanted to party! For the entire decade the gangsters ruled. The nights were broken by machine-gun fire, "speakeasies" could be found all across the country and corrupt cops and politicians pocketed bribes. Through it all rang the music which scandalized the straights even more than rock and roll would thirty years later — Jazz!

The Occult saw a resurgence in popularity. From parlor games to deadly serious demon worship, the mysteries of the unknown held a strong fascination for the denizens of the times. The most far reaching result of this craze was the strong impression the racist teachings of the Thule Society made on young Adolf Hitler in Austria, and their role in the holocaust to come.

Disasters and other notable events include the ZR-2 airship disaster and the *Hong Kong* sinking (1921), the Blackston, Va. meteor strike (20 tons, seen for miles) in 1922, the Yokohama/Tokyo earthquake in 1923, the *Vestris* sinking in 1928, the St. Valentines Day Massacre in 1928, and the Ohio State Penitentiary fire, the Burmese earthquake, and the killer hurricane that ravaged Santo Domingo, all in 1930.

Exploration and technology became a favorite subject for escapist reading. Among the true stories of the decade are the invention of the polygraph (1921), the discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb (and accompanying curse) in 1922, the exploits of paleontologist Roy Chapman Andrews in Mongolia in 1924, the first trans-Atlantic phone call, the airship *Norge* completing a transpolar crossing and Byrd flying an airplane over the pole, all in 1926. Lucky Lindy captured the admiration of the world with his solo flight across the Atlantic, Watkins explored Spitsbergen (did he find Lamplighters?) and an 8000 foot well was drilled in California, all in 1927. In 1928 the beloved Autogyro is introduced and Amundsen dies on a rescue mission to the Arctic. Pluto is discovered in 1930, to the consternation of Astrologers everywhere.

1931-1945: The final fifteen years of the Pulp Era saw worldwide depression ferment into global warfare that dwarfed that of two decades earlier. The Great Depression is already underway at the beginning of this period, and will continue until the outbreak of World War Two. But the American spirit prevailed, and countless young men went overseas to fight for a system of government that had basically failed them for the last ten years. This is the age of saboteurs and spy rings, of secret treaties and hidden agendas. Games set in this period can feature Nazis and Japanese villains who bring horror to America, or exciting terrors overseas in enemy territory. Who knows what desperate tactics were tried by would-be world conquerors?

Game-worthy disasters and events during these years include the *Morro Castle* fire and the Honshu Island typhoon in 1934, the Dust Bowl and the Quetta, India earthquake in 1935. The *Hindenburg* explosion, the New London, TX schoolhouse explosion and the disappearance of Amelia Earhart all occurred in 1937. A living Coelacanth is caught, Orson Welles broadcasts War of the Worlds and an unexpected Hurricane in New England — all combined to make 1938 a very strange year.

From 1939 on, World War II dominated the news, particularly after the United States entered the conflict in 1941. This was the beginning of America's recovery from the Depression, fueled by the demand for manufactured military goods. Life revolved around support of the war effort. It was the end of the war that signaled the end of the Pulp Era. Methods of entertainment turned to the mass appeal of the movies and radio and away from the more individual-oriented activity of reading, a trend that increases as time goes by.

CHOOSING A LOCATION

In a Pulp Campaign the world is the setting. The nature of this sub-genre almost demands that characters be permitted to travel. The organization and monster entries presented in this chapter are designed to allow scenarios which start in the United States and then branch out to foreign locations. For example, an adventure cycle featuring the villain Taxlan could lead from any Atlantic coast city to the Caribbean and finally to Taxlan's hellish lair beneath Haiti. Choosing a location, then, is more likely to be choosing a place to travel from. If the Dark Corner Society or a similar organization is used, then the PCs may regard whatever chapter they belong to as their home base.

CONDUCTING THE CAMPAIGN

ESTABLISHING THE TONE

The material in this chapter is designed to be used in scenarios featuring a combination of dark horror and high adventure. The consequences of PC failure should be grim, and the desired results of a mastermind's schemes should be ambitious indeed. But why is this so?

A cursory review of some of the more fantastic heroic pulp stories will show that the villains were not content with what they could easily have. They wanted the world, and if they could not have it, then they wanted to destroy it. The monster entries illustrate the desires of many eldritch creatures to extend their influence across the globe. And if they are not opposed, then they are likely to succeed.

Not all stories need to start with the PCs discovering a dead body and a cryptic clue, a staple of countless pulp stories. Exploration that leads to evidence of the presence of Something Strange should have the PCs eager to learn more, portents of doom and curses notwithstanding. Political events may arouse the suspicions of PCs (i.e., some corporal in Germany just took over the whole country) and send them off to investigate matters firsthand.

CAMPAIGN SCALE

Unlike the previous era, travel in the pulps is much faster and strongly encouraged. New York is a great city, but so are the major population centers of a hundred other countries. Likewise, evil plots take on a greater scale. World domination, by force, monetary control, or blackmail, is the goal of many of the more influential adversaries in this time.

With travel being such a staple of this era, some adventures could take place on conveyances like a train speeding across Europe or a cruise ship making its way across the Atlantic. Popular novelists have taken advantage of the possibilities afforded by some methods of transportation: isolation within a small area, hindrances due to inclement weather, the potential of being marooned in a strange country or on a deserted island, etc. The GM is encouraged to exploit all these ideas to the fullest.

THE PULP HORROR CAMPAIGN

THE CULT OF TAXLAN

This section describes the Cult of Taxlan, a pulp-style organization serving an evil god from prehistory. The Taxlan campaign embraces most Pulp Horror themes — here the GM will find ancient moldy manuscripts, murderous cultists, sorcerous rituals, lost cities, mind-numbing monsters and the horror of an antediluvian god stalking the Earth.

This material is for GMs eyes *only* — players who enjoy unraveling mysteries should read no further lest their enjoyment of the campaign be compromised.

THE HISTORY OF TAXLAN

Atlantis, the shining pinnacle of civilization, has fascinated humanity since Plato recorded it in the "Timoerus" thousands of years ago. The ancient philosopher chose to relate the story as a moral tale, dressed in the familiar trappings of his contemporary religion. He detailed the fate of a mighty continent in the Atlantic. Wise scholars and mighty warriors lived there. Their prosperity led them into pride and impiety, and the gods that they forsook destroyed them and sank the country beneath the waves. But this is not the story as Plato heard it. At the center of the myth of Atlantis lies deception and madness.

The truth, which Plato secretly recorded in his "Revelations of Chronos," is a darker matter. It is the tale of Taxlan, a mortal man who aspired to godhood, and the horrible lengths he went to in his quest. Taxlan was hereditary Priest-King of the island nation that bore his name. He commanded the navy, and officiated at religious functions. His passion was the Black Arts; he was already five centuries old when he discovered that the god he worshipped was once a human being, his distant ancestor. More importantly, he discovered the secret means by which his god's power was sustained. His evil spirit was inflamed by the realization that he, Taxlan, could become a god.

Taxlan's plan was simple, and it worked. First he furiously escalated the rate of human sacrifice on the island, to lull the demanding god into carelessness. Then he performed the rituals that would channel all the sacrificial energy into himself. Planning to trick the god into a characteristic act of mass destruction, he then ordered all sacrifice stopped immediately. The scheme worked beyond his wildest conjectures. The wrathful deity, enraged at its worshippers, sank the hills and temples beneath the sea — in short, he drowned them all. And Taxlan was ready. In the rush of unimaginable power stolen from millions of fleeing souls, killing the formerly omnipotent deity was almost an afterthought.

The god Taxlan's first divine act was ensuring the survival of a handful of his faithful. He demonstrated to them that he was now a god, and instructed them how to serve him. East and west he sent them, and ancient cultures on both sides of the Atlantic recorded their visits. The mythology of Central America remembers them as gods who taught the primitives there many things — how to grow maize, weave cotton, build with stone and how to tell time by charting the stars. The passage of centuries twisted the legend so that now these accomplishments are attributed to one god — Quetzalcoatl.

The impact of the Taxlanian exodus on the west is negligible. Conditions on this side of the Atlantic were more favorable to the development of civilization. It is likely that most Taxlanians quietly blended in the cultures there or to have formed secret societies; others are thought to have entered the African interior. As the centuries passed their story entered the realm of myth.

Taxlan the god, having sent his followers away, used his magic to raise an archipelago from the ocean floor and constructed a huge labyrinth linking the islands. Then, exhausted, he waited for the sacrifices to commence, so that he could build cities and call back his people. He waited there in the darkness for centuries, and felt his energy ebbing. Only just before oblivion seized him did his pride allow him to admit that he had made a mistake. His predecessor had gained power as the result of a mighty war; sacrifices to him were made by the knife. Taxlan had ascended through a mass drowning but had assumed that the method of sacrifice was the same as before. As the god entered a deep coma, his priests were killing millions in his name...

The evil history of the god-thing Taxlan might have ended in darkness and silence if not for Western man's lust for gold. Through the centuries the worship of Taxlan metamorphosed into the familiar rites of the Native American cultures. But a few of the faithful remained, and kept his name alive. No book records their dark deeds, but they are there, between the lines of history, sacrificing their all for the glory of their ravenous master. But they never realized that to properly sacrifice to their god the victim must be drowned. When a proper offering was made it was entirely by accident.

The year was 1522. A small band of Aztec refugees encountered a Spanish scouting party near the shore of the Gulf of Mexico. A priest of Taxlan was among those who escaped. Swearing vengeance he snuck onto the Galleon anchored offshore. Making his way into the hold he whispered the most powerful spell he knew, "Ic Taxlan Ummentul" (More Souls for Taxlan), and set a fire. He almost made it off the ship before the gunpowder exploded. Knocked unconscious by the blast, he and a dozen sailors drowned...And fourteen hundred miles to the east Taxlan stirred from his age-old slumber. He cast his mind across the waters and touched the souls of the dying. Sensing the evil in their hearts he gave them the choice to live again and serve him or to perish. Thus the new Cult of Taxlan was born.

THE CULT OF TAXLAN

The evil of Taxlan has spawned two cults. The Outer Cult is an evil variant of Voodoo based on the worship of Taxlan and the spirits of his long-dead priesthood. The traditional Voodoo church, even those schisms and sects known to be evil in intent, hates and fears Taxlanian Voodoo. This group practices blood sacrifice, consorts with monsters and has bullied the islands with terror for years. But the horror of the Outer Cult pales next to the atrocities of the chosen of Taxlan, the Inner Cult. All of them, every one, is an individual who died once and chose resurrection and total fealty to Taxlan over final judgment. They care little for power or terror. They exist to murder the innocent.

Those who cannot swim are foolish to enter deep water; those who seek the Cult of Taxlan should take heed. The cult exists in every seaport on the Atlantic, but is most influential in the Caribbean, especially in Haiti. Adventurers who inquire about Taxlan will soon find themselves slipping beneath the surface of rationality into a twilight abyss of deranged fantasy. Their only answer may be cold steel between the ribs or a set of concrete galoshes. Obscurity is the watchword of the Cult of Taxlan; the secrets they gloat over are not meant for the mind of a sane humanity.

The Inner Cult of Taxlan are shipwreckers. Sabotage is their mission; a cultist may neglect to warn his captain of a looming iceberg, or unfurl a sail in the midst of a hurricane. He may act more directly; dynamite or arson may be his tools. But not all cultists are sailors, and not all drowning victims are shipwrecked. Cultists may be aeroplane pilots, a nice elderly couple who push people overboard from cruise ships or a U-Boat commander. A Taxlanite may simply prowl beaches and kill his victims in the surf. The sacrifice may be committed on a sudden whim or after years of intricate planning.

No one may approach a Taxlanite and expect to join the Inner Cult. It does not recruit members, and an outsider who exhibits knowledge of their existence is marked for death. Inducting novice cultists is the prerogative of mad Taxlan himself; he chooses them all, from every strata of society. Inner Cultists share only one common trait — each perished in a shipwreck, or drowned in the Atlantic in some manner.

At the exact moment of death, an unfettered soul was grasped by the searching intellect of Taxlan. If evil and destructive in life, or potentially so, he will be judged worthy to serve. The lost soul is then tempted with vistas of pellucid splendor. Acceptance of their dark promise blasts away whatever vestiges of good he possessed, and into the void comes the murderous desires of Taxlan. Then comes rebirth, rescue, and a foul new purpose.

The taint of Taxlan allows Inner Cult members to identify each other on sight. While they are not tightly organized they keep in touch. They participate in the rites of the Outer Cult, which they throw themselves into with wild abandon. Taxlan has only one day that is held sacred by his followers, April 15th. On this date great revels are held on deserted ocean fronts, and sacrifices are made to commemorate that long ago day when the souls of drowning millions elevated the evil sorcerer-king to godhood. Their god is content to remain in his undersea lair, influencing the tiny creatures that serve him, and to grow fat from their sacrifices. While he has not communicated to his worshippers an ultimate objective, all follow the dark agenda he instituted millennia ago.

"Ic Taxlan Ummentul" or "More Souls for Taxlan" is their litany, and they fulfill its command without fear for themselves. Having drowned once, they can never do so again until Taxlan wills it. If he deems their sacrifice adequate, they will survive the watery depths to serve him again. An Inner Cultist who has distinguished himself over all others is transformed into a non-human Ictaxlian (q.v.). Those who have displeased Taxlan are drowned with the victims of their crime.

The Cults of Taxlan exist to this day, sacrificing victims to empower their god. Taxlan himself is content to reside in his underwater lair, continuing his studies in magic. He keeps well abreast of the human world; periodically he will enter the body of one of his priests (Manifest Jones q.v.) and wander the planet, studying new sorcerous techniques and indulging in fleshy vices. With the dual protection of his two cults and his monstrous servants he expects to live forever.

DARK DESIGNS

THE NEW ICTAXLIANS

With mankind becoming more sophisticated and his weaponry more deadly, Taxlan has seen a need for a more efficient magical servant. The Ictaxlian works well in an underwater environment but is inefficient on land. His Cults are committed but they are mere humans and often too weak in dangerous situations. What Taxlan wants is a combination of the two — a servant who is able to pass as a human but is capable of the shapeshifting feats and hideous strength of the Ictaxlian.

The problem calls for extensive research and experimentation. However, the nature of the work demands that it not be traceable to Taxlan himself. With this object in mind Taxlan has appointed a team to establish a base, protected by members of both cults and monsters, in an abandoned Seminole village in the Everglades. Their mission? The capture and dissection (while 'alive') of shapeshifting creatures. Taxlan is well aware that many of these beings belong to communities which are likely to desire revenge, thus the acquisitions must be accomplished through agents. Occasionally Taxlan himself will supervise the work in his Manifest Jones guise.

Player Characters can be involved in this scheme in several ways. They may be tricked into capturing a monster and naturally wonder what the 'Government agents' want with it. They may simply be investigating a disappearance in the 'Glades. Possibly they may even be approached by a monster seeking help — perhaps a Werewolf who is unaware of his condition and knows only that weirdoes are chasing him. Chantell Dujon is a good NPC to involve in this story cycle.

THE REVELATIONS OF CHRONOS

Taxlan is obsessed with immortality. While incredibly powerful he is still vulnerable, and quite capable of dying. One of the greatest threats to his existence is the twelve scroll Platonic manuscript called 'The Revelations of Chronos'. The text is written in the form of a dialogue between the Titan Chronos and Plato himself. Briefly, the story is that recounted in the 'History of Taxlan' section. Somehow — perhaps 'Chronos' was an Oracle Demon — Plato recorded details of the story which not even a witness to the events

would have been able to share. The most important portion of the scrolls is the exact spell Taxlan used to ascend to godhood! With this knowledge in their possession a sorcerer could feasibly devise a way to *reverse* the process. The 'Revelations are encoded so that all twelve must be on hand for any single portion to be understood. Finding the scrolls is the key to defeating Taxlan forever, but it should not be an easy task.

The "Revelations" are included here as a tool for the GM. Their most obvious use is as a method of winning the campaign without having to resort to extreme measures such as blowing up Haiti. They are also useful as a campaign barometer — the more scrolls the PCs possess the more deadly the opposition should be. They could also open up an entirely new storyline wherein an evil sorcerer is also tracking down the scrolls with an eye towards using the spell to obtain godhood himself. Tales featuring this individual and his minions could alternate with Taxlan scenarios, giving waterlogged PCs a break from aquatic menaces.

Where are the scrolls now? It is suggested that the GM establish that an occultist group once collected all twelve, saw the danger they posed, and split up. Each took one of the twelve for safekeeping. The PCs must find the descendants of the twelve and determine where the scroll is now. If one of the twelve is still alive he could be the ambitious individual alluded to above. Feigning goodness, he might even hire the PCs to help him! Or, an academic PC could stumble across a scroll and wonder if there is any truth to the tale therein. His investigations could initiate the campaign.

One final note — at first, Taxlan should not be aware of the scrolls. Their existence is not known to the occult circles he moves in. About midway through the campaign, however, the GM should let him on to the secret (maybe somebody will drown) so that the cult will be able to get in on the hunt...

TAXLAN MANIFEST

An interesting twist on a Taxlan campaign is that the PCs will have an opportunity to meet their enemy long before the dreaded climactic battle. Taxlan (inhabiting Jones) has several identities in man's world, all of them connected in some way to the study of the occult. In America his name is Warren Erickson and he is a reclusive shipping magnate who helps sponsor Dark Corner Society expeditions. PCs investigating the history of Atlantic maritime disasters will discover that a disproportionate number of the ships involved belonged to Erickson. If Erickson is met by the PCs he may well help their investigations along in the wrong direction, perhaps complaining that an evil sorcerer (or cult, monster, etc.) has targeted him. Taxlan has often disposed of enemies and rivals by setting them against each other.

In Europe Taxlan has established the identity of Azuago Formosa, Portuguese antiquities dealer. In this guise the wily god has managed to cultivate a reputation as one who can procure anything, no questions asked. The game application of this is obvious — PCs tracking down or trying to identify a certain artifact are bound to attract the attention of Formosa, who has many greedy spies on the continent. Formosa is also said to be involved in Black Magic rituals — persistent rumors suggest that among his wares are potent magical tomes and devices. The best stuff he takes home, of course. This is Taxlan's favorite alias.

On the west coast of Africa, Taxlan is called Papa Takla. Here, mocking the ability of colonial authority to thwart him, Taxlan indulges in horrific foulness. Papa Takla wanders the coast speaking out against the hated imperialist governments, twisting legitimate grievances into dogmatic racial hatred. He openly displays his magical abilities and savagely murders any who cross him. Taxlan plans to link together a brotherhood of witch-doctors and use their influence to instigate a continental rebellion, with new leaders hand picked from his cult. PCs may become involved in this matter in any number of ways. They may hear of the (officially non-existent) Takla uprising because of its sorcerous aspect — perhaps an official known to the PCs is being victimized by a local witch-doctor. Or, maybe a friend of theirs has had family members join the cult.

Here are a few points to consider when Taxlan is out slumming. First, he will not willingly endanger the body of Jones. He will always have hired thugs, cultists or monsters around to help him out of jams. Second, while doing so is not injurious he will not willingly travel far from the coast. Third, he is prone to relaxing while in disguise and may be difficult to antagonize. Fourth, he may use his aliases as a means of commissioning individuals to fight other supernatural menaces which cause him problems. PCs may well believe that he is a staunch ally. Finally, remember that he uses magic to alter his appearance — it will be a while before PCs catch on that Manifest Jones is really Warren Erickson who is Azuago Formosa who is Papa Takla who is the god Taxlan.

TAXLANIAN VOODOO

Voodoo is a complex subject which has been badly represented in popular culture. The style of Voodoo presented here is not the real article, which is a religious faith practiced by millions worldwide. Instead, this is Taxlan worship cloaked in the trappings of the Voodoo faith. Very few Voodoo practitioners would condone the activities described here — in fact, most would willingly ally themselves with PCs who oppose Taxlan.

Real Voodoo is a curious mix of native African Spiritualism, Catholic rite and European Grimore Magic. It has existed in its present form for approximately two centuries, primarily in Haiti. The core belief of Haitian Voodoo is that the gods are always nearby and will participate in their own worship services by possessing willing hosts. Taxlanian Voodoo is a far different matter. The trappings and terminology of the two faiths are quite similar due to their concurrent evolution. Because of this many adherents of Voodoo in Haiti have been seduced into participating in Taxlan rites; this mistake often results into their excommunication and/or destruction at the hands of the traditional Voodoo gods. The Outer Cult has many adherents on the island who are quite unaware of the activities of the Inner Cult — they are simply evildoers who are attracted to the power offered by Taxlan, and are smart enough not to question the presence of the occasional white in the houmfort (True Voodoo has been suppressed and scorned by white-led churches for as long as it has existed. Understandably, the motive of whites who wish to join the true religion is held in deep suspicion). The only requirement for joining the Outer Cult is a black heart. Taxlanian Voodoo includes most of the atrocities attributed to evil Voodoo practitioners. This includes such activities as trafficking with evil spirits, cavorting with monsters, and the creation of deadly spells and magic items.

ELEMENTS OF TAXLANIAN VOODOO

Here is described the terminology, creatures and magic items associated with Voodoo; unless otherwise noted all terminology applies to both types.

Baka: (see creature entry). Evil spirits in Traditional Voodoo parley, these possessing creatures are actually phantoms, the ghosts of Taxlans prehistoric priesthood summoned back to the waking world. The Taxlan cult actively implores these spirits to possess the faithful.

Bokor: A sorcerer (not necessarily a priest) of the Voodoo or Taxlanian faith. A Bokor uses his powers for personal gain, and is considered to be evil.

Chauche: (see creature entry) An individual possessed by a Baka. Chauche transform into dogs during the night and practice cannibalism.

Grande Mamaloi: A Voodoo high priestess. There is no Taxlanian counterpart.

Grande Papaloi: A Voodoo high priest. Taxlanian Version is a Grande Papabaka.

Gris-gris Bag: (see spells and items) A pouch of items used to bestow blessings or curses to the recipient. To hurt an enemy the gris-gris can be hidden among personal belongings. Beneficial gris-gris must be worn.

Hougan or Obeah Man is the Voodoo and Taxlanian equivalent of a Bishop.

Houmfort: A Voodoo temple, usually a house or barn.

Ictaxlians (see creature entry) A sea monster created by Taxlan.

Loi: In traditional Voodoo, a divine spirit which possesses the body of an adherent. Major Voodoo Loi include the Venus/Virgin Mary figure Erzulie, the serpent god Damballah and the greatly feared master of black magic, Baron Samedi.

Loup-Garou: (see creature entry) Not a Werewolf, but a Haitian Vampire which can be bribed to do favors for the priesthood.

Mambo: A female Hougan.

Mamaloi: A minor priestess in traditional Voodoo. The Taxlan version is a Mamabaka.

Papaloi: A minor male priest in traditional Voodoo. The Taxlan version is a Papabaka.

Petro: The ceremony wherein Loi or Baka are beseeched to possess worshippers.

Tontons Macoutes: These traveling sorcerers are the most hated and feared figures of Voodoo. They owe no allegiance to family or village. Dedicated to Voodoo, they use their evil powers to oppose the Cult of Taxlan.

Vever: A magical diagram; every Loi and Baka has its own Vever without which it cannot be summoned.

Zombie: (see creature entry) A reanimated corpse. Used for menial labor and murder.

VOODOO SPELLS AND ITEMS

Voodoo Spells and Items have been developed to influence almost every aspect of life. Those listed below deal with matters which may involve Player Characters.

To call up Baka in a non-worship setting go to a crossroads at midnight on Friday. Bring along a pistol loaded with dirt and incense, and light a candle of beeswax. Have a question ready. At the moment of midnight light the candle, draw the vever in the dirt, call out in the name of the Baka, and fire the pistol to the East while imploring the Baka to answer your question. Please note the lack of dismissal spell. Wait on the crossroads until daybreak.

Summon (Baka): Requires magic skill roll, Extra Time (5 hours), Incantations, Gestures, OAF (Pistol and candle)
Active cost: 90   Real Cost: 15   END cost: -9
Magic Skill roll modifier: -9

To contact an Ictaxlian and issue a brief command, stand in the sea and speak the ritual. A message written in blood on human skin is then forced down the gullet of a live fish. Release the fish and go about your business. The Ictaxlian will always know where the caster is until the aegis has been fulfilled, so it will find you. If the caster is not a Taxlan cultist the monster will attack.

Call of the deep: Summon Ictaxlian, OAF (fish, message), extra time 5 hours, requires magic skill roll.
Active cost: 70   Real Cost: 12   END cost: 7
Magic Skill roll modifier: -7

To cast your thoughts to another person procure a fresh human head. Stuff a possession, picture or body part of the intended listener into its mouth. Perform the ritual and whisper your message into the ear. If anyone else hears the message the spell will not work.

Death's Call: Mind Link (Taxlan Cultist 1 at a time), OAF (Head/ Item from subject), Requires magic skill roll, Incantations

Active cost: 10   Real Cost: 3   END cost: 1
     Magic Skill roll modifier: -1

To become the monster Aquasanguis make an appeal to Taxlan for power and cut your throat. This seems easy but only works for members of the Inner Cult. See monster entry.

Favor of Taxlan: Summon Aquasanuis, Trigger (Cutting own throat), Requires skill roll, Gestures, Incantations, Extra time I hour, Side effect Automatic (Cultist dies), Spell ends if cultist body is destroyed (-½)

Active cost: 80   Real Cost: 13   END cost: 8
     Magic Skill roll modifier: -8

To drown a victim on land the sorcerer summons the Breath of Taxlan. Casting the spell requires a live fish, a wooden pail and an item, picture or body part of the victim. Take the representative object and put it in the pail. Incant for a while, then add the fish and some water. The fish should eat the object, after which it should be removed from the water and allowed to die. The victim of a correctly cast Breath spell will have their lungs fill with water while the fish is expiring. If first aid is not immediately applied they will drown. This spell does not empower Taxlan like a death at sea but is an effective terror weapon.

Breath of Taxlan: 2d6 RKA (Special Effect: Victim cannot breathe), Requires A Skill Roll, Extra Time: Full Phase, Gestures, Incantations, Increased END Cost x2, OAF (Fish removed from water)

Active cost: 30   Real Cost: 7   END cost: 6
     Magic Skill roll modifier: -3

For protection against injury sew a garment of rough rags and tie on a belt of cat-eye (it's a plant) with a prayer written on it. Cast the spell. Give to the poor every day until someone attempts to injure you. The shirt will repel a number of attacks equal to the number of days that it has been worn to a maximum of seven days. Stopping the donations or removing the garment will negate the spell and it must be restarted.

Cloak of Taxlan: Armor (+4PD), 7 Charges (Note: Charges are limited to actual number of days donations are made), Requires magic skill roll, OAF, Incantations, Gestures, Extra time 1 hour, Garment must be worn continuously.

Active cost: 6   Real Cost: 1   END cost: 1
     Magic Skill roll modifier: 0

To control an enemy the infamous Voodoo doll is used. The doll is constructed of wood, clay, fabric or wax and stuffed with magical herbs and mosses. A part or representation of the victim must be incorporated, such as hair, blood, nail clippings or photographs. After a full week of ritual, including the sacrifice of wealth to the spirits and the ritual slaying of a black rooster, the sorcerer — no one else — can inflict Stun damage to the victim by stabbing the doll with a black pin. A Voodoo doll cannot be used to kill except through accidents stemming from sudden unconsciousness. A doll can be stabbed with white pins to promote healing.

Voodoo Doll: 4d6 EB NND (Mental defense), Indirect (+¼), Invisible power effects (Sight, Sound) (+¾), No range penalty, 0 END, OAF (Doll/Black Pins/Personal Item), Extra time 1 week (-4), Gestures, Incantations.

4d6 Healing Aid (option rule): Advantages and Disadvantages as above, but pins are white instead of black.

Active cost: 80 harm/40 heal   Real Cost: 12/6
END cost: 10   Magic Skill roll modifier: -12

To Curse or Bless a JuJu bag is used. This is a small drawstring bag made of cloth, leather or human skin which is filled with items (see common spell elements) consecrated to a particular Loi, Baka or god. To curse an enemy the bag is hidden among their personal belongings. As long as the bag is undiscovered it will act as a 3d6 Unluck roll. A JuJu bag designed to bless is given to the honored individual. If they accept it in good faith without doubt the bag will give the bearer a 1d6 luck roll for about a month or until he expresses doubt in the magic. Sometimes items which attract monsters are hidden in the bags.

JuJu Bag: 8d6 Major transform (normal person to cursed/blessed person), OAF (JuJu bag), Extra time 1 hour, Incantations, Gestures, Must be hidden or accepted in good faith (-½).

Active cost: 120   Real Cost: 21   END cost: 12
     Magic Skill roll modifier: -12

• • •

Common Voodoo spell elements include dried lizards, the bones of a victim's father, anything a Christian priest is tricked into blessing: fowls' bones, graveyard dirt, blood, live spiders, fish, chickens, fruit and the like.

NOTABLE TAXLAN CULTISTS

MANIFEST JONES

Background/History: He comes home in the evening with his face wreathed in smiles and hellos, with a bounce in his step and a kind word for everyone. All the neighbors know him, though none call him friend. Some say he must be a great man of God to be so cheerful in a place of darkness. Others have seen that his jolly smiles do not reach his eyes; Manifest Jones may be a great man of God, they ask, but what god?

Jones is the *Grande Papaloi* of Taxlan. His little house in Port-Au-Prince, Haiti is built over an entrance to his god's labyrinthine domain, the upper part of which extends upward into the hill itself. Manifest Jones is the gatekeeper and guardian. Despite his humble lifestyle, he is Taxlan's prime agent on Earth.

During the day, he is employed in the dockyards as a tallyman, supervising the loading of cargo bound for faraway ports. Here he is in contact with many fellow cultists of both circles, and here he plies his deadly mission. Cotton and bananas are not always the only cargo in the holds of doomed freighters he loads. Once they sail, explosions will blast out their hulls, and there will be more souls for Taxlan. After the hideous Ictaxlians bury the wreckage, the ship will be logged as vanished without a trace. Days later certain sailors will swim ashore and go to the little bungalow on the hill, and deep in the realm of Taxlan revels will be held. Manifest Jones will be there, leading the chants and singing the formulae that honor their ravenous god.

Personality: Manifest Jones seems the happiest, kindest man anyone is liable to meet. In many ways, in fact, he is. He truly enjoys his life, both as a friendly dockhand and as a sorcery — wielding high priest of an evil god. He is kind to children and animals, and as good a neighbor as circumstances allow. But there is a hollow place in him where Taxlan dwells, and while he is always gentle to his victims, he shows them no mercy.

Investigators who attempt to implicate him in wrongdoing will find the authorities and populace of his home city unwilling to believe them. Only his closest neighbors harbor any suspicion toward him.

Powers/Tactics: Manifest Jones is a powerful magician with a large following of Taxlanian Voodoo cultists. His spells and rituals are described in the Taxlanian Voodoo section. Although he is familiar with the use of knives, he is not a combatant. He is to be feared because of the cult he leads, his magic and most of all because he is Taxlan's chosen human vessel.

When Taxlan desires to wander the normal world, or when his priest is threatened, he and Jones switch bodies. The possessed Manifest Jones is a frightful opponent. Only the human limitations of his borrowed body check the sorcerous arsenal of Taxlan. Taxlan will normally cast magic to toughen Jones' body first, heal any injuries, and then will turn his attention to his foes. Taxlan shares none of his priest's gentle nature and delights in inflicting pain.

MANIFEST JONES

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
15	STR	5	OCV: 7+
20	DEX	30	DCV: 7
18	CON	16	ECV: 8
12	BODY	4	Phases: 4, 8, 12
18	INT	8	
23	EGO	26	Costs
18	PRE	8	
14	COM	2	Char: 116 Base: 100
8	PD	5	+ +
6	ED	2	Powers: 129 Disad: 145
3	SPD	0	= =
8	REC	2	Totals: 245 245
40	END	2	
35	STUN	6	

Cost	Powers	END
71	Ritual Magic Spells: Manifest Jones's spells can be chosen from the Taxlanian Voodoo section	
5	Detect Taxlan cultist w/Sense (Sight)	0

	Skills	
10	Perk: Cult of Taxlan member (high)	
13	Magic Skill: Ritual Magic 19 -	
3	Interrogation 14-	
3	Oratory 14-	
3	Persuasion 14-	
7	Demolitions 13-	
3	KS: Cult of Taxlan 13-	
3	KS: Voodoo Magic 13-	
2	PS: Tallyman 11-	
1	WF: Knives	
5	+1 Level w/Spells	

100+	Disadvantages	
15	Psych Lim: Split personality; outwardly kind, merciless to foes (Com, Str)	
25	Psych Lim: Subject to Taxlan's will (All time, Fully)	
13	Watched, Taxlan (Mo Pow, NCI) 14-	
15	Hunted, Dark Corner Society (As Pow) 11-	
10	Distinctive Features: Mixed caste (Conc, noticed)	
15	Reputation: Merciless Taxlan Cult leader (Extreme, 14-, only in occult circles)	
15	Secret ID (Manifest Jones is actually Taxlan's priest)	
37	Villain Bonus	

There is no limit to the length of time the possession may be held and in the event of the Jones body's death Taxlan is in no way injured. He will merely abandon the corpse, find another human vessel, then return to his form in his lair and evict the Jones soul from the Taxlan form. Manifest Jones is aware of this potential drawback to his position but suffers it gladly.

Appearance: Manifest Jones's happy-go-lucky demeanor is marred only by an unutterable sadness in his eyes. He is of mixed parentage, and is unremarkable in any company. Hard work on the docks has kept him healthy and tanned.

CHANTELLE DUJON

Background/History: Chantelle Dujon was born in New Orleans less than thirty years ago. She was the only child of a wealthy older couple whose loving indulgence produced a spoiled brat who never learned to treat others as anything except underlings. She was never given to introspection — for Chantelle the world consisted only of possessions and status. Perhaps this is what Taxlan saw in her.

For her twenty-first birthday her parents sent Chantelle on a Caribbean cruise. The ship hit a reef off Andros and everyone aboard was drowned. For the first time in her life Chantelle found a situation where beauty and special privileges could not save her. But there was an edge to her that Taxlan found intriguing. When he revealed himself she eagerly embraced the opportunity he presented. Like so many before, Chantelle arose from the watery depths as a cultist to the dark god. The seeming miracle of her survival paled beside the changes the experience wrought in her personality. The fragile flower of society became an adventuress.

Now back in New Orleans society, Chantelle is the darling of the elite and a respected member of the Dark Corner Society. At the DCS she keeps a close watch for expeditions which might threaten Taxlan. From her contacts with the rich and powerful she keeps her evil mentor supplied with information and more souls for the cause.

CHANTELLE DUJON

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
8	STR	-2	OCV: 4
11	DEX	3	DCV: 4
10	CON	0	ECV: 6
10	BODY	0	Phases: 4, 8, 12
15	INT	5	
18	EGO	16	Costs
20	PRE	10	
25	COM	10	Char: 52 Base: 75
2	PD	0	+ +
2	ED	0	Skills: 83 Disad: 60
3	SPD	9	= =
4	REC	0	Totals: 135 135
20	END	0	
20	STUN	1	

Cost	Skills			
10	Martial Arts — Dirty Infighting			
	Maneuver	**OCV**	**DCV**	**Notes**
	Punch	+1	0	3 ½d6 Strike
	Low Blow	-1	+1	2d6 NND(1)
	Clinch	-1	-1	STR 18 Hold
5,5	Perks: Dark Corner Society member, Cult of Taxlan member (both medium)			
8	Detect Taxlan Cultist at range			
5	Life Support: Breathe water			
2	+2" Swimming			
7	Stealth 14-			
5	Demolitions 12-			
3	PS: Cultist 12-			
8	+1 Level w/ combat			
3	High Society 13-			
3	Persuasion 13-			
3	Conversation 13-			
3	Seduction 13-			
3	French 4 pts.			
3	Carib 3 pts			
3	PS: Society Matron 13-			
4	FAM: w/ Small Arms & Melee Weapons			

75+	Disadvantages
15	Watched Taxlan (MoPow, NCI, 14-,x½)
15	Psych Lim: Fear of Taxlan (Com, Str)
15	Secret ID (Taxlan Cultist)
15	Villain Bonus

Personality: Chantelle is a perfect example of impeccable manners and refinement. She is constantly courted by gentlemen callers and suitors. To the public she is a society darling and a bit of an airhead. Only a select few of know of her occult activities. She always has a clever quip on her lips and the proper attire for the occasion.

Powers/Tactics: Chantelle possesses no special powers beyond those of a Taxlan cultist. Her value to Taxlan is as an insider at the Dark Corner Society. Whenever an expedition is launched which may endanger the secrecy of the Cult Chantelle is sure to charm her way aboard.

Appearance: Chantelle is a 5'8", auburn haired beauty able to stop most men with a misty-eyed look or pout.

TAXLAN INNER CULTIST

This is an average Inner Cultist of Taxlan. GMs are encouraged to use these stats for large groups and templates. Remember that in most cases the only thing Inner Cultists have in common are their water-breathing ability and servitude to Taxlan. Suggested Professional skills are sailor, diver, traveler, loadmaster, fisherman or any occupation dealing with the sea. The Inner Cultists' drive in life is to murder for Taxlan, so they tend to seek employment near the ocean.

INNER CULTIST

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
15	STR	5	**OCV:** 6+
17	DEX	21	**DCV:** 6
18	CON	16	**ECV:** 4
11	BODY	2	**Phases:** 4, 8, 12
13	INT	3	
11	EGO	2	**Costs**
18	PRE	8	
10	COM	0	**Char:** 63 **Base:** 100
6	PD	3	+ +
4	ED	0	**Skills:** 67 **Disad:** 30
3	SPD	3	= =
7	REC	0	**Totals:** 130 130
36	END	0	
28	STUN	0	

Cost	Skills
15	Martial Arts — Dirty Infighting

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
Punch	+1	0	5d6 Strike
Roundhouse	-2	+1	7d6 Strike
Low Blow	-1	+1	2d6 NND(1)
Clinch	-1	-1	STR 25 Hold

Cost	Skills
5	Perk: Cult of Taxlan member (medium)
8	Detect Taxlan Cultist at range
5	Life Support: Breathe water
2	+2" Swimming
7	Stealth 14-
3	Streetwise 13-
5	Demolitions 12-
3	PS: Cultist 12-
3	KS: Taxlan priestly rituals 12-
3	WF: Any choice of GM
8	+1 Level w/ combat

100+	Disadvantages
15	Watched Taxlan (MoPow, NCI, 14-,x½)
10(15)	Psych Lim: Fear of Taxlan (Com, Str)

TAXLAN OUTER CULTIST

The Outer Cultists are best envisioned as evil Voodoo worshippers. They can be found in every city on both sides of the Atlantic. They may be of any race, age or gender. For leaders use the package deal for Ritual Magicians and choose from the Voodoo spell list.

OUTER CULTIST

15 STR	13 DEX	15 CON	11 BODY	10 INT
8 EGO	13 PRE	10 COM	4 PD	4 ED
3 SPD	6 REC	30 END	27 STUN	34 Cost

Skills: Martial Arts (Dirty Infighting)10 pts, Perk: Cult of Taxlan member (Low), Stealth 12-, Demolitions 12-, PS: Cultist 12-, +1 w/Combat. Cost: 29

50+ Disadvantages: Watched: Taxlan (MoPow, NCI, 14-, x½), Psych Lim: Fear of Taxlan (Com, Str)

CREATURES

THE GOD TAXLAN

Background/History: See 'The History of Taxlan'.

Powers/Tactics: Taxlan's current power level, a tiny fraction of what it once was, is still mind boggling. The Earth should be grateful that he has no desire for conquest, for It would be hard-pressed to stop him. If not for the actions of his murderous cult, most occult adventurers agree, he would best be left alone.

Taxlan's magical research has enabled him to forgo the lengthy rituals needed to cast spells. The ever-growing library hidden in his lair contains many fabled sorcerous texts, including a few pre-dating the ascent of humanity. Taxlan's primary concern at this time is to increase the size of his collection. Taxlan is capable of performing every spell listed in this book — after all, he's a god with a Power Pool. GMs desiring to fashion a style for Taxlan would be well served by limiting his spells to those which deal with the element of water, bodily transformation and the summoning of various entities.

There is no happiness for Taxlan. Wrested from his time by the capriciousness of magic, he awoke in an alien world. Wishing only the unquestioning devotion of his beautiful people he slew their god; instead of ascending into sunlit Nirvana he plummeted into a Hell of his own design. Now, grown twisted in the darkness, he creates monsters and cultivates the devotion of murderers . He endures the entreaties of Demons who demand diverted souls and Vampire lords who plead for his secrets but share none of their own. And always, every day, his attention is diverted toward the dying struggles of tiny creatures to whom he can offer no succor, lest they be drowning in evil. But he must endure it all for his life to continue. Finally, when he can bear the clamor no more, Taxlan casts his mind upward, out and into the skull of Manifest Jones. And around the world dogs begin to howl and sensitive men go mad, for black-handed Taxlan stalks the Earth.

Taxlan often enters the body of Manifest Jones and travels around the world researching new magic and making personal visits to cultist projects. He has established several residences and identities around the world. While in the body of Jones he cannot sense or resurrect drowning victims, nor is he empowered by sacrifices. Taxlan cannot possess anyone but Jones until that body is dead — after that a new avatar must be chosen.

The ascent to godhood has had unexpected complications for Taxlan. He was quite surprised to find that he was still bound to the body he was born in, and that the body was by no means immortal — its condition depended on the sacrifices dedicated to him. Nor was his body impervious to

physical harm, as the occasional accident has shown. While still tougher than almost anything else alive, he can die by violent means. He does not need to eat, sleep, or breathe.

Taxlan is master of his undersea environment. From his vast lair beneath the Caribbean his consciousness monitors the activities of his cult. If a member seems lax in procuring life-sustaining sacrifices, Taxlan will have him destroyed, or allow him to drown with his victims.

Appearance: The twin deformities of godhood and vast age have rendered Taxlan barely human. He seems little more than a skeleton cloaked in loose leather. He would almost seem frail, save for his incredible size and the painful miasma of darkness he exudes. Standing, he is almost twenty feet tall. He wears no clothing. He spends almost all his time in a seeming coma, save when he is dictating to his assistants in his sorcerous laboratory. Taxlan never travels under his own power unless events demand it; he is usually dragged on a huge sledge by a team of human slaves.

TAXLAN

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
40*	STR	0	**OCV:** 6
18	DEX	24	**DCV:** 6
25	CON	30	**ECV:** 12
25*	BODY	18	**Phases:** 3, 6, 9, 12
35	INT	25	
35	EGO	50	**Costs**
40	PRE	30	
2	COM	-4	**Char:** 246 **Base:** 100
20	PD	18	+ +
20	ED	15	**Powers:** 1141 **Disad:** 1287
4	SPD	12	= =
13	REC	12	**Totals:** 1387 1387
70	END	10	
55*	STUN	6	*–Characteristics from Growth added in

Cost	Powers	END
150	10d6 Ego Attack, ½ END	5
100	Power Pool: Spells and Alchemical Potions	
100	Control Cost on Magic Pool, 0 phase to change	
100	Power Pool: Sciences and Knowledge Skills	
100	Control Cost on Knowledge Pool, 0 phase to change	
30	25% Resistant Physical & Energy Damage Reduction	
10	10 PD/10 ED Damage Resistance (10 PD/10 ED)	
40	Growth 30 pts, 0 END Pers, Always On, 8m height, 6400 kg, -4 DCV, +4 PER, +2" reach, -6" KB	0
3	Life Support: Immune to Aging	
65	Followers: 2048 Outer Cultists, (50 pts + Disads) each	
55	Followers: 128 Ictaxlians, (100 pts + Disads)each	
60	Followers: 256 Inner Cultist, (100 pts + Disads) each	
300	Base: 200 km x 200 km	

	Skills
3	Interrogation 20-
3	Oratory 20-
3	Persuasion 20-
3	Deduction 19-
13	Magic Skill: Ritual Magic 21-
13	Magic Skill: Alchemy 21-
10	KS: Ritual Magic 23-
10	KS: Alchemy 23-
10	KS: Cult of Taxlan 23-
10	KS: World History 23-
10	AK: Atlantic Ocean 23-

100+	Disadvantages
25	Psych Lim: Taxlan underestimates Humanity (V.Com, Tot)
25	Psych Lim: Taxlan does not tolerate failure in his cult (V.Com, Tot)
15	Psych Lim: Disdains most activity, except research (Com, Str)
25	Distinctive Features: Extremely tall, leather cloaked corpse (Not Conc, Extreme)
1197	Villain bonus

ICTAXLIANS

Background/History: It is an honor only the most faithful can attain. It is the glorious, terrifying rejection of all that is human, the surrender to a new existence free of mortal weakness. The Cult of Taxlan calls it the Ictaxlian Transformation; it is the pre-eminent prize and the blackest curse of Taxlan.

A Taxlan cultist is only offered the opportunity once — any refusal means instant retribution. He is escorted into the vast undersea domain and with great ceremony is sealed into a vault to undergo a year-long ordeal during which his body metamorphoses into a shape that has no place in a sane world. The pain is excruciating and without relief, sleep is impossible and food cannot be taken. Only the power of Taxlan keeps his faithful servant alive. After a year, the sealed vault is broken, and where a man went in, a shambling monstrosity emerges.

Powers/Tactics: Ictaxlians serve their master in many ways. They guard the entrances of his lair, capturing intruders and preventing escape by captives. They are his foremen, his slave drivers. Taxlan's domain is also the lair of many strange monsters and sea beasts, and the Ictaxlians act as their handlers.

Often Taxlan will send them out into the sea to perform special duties. When an especially fruitful mass sacrifice is planned, the Ictaxlians will lurk in the area, ready to pull swimmers into the depths. They are also called upon should danger to the cult become evident; they are by no means confined to the sea, and may travel overland for days to seek out and slay offenders.

Besides the obvious bodily changes they have endured, an Ictaxlian's brain matter is bombarded by a steady stream of adrenaline. While they remain quick and cunning, this chemical imbalance robs them of higher thought processes. Their normal mental state is the frenzied temperament of a drug addict, and their rapid guttural speech reflects this. Because of this, they can rarely be appealed to or reasoned with.

The furious adrenaline production affects their bodies in the expected way. An Ictaxlian's strength and speed are those of a madman. An Ictaxlian possesses an incredible transformation ability — it may alter the nature of its four limbs as it sees fit. If at sea, it may fuse its limbs into its body to facilitate swimming; on land it may form arms and legs, or tentacles. Any combination is possible. The huge maw of an Ictaxlian is equipped with dozens of razor sharp teeth; its strong jaws can crush stone.

The astonishingly tough body of an Ictaxlian can withstand the high water pressure in the deepest Atlantic abyss. They can see in complete darkness, and the placement of their eyes allows them to see in all directions at once.

ICTAXLIANS

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
18	STR	8	**OCV:** 5
14	DEX	12	**DCV:** 5
18	CON	16	**ECV:** 3
12	BODY	4	**Phases:** 3, 6, 9, 12
10	INT	0	
10	EGO	0	**Costs**
18	PRE	8	
8	COM	-1	**Char:** 78 **Base:** 100
8	PD	4	+ +
4	ED	0	**Powers:** 122 **Disad:** 100
4	SPD	16	= =
10	REC	4	**Totals:** 200 200
40	END	2	
35	STUN	5	

Cost	Powers	END
15	1d6 HKA (2d6 w/STR)	1+
3	+1d6 Hand Attack	1
6	Damage Resistance (8 PD/4 ED)	
20	Shapeshift (Limited to appendages)	2
5	Life Support: Breathe underwater	0
10	360 degree Vision	
5	Ultraviolet Vision	
5	Detect Taxlan cultist w/Sense (Sight)	
10	+10" Swimming (12" total)	1/5"

	Skills
3	Contact: Taxlan 12-
3	Bump of Direction
9	Stealth 15-
3	Interrogation 13-
3	Concealment 11-
3	Navigation 11-
3	Shadowing 11-
3	Survival 11-
3	Tracking 11-
3	KS: Cult of Taxlan 12-
2	KS: Shipping Lanes 11-
2	KS: Ports 11-
3	AK: Atlantic Ocean 12-

100+	Disadvantages
25	Berserks when attacked by flame (14-/11-)
15	Physical Lim: Subject to Taxlan's will (Freq, Greatly)
15	Watched, Taxlan (Mo Pow, NCI) 14-
20	Hunted, Dark Corner Society (As Pow, NCI) 11-
25	Distinctive Feature: Fish head (Not conc, Extreme reaction)

Appearance: The elastic nature of an Ictaxlian renders an accurate description difficult. Captured or killed specimens quickly dissolve into a rapidly evaporating tarry mass, no doubt due to the intervention of Taxlan. A few general parameters of their appearance are available, however. They are a uniform oily black in color. Their heads, the only portions of their body that they cannot alter, resemble a deep-sea fish more than anything. Their huge eyes are slightly luminous, and protrude from the side of the skull. The torso is thin and sinuous, and tapers into a powerful narrow tail. The general effect is serpentine. The limbs, as has been noted, may be transformed into flippers, arms, tentacles, or any other appendage.

AQUASANGUIS

Background/History: The Taxlan cultists arsenal of death includes the knife, the club and the merciless murder by drowning. In extremis the magic-using cultist may call upon an Ictaxlian or others of the cult. But when weapons fail and allies are not to be found a final option is open, one terrible both to undertake or be the target of. It is a the blasphemous invocation of the Aquasanguis Transformation.

An Aquasanguis is the magically animated bodily fluids of a Taxlan cultist. It is directed by the spirit of the cultist and is best visualized as a type of water elemental. To cast the spell one must be a member of Taxlan's Inner Circle. The ceremony requires a human sacrifice by drowning accompanied by drumming and ritual dancing. It need only be cast once; the transformation may take place any time thereafter.

When a cultist is forced to undergo the transformation he will find a place where his body will not be disturbed. To make the spell go off he must utter a short prayer to Taxlan and cut his throat. Blood and other bodily fluids will rush from the wound and leave the body a brittle husk. The Aquasanguis will then be able to move about at will.

Powers/Tactics: The most deadly attack an Aquasanguis can perform is to flow into a victims lungs and drown him. If the intended victim is magically protected the creature will have to overcome the defense. If there is no magical defense the best protection is to evade the swift-moving creature. Once the victim is dead, the Aquasanguis will be able to animate the dead body. It can use the borrowed body to move about in sunlight or get close to its next victim. It vacates a body in a torrent of liquid ejected from the mouth and nostrils.

AQUASANGUIS

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
15	STR	5	**OCV:** 6+
18	DEX	24	**DCV:** 6
18	CON	16	**ECV:** 3
11	BODY	2	**Phases:** 3, 6, 9, 12
10	INT	0	
8	EGO	-4	**Notes**
23	PRE	13	
0	COM	-5	**Char:** 67 **Base:** 75
7	PD	4	+ +
4	ED	0	**Powers:** 123 **Disad:** 115
4	SPD	12	= =
7	REC	0	**Totals:** 190 190
36	END	0	
28	STUN	0	

Cost	Powers	END
9	+3d6 HA [pseudopodia]	
15	1d6 HKA (2d6 w/ STR) [Drowning Attack]	1+
20	Desolidification (cannot move through completely solid objects) -2	4
40	4d6 Minor Transform; Dead body to animated body	4
8	Detect Taxlan Cultist at range	
10	LS: Need not breathe	
2	+2" Swimming (4" Total)	1/5"
4	+4" Running (10" Total)	1/5"
7	Stealth 15-	
8	+1 Level w/ combat	

75+	Disadvantages
15	Watched Taxlan (MoPow, NCI, 14-,x½)
15	Psych Lim: Fear of Taxlan (Com, Str)
25	Distinc Looks: Mass of body fluids (Not concealable, Extreme)
30	Susc: Sunlight (V.Com, 2d6/ Turn)
30	Vuln: Cold (V.Com, 2x BODY)

The creature has full control over its mass and can form mocking faces and useful limbs at will. It enjoys an almost complete freedom of movement — only the slickest vertical walls frustrate its progress.

The magic which animates an Aquasanguis protects the creature from being diluted in water or other liquid. It can swim or move through the heaviest downpour without ill effect. The creature will, however, take evaporation damage from heat or sunlight. It generates no internal heat and can be frozen. It is also vulnerable to magic and Holy Water.

An Aquasanguis will retain animation and cohesion only as long as its original body is intact. If the body is destroyed the Aquasanguis will perish.

Appearance: The Aquasanguis is a vile creature. It looks like moppings from a slaughterhouse floor and smells worse. It is a horrible experience to see an Aquasanguis; the dog-sized mass of congealed liquid purposely surging toward its victim while forming ghastly faces and pseudopodia will give the strongest man pause.

A body housing an Aquasanguis has a repellent "full" look to it due to the double load of bodily fluids it carries. Its voice will be phlegmy and its breath atrocious.

BAKA

Background/History: Among the countless victims of Taxlan's deluge were many priests who had faithfully served him and his blood-cult. His reward for their service was to grant them eternal life as disembodied spirits. Throughout the centuries, as they glided invisibly through the rise of civilization, their frustration at being unable to sway the mind of man grew. After his awakening centuries ago Taxlan summoned the Baka and granted them the power to possess the living and to speak to those who summoned them. To these mad spirits (whose very passing chills the blood) were given the responsibility of maintaining his human cult.

The Outer Circle of Taxlan worship the Baka as demi-gods. To them and the all-mighty Taxlan they ascribe all responsibility for natural forces and human destiny. They treat each Baka as an individual personality and build altars and shrines to honor them. The ultimate religious experience for an Outer Cultist is to be possessed by a Baka during a houmfort ceremony.

The possession of a cultist by a Baka will manifest in one of two ways. The most common is for the Baka to enter the body and officiate over the gathering. The Papabakas and their congregations will worship the 'god', offering it food, wine and carnal pleasures. Often the Baka is on an errand for

BAKA

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats			
*	STR	0	**OCV:** 5			
15	DEX	15	**DCV:** 5			
23	CON	26	**ECV:** 8			
*	BODY	0	**Phases:** 3, 6,9 ,12			
23	INT	13				
25	EGO	30	**Costs**			
23	PRE	13				
2	COM	-4	**Char:**	138	**Base:**	100
*	PD	0		+		+
10	ED	5	**Powers:**	163	**Disad:**	201
4	SPD	15		=		=
5	REC	10	**Totals:**	301		301
50	END	2	*These characteristics are as per			
+20	STUN	13	the Host body.			

Cost	Powers	END
90	12d6 Mind Control, 0 END	0
7	1d6 Major Transformation, Cumulative (normal person into demonic servant), power is usable once per Summoning (-2)	1
66	Summon: Chauche	7

100+	Disadvantages
20	Vuln: 2x Effect from holy items
20	Psych Lim: Fear of failure (Com, Tot)
15	Psych Lim: Hatred of clergy and holy items (Com, Str)
15	Psych Lim: Overconfident (Com, Str)
20	Physical Lim: Dispelled by death of host body (Freq, Fully)
30	Susceptibility 3d6/phase from holy ground (Common)
81	Monster bonus

Taxlan and will order assassinations or other dark deeds. After about six hours the Baka will leave and its vessel will awaken unharmed.

Sometimes a Baka will possess an individual who is a natural "spirit trap." The personality of the Baka will be dissolved into that of the host. This individual has become a Chauche (see entry).

Powers/ Tactics: A disembodied Baka is powerless to affect the real world except when it is summoned (see spell). It is then able to speak aloud in a teeth-rattling bass and to mentally summon Chauches if the summoner is an enemy. If the individual is not protected (see Disads) the Baka may also attempt a possession.

The main function of the Baka is to spy for Taxlan and report the actions of his enemies. As Taxlan punishes any Baka who interrupts his studies for less than grave threats, a Baka will usually attempt to reconcile matters on its own.

Appearance: Baka are entirely invisible. Their presence is felt as an abrupt drop in temperature and a palpable tension in the air. Animals and babies sense Baka well before adults do.

CHAUCHE

Background/History: One person in every five hundred has a secret from which there is no release but death. It is not a secret learned but one born into. An individual with this secret may life his entire life and never suspect that he belongs to a select fraternity. Scientists scoff at the merest suggestion of their existence, but learned scholars of the occult have a name for them. They are called 'spirit traps' — no ghost, demon or spirit can ever escape from their bodies unless exorcised. In the dreaming land of Haiti, where drums murmur beneath the stars and worshippers writhe in invitation to possessing entities, a spirit trap becomes a monster.

Sometimes a Baka or Loi comes to a Petro and enters a spirit trap unknowingly. The person so possessed may feel strange for a moment but will not otherwise suspect that he has been honored by a visitor from beyond. But on the next Friday night and every one thereafter the spirit will rise to the fore. A benevolent spirit will seek release and engage the services of a Papaloi, but an evil spirit or a Baka will rage and struggle. So violent is the escape attempt that it alters the very appearance of the host. What was once a man is now the dreaded beast known as the Chauche.

CHAUCHE

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats		
18	STR	8	**OCV:** 6		
18	DEX	24	**DCV:** 6		
23	CON	26	**ECV:** 6		
13	BODY	6	**Phases:** 4, 8, 12		
18	INT	8			
18	EGO	16	**Costs**		
23	PRE	13			
6	COM	-2	**Char:**	108	**Base:** 75
8	PD	4		+	+
8	ED	3	**Powers:**	69	**Disad:** 102
3	SPD	2		=	=
9	REC	0	**Totals:**	177	177
46	END	0			
34	STUN	0			

Cost	Powers	END
24	2d6 HKA, (2 x 1d6; 2x1d6+1 w/ STR), Reduced Penetration [Bite]	3+
16	Armor (+8 PD/ +8 ED), Not vs Blessed or Holy Items or salt treated weapons used by those who know the host's identity (-½)	
20	Multiform 100 pt Outer Cultist	
3	Stealth 13-	
3	Concealment 13-	
3	Shadowing 11-	

75+	Disadvantages
30	Accidental Change: Every Friday (V.Com, Unavoidable)
35	Berserk: When in the kill (14-/8-)
5	Dependence: Killing (V.Com, 1d6/ week)
25	Distinc Looks: Large black dog (Not Conc, Extreme)
7(15)	Psych Lim: Cannot harm member of family, or anyone who has saved its life. (Infreq, Fully)
0(15)	Psych Lim: Cannot cross over Salt or Saline water (Infreq, Fully)
0(15)	Psych Lim: Cannot enter Holy Ground (Infreq, Fully)

Powers/Tactics: A Chauche is a feral beast bearing a superficial similarity to a werewolf. Both are vicious killers and both take canine forms. Both are locked into a cycle of transformation. But the differences are greater. Chauche are as intelligent as the possessing spirit. They have only one form — a great dark 'dog'. They change at sundown every Friday and revert to human at dawn on Saturday. Eeriest of all, Chauche trick and taunt their victims in growling voices before the kill ('let me in, there's a monster out here'). Its only offensive weapon is its sharp teeth.

Chauche must kill and feed at least once during each transformation or the spirit will be damaged. If feeding is prevented a sufficient number of times the transformations will cease. Evil men have been known to enter partnerships with Chauche wherein enemies are provided for the feast. Chauche are able to communicate with Baka and will perform services through them for Taxlan. Sometimes Chauche will take part in Petros, howling along with the drumming and chanting.

L. FRANK 12-93-•

A skilled exorcist can dispel the possessing spirit if he is able to learn its true name. As with most evil creatures the Chauche have special weaknesses and defenses. A Chauche is unable to harm a member of its host body's immediate family. It cannot enter ground sanctified to benevolent deities. It cannot cross a line of salt or saline water. It cannot harm anyone who has saved the life of its host (staged rescues do not count!).

The Chauche's greatest defense is that no weapon can harm it unless the wielder knows its host's identity. Once this is established only blessed or salt-treated weapons will injure it. Clubs of driftwood and shotgun loads of rock salt are especially effective.

Appearance: Chauche resemble large black or grey dogs of an unknown species. The hair on their bodies is short and their rippling muscles are evident. Their eyes glow with an ever-shifting spectrum of color. The face of a Chauche is uncannily human and their jaws are large and powerful.

LOUP-GAROU (HAITIAN VAMPIRE)

Background/History: A visitor to the Caribbean may be excused if he ignores warnings and falls under the spell of the luminous nighttime of the islands. The calm whisper of the breeze caressing the verdant jungle and the majestic canopy of stars soothe the most troubled heart. But sometimes the breeze turns chill and the stars glare cold and distant. The visitor will sense that the jungle watches all who pass within and that the comforting closeness has become oppressive. Then he will hear a high pitched cackle among the trees and something will crash through the leafy canopy and land silently before him. He will not have even begun to flee when cold grasping fingers will find his throat. He has met the Haitian Vampire, the female called Loup-Garou.

Powers/Tactics: Loup-Garou are the most independent of Taxlan's creatures. While an individual is occasionally met in the company of cultists or other monsters the majority are solitary hunters.

Taxlan creates a Loup-Garou by kidnapping babies who he knows will not be baptized. All are female. After a ceremony the child will be returned to its home to live a normal life. The change into Loup-Garou will only occur after the young woman gives birth. Then her hair will slowly turn red and she will begin to drink the blood of children through small incisions between their toes. Her strength will increase and she will become moody and withdrawn. A Loup-Garou in this stage of development will usually be banished to the wilds and forcibly prevented from entering any habitation. Note that these individuals are considered passed beyond the judgment of man and are therefore never killed.

The Cult of Taxlan is always on the watch for these individuals and invites them to join. Any who do are kept well-supplied with young victims. Eventually a Baka will come and announce that the Loup-Garou is ready to move on to the next stage. She will then be ritually slain in a ceremony which climaxes with her heart being cut out and put in an enchanted vessel, which is buried. This is not the end. Three days later the body will quicken and a true Vampire will be free to stalk the night.

The Loup-Garou can now feed on any warm-blooded animal but still prefers human children. Lacking fangs the creature stabs its victims with its razor-sharp talons and drinks from the wounds. Lacking other vampires mind control powers they beat their victim unconscious before attempting to feed. Their favored method of feeding is to haunt the intended for a while (several days) before making the kill.

A Loup-Garou is a formidable adversary. They delight in terrifying their victims and play cruel games before feeding. Some will keep a 'corral' of victims in their lair, sometimes feeding for months before tiring of an individuals taste. They are skilled at moving through trees and climbing. They are almost as strong as European vampires and use their talons to blindingly swift effect.

Many Loup-Garou live in Taxlan's lair beneath Haiti, where plentiful victims may be found. Independent individuals usually reside in caves or abandoned buildings. Some act as guardians of houmforts dedicated to Taxlan. During the daylight hours a Loup-Garou reverts to human form.

LOUP-GAROU

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
23	STR	13	OCV: 6
18	DEX	24	DCV: 6
18	CON	16	ECV: 6
10	BODY	0	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
13	INT	3	
18	EGO	16	Costs
20	PRE	10	
8	COM	-2	Char: 97 Base: 75
7	PD	2	+ +
7	ED	3	Powers: 73 Disad: 95
4	SPD	12	= =
9	REC	0	Totals: 170 170
36	END	0	
31	STUN	0	

Cost	Powers	END
10	1d6 HKA (2d6 w/ STR), Must grab (-½) [Claws]	1+
6	+2d6 HA	
9	7" Flight, Must be in touch with tree limbs (-½)	1/5"

	Skills	
3	Breakfall 13-	
7	Climbing 15-	
7	Concealment 14-	
7	Shadowing 13-	
7	Stealth 15-	
3	Tracking 12-	
5	PS: Braichiating 15-	
3	AK: Haiti 12-	
3	KS: Cult of Taxlan 12-	
3	KS: Hunting Tricks 12-	

75+	Disadvantages	
5	Dependence: Human Blood (Com, Every Night, 1d6/Night)	
20	Distinc Looks: Red hair, Chalk skin (Conc w/effort, Extreme)	
13	Watched: Taxlan (MoPow, NCI, 11-, x½)	
20	Psych Lim: Sadistic (V.Com, Str)	
20	Psych Lim: Giggles to self (V.Com, Str)	
15	Reputation: Noted stalkers of children (Extreme, 11-)	
2	Monster Bonus	

If a Loup-Garou's heart is destroyed the vampire will die. If one is baptized it will be cured of its condition, as indicated by a return to its natural hair color. It has no special defenses against normal weapons but will craftily avoid run-ins with well-armed investigators.

Appearance: The undead Loup-Garou is most noticeable because of its blood-red hair and chalk-white skin. During the night its digits extend to twice normal length and its spine curves so that it must move on all fours. They are prone to giggling to themselves while hunting. During the day only their red hair and nasty disposition reveal their vampiric nature.

MONO GRANDE

Background/History: The Mono Grande, or 'de Loys ape', inhabits the lost city Tzulemtec in the swampy jungles south of Lake Maracaibo in Venezuela. Tzulemtec is a colony of the nation of Taxlan built thousands of years ago and now fallen into ruin. The apes are all that remains of the inhabitants. The apes were an intrinsic part of the culture, providing slave labor and companionship. See the location, 'Lost City of Tzulemtec', for more information.

Powers/Tactics: The apes inhabiting Tzulemtec are similar to Chimpanzees in most respects. They are excellent climbers and move through the jungle as silently as wraiths. While of lean build they are stronger than most men.

Most Mono Grande are now possessed by the spirits of the cities past inhabitants. This makes them much more dangerous than if encountered in their natural state. Having human intelligence, the Mono Grande is capable of building traps and working together to kill intruders. A favorite tactic is too drop nets from the trees and beat ensnared victims to death with clubs. The apes also inflict a ferocious bite.

The possessing spirit is able to communicate telepathically, but will move its mouth to simulate speech.

MONO GRANDE

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
18	STR	8	OCV: 6
18	DEX	24	DCV: 6
15	CON	10	ECV: 6
10	BODY	0	Phases: 4, 8, 12
10	INT	0	
18	EGO	16	Costs
18	PRE	8	
6	COM	-2	Char: 70 Base: 75
6	PD	2	+ +
5	ED	2	Powers: 164 Disad: 159
3	SPD	2	= =
7	REC	0	Totals: 234 2324
30	END	0	
27	STUN	0	

Cost	Powers	END
90	12d6 Mind Control, 0 END	0
7	1d6 Major Transformation, Cumulative (normal person into demonic servant), power is usable once per Moon cycle (-2)	1
15	1d6 HKA (2d6 w/ STR) [Bite]	1+
7	7" Flight, Must be in contact with tree limbs, branches (-1) [Brachiating]	1/5"

	Skills
5	Breakfall 14-
5	Climbing 14-
5	Concealment 12-
3	AK: The City 12-
3	AK: The Jungle 12-
2	PS: one of choice 11-
5	Shadowing 12-
5	Stealth 14-
3	Survival 11-
5	Tracking 12-
4	WF: Melee, Missile

75+	Disadvantages
25	Distinctive Features: Ape (Not Conc, Extreme)
25	Psych Lim : Evil and Manipulative (V. Com, Total)
20	Psych Lim : Must wait until next new moon after leaving host before possessing a new one (Frequently, Fully)
89	Monster Bonus

Should the possessing spirit be exorcised from an ape the animal will flee unless cornered. The possessing spirit will be unable to enter a new host until the next new moon.

Appearance: The Mono Grande averages between four and five feet tall. It is covered with coarse grayish-brown hair everywhere except the face. Its head is quite round; its simian features recall an evil old man's. The creature has extremely long fingers and toes which grant it considerable arboreal mobility.

ZOMBIE

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
13	STR	3	**OCV:** 3
8	DEX	-6	**DCV:** 3
10	CON	0	**ECV:** 2
14	BODY	8	**Phases:** 6, 12
8	INT	-2	
5	EGO	-10	**Costs**
15	PRE	5	
6	COM	-2	**Char:** -2 **Base:** 50
3	PD	0	+ +
2	ED	0	**Powers:** 102 **Disad:** 50
2	SPD	2	= =
5	REC	0	**Totals:** 100 100
20	END	0	
26	STUN	0	

Cost	Powers	END
9	PD Armor (+6 PD)	
15	25% Resistant Physical Damage Resistance	
6	0 END Cost on STR	0
24	LS: Full except Vacuum, Heat/Cold	
25	Spatial Awareness	
15	Does Not Bleed	

	Skills	
3	WF: Creator's choice (example: Melee Weapons and Thrown Spears)	
1	Climbing 8-	
1	KS: Memories of previous life 8-	
3	Language of creator	

50+	Disadvantages	
15	Psych Lim: Must obey orders of its creator (Com, Mod)	
20	Distinctive features: Zombie (Conc w/disguise, Extreme reaction)	
15	Monster Bonus	

THE ZOMBIE

Background/History: Loss of identity is one of man's greatest fears. The horrible possibility that an ego can be stripped away and replaced with total loyalty to a hated master has spawned nightmares in the bravest of men. But nightmares were bearable as long as the daylight came. Then, at the turn of the century, strange tales from the mysterious island of Haiti began to suggest that, no, not even a man's will was immune from the forces of evil.

The popular conception of the Zombie as an undead servant of Voodoo priests owes more to sensationalist journalism than any shred of truth. The Zombie is in fact a living person whose identity has been stolen by evil magic. The first Zombies were created by the *culte de morts*, a Haitian cult whose similarity to Voodoo echoes that of Satanism to Christianity. The Cult of Taxlan, as might be expected, has made extensive use of the Zombie ritual.

The creation of a Zombie begins before their "death." The intended Zombie is abducted and taken to a houmfort. The sorcerer must then work quickly, because the abductee cannot be missed or all will be for naught. A powder of Callaloo, animal intestine and dried blowfish venom is rubbed all over the victims body. He is then forced to drink a potion of rum, fish blood, belladonna and thorn apple juice. After this he is spun around until he is too dizzy to stand. After a final appeal to the Baka and Taxlan for success the victim is cleaned up and returned home. By morning he will be "dead."

Three days after burial the sorcerer will retrieve the body. A long drum ceremony follows. More appeals to the spirits and a dose of fluid squeezed from secret herbs will revive the Zombie within the next few days.

Powers/Tactics: Zombies, with rare exceptions, have no intelligence save that necessary to perform menial labor or guard duty. Due to their slowness they do not function well in combat, except when encountered in large numbers. Note that Zombies do have some vague memories of their past lives and if unattended will occasionally wander home.

In a few instances, occultists have reported that Zombies of normal human agility and intellect have been created. These creatures are cannibals. They have been encountered serving Obeah men, living off leftovers from the priest's sacrifices. For these creatures use the statistics below but adjust the INT to 10 and DEX to 13.

The condition is curable but Haitian sorcerers often demand exorbitant fees or impossible tasks in return for their services.

Appearance: Zombies look like normal, albeit vacant-eyed and drooling humans.

LAIRS AND LOCATIONS

ISLE DE NAGULA

Off the Yucatan peninsula lies several small islands. One of these, the Isle De Nagula, is shunned by native fishermen. Here, it is said, shapechanging witches reside. Any trespassers are said to be eaten. There is a germ of truth in these tales. For centuries the Cult of Taxlan has used this island as a safe haven. A permanent guard was established who slew anyone foolish enough to approach. Now, in the twentieth century, the island has been put to a new use.

On the island is a hidden submarine port, manned by an unholy alliance of Taxlan cultists and Nazis. This strange collaboration came about through the machinations of certain Taxlan cultists of German nationality who saw an opportunity to curry great favor with the god. What better way to send souls to Taxlan than through the use of an armed submersible? When coupled with the chance of advancing their political careers it seemed an idea whose time had come, especially with Taxlan himself predicting world wide warfare within the next decade. And so, secret meetings were held in the highest corridors of power and authorization was given to send a U-Boat to Isle De Nagula, and to train the cultists in its use.

There is a second submarine here, an American one salvaged from the ocean floor by the cult. It is still being refitted for service. This is taking longer than expected, as the necessary components must be stolen from the United States military.

The island is governed through the joint leadership of the cult and the Nazis. The cult representative is Darren Killian, an American Naval officer presumed dead after disappearing in Norfolk, Virginia (he was drowned by a fellow officer). Killian is totally committed to Taxlan and harbors no loyalty for his homeland. The German leader here is Horst von Kloten, a U-Boat commander whose vessel sunk off Bermuda a year ago. He is torn between loyalty to Hitler and Taxlan. His second in command is a fanatical Nazi who, like the rest of the Germans, loathes and hates the cultists they are training. The sailors under von Klotens command are unaware of his Taxlanian sympathies and would likely revolt if the truth was revealed.

The situation is tense and unlikely to last much longer. The cultists plan to kill the Germans as soon as their training is complete. Ictaxlians wait offshore to kill intruders and help slay the Germans when the time comes. Local officials are starting to wonder about the unusual activity being reported by native fishermen. The U.S. Navy is alarmed by the thievery of Top Secret submarine components.

PCs could enter the fray at any time. They could be investigating the thefts or the numerous local disappearances, or even be shipwrecked on the island. Maybe they could stir up trouble between the two groups. When the PCs discover what is happening, the Nazis will be receiving reinforcements to battle the cultists, who will summon Ictaxlians to their aid. A war of technology versus eldritch mysticism will ensue, with the PCs right in the middle of things. The PCs will have to work to neutralize the Nazi sabotage scheme, the Taxlan cult's grisly mission, and also get off the island while safeguarding the lives of any innocent NPCs who may be on hand.

TAXLAN'S LAIR, HAITI

On the crest of a wooded hill overlooking Port-au-Prince is an inconspicuous bungalow. Neighbors have whispered that the house seems larger on the inside, a nervous comment based on the amount of traffic seen entering and exiting, but they do not complain. It is only one more bit of strangeness that they must endure, for the entire slope is haunted. Their uneasy slumbers are disturbed by screams and croakings emanating from deep beneath their floors. Stenches rise from the ground, which sometimes shudders as if in torment. Sometimes odd figures stagger past their windows at night. They live in fear, but the people who live on the hill are too poor to abandon their homes. The little house on the hill belongs to Manifest Jones, and beneath a stone slab in the center of his floor is a flight of stone stairs which twist downward into the hellish lair of Taxlan himself.

Taxlan's cavernous abode lies under the northern Caribbean; several well-hidden tunnels lead to it. The most often used is that described above. Others are entered through caves and old ruins in the jungles. All are guarded by cultists, Ictaxlians, Loup-Garou, Zombies and other dire creatures. Taxlan favors his privacy greatly.

The labyrinth is huge. Over a thousand miles of tunnels connect the portals and the chambered areas. The largest set of chambers lies below Haiti and is larger than Manhattan. Dozens of smaller complexes radiate outward from the center. Some, such as those that serve as housing for cultists, are lavishly decorated. The halls are clean and tastefully adorned, the apartments are elegantly decadent and well-lit. Slaves stolen from the upper world serve their masters every need. Other areas are maintained for demonic delegations and visiting entities — these are mind-bending areas of impossible geometry and blasphemous decor. The outer chambers are dark and unmaintained. None of Taxlans people have trespassed here for years, except on the main thoroughfares. Wanderers tend to disappear in these dark areas, and rumors of societies of escaped slaves and areas inhabited by non-allied monsters persist. Ironically, it is through these areas that enemies of Taxlan are most likely to gain entrance.

The ancient ruins are kept dry to facilitate magical experimentations, and are staffed by kidnapped humans and zombies who do their duties under the watchful eyes of the Ictaxlians. Slaves who are lax or try to escape are usually turned into Zombies or are eaten by the Ictaxlians. Found throughout this dim realm of horror are portals leading to the sea, where the Ictaxlians and other creatures come and go.

TZULOMTEC, SOUTH AMERICA

This city is inhabited by the spirits of the people who fled from Taxlans takeover of the Old God. The inhabitants created many works of art including a giant mosaic of their exodus from the Caribbean. This text also contains research of how Taxlan conquered the Old God and how to possibly destroy Taxlan. Unfortunately for them, the local tribes rose up and destroyed them before their plan could be put to work. The city is now inhabited by the spirits of these same people.

Characters who come to the city will be amazed at the level of technology and the relatively preserved state of the surrounding buildings. The reason for this is that the spirits live on in the local animals.

When the city was first destroyed by the tribes the spirits rose up to exact a terrible revenge. Using their new ability to possess another they possess some of the tribesmen and set out to destroy the villages of the area. In this they were successful and now the area is almost forgotten by all the tribes.

The possessions have gone on for several generations now, but the ability is fading and the level of being they are able to possess has deteriorated, because even spirits have a limited time on this Earth and the remaining ones are the strongest and most evil. Now they are able to only possess lower lifeforms such as apes and some of the great cats. The population of the city is barely one-tenth of what it once was.

The spirits have used the bodies they possess to live out their evil desires and to maintain their city. PCs encountering the city for the first time will be amazed to be met by talking apes. The apes when first met will probably astound PCs into believing that they have encountered a new species of primate, as the apes are of a species that has only been reported on one occasion. This occasion became known as the Mono Grande, or deLoys ape, named after the explorer who shot and photographed one that attacked his party. They are a large primate approximately four and a half to five feet tall and incredibly fierce. But close observation will show that the words being spoken do not match the lip movements of the apes. This is a weakness in the spirit possession as the apes do not possess the vocal capabilities of a person, and the spirit simply manifests a voice to speak with.

PCs will have to fend against the apes, find the mosaic and get out alive. Not an easy task in the jungles of South America.

THE OPPOSITION

THE DARK CORNER SOCIETY

Organization/Background: Nestled among the narrow lanes of New Orleans, between the Metairie burying grounds and the French Quarter, is a house with many stories. It is a nondescript Victorian of the type common to the area, and the plaque set beside the recessed door simply reads D.C.S. The neighboring citizens sometimes wonder about the place, and its curious hours — closed and silent all day, at night the house lights up. Soon afterward a Hindu doorman appears, a strange assortment of visitors begins to arrive, then music and carousing can be heard throughout the night. It is known that D.C.S. is a club of some type, and local gossip has identified certain members as famous explorers. The current theory, then, is that a type of adventurer's club operates on the premises, and for once the gossips are right, but the whole truth is much stranger.

The Dark Corner Society is the name of this elite organization. It was founded at the turn of the century by an anonymous group of investors who experienced confrontations with the supernatural and saw the need for an organized front to aid others in the battle against unnatural menaces. Membership in the Society is by invitation only; potential inductees must have already proven themselves to be resourceful explorers and sworn enemies of the occult threat to humanity. They have several clubs scattered across the globe, but the main meeting hall is the one in Louisiana.

Organization Abilities: The Dark Corner Society is a combination meeting hall and outfitter. The famous and not-so-famous who frequent its richly appointed premises are noted

explorers, researchers and fighters; all have in common the mission to rid the world of supernatural menaces. The Society is a place for relaxation, discourse, and tale-spinning. This last is a tradition; one room of the building is a museum, and each exhibit is proof of a tale brought back from the dark corners of the world. The ambiance of a tale of true terror, told in a darkened room in front of a roaring fire, is an addictive drug for the intrepid members of the Society.

Some of the dignitaries to be met in the Society are psychic researchers; lacking the brawn and fighting prowess of their fellows, but counted as equals for the power of their knowledge. Many a fruitful seance has been held here, and many a dusty tome of eldritch lore can be found in the library.

The Society's usefulness as an expedition sponsor cannot be underestimated. It must be stressed that the coffers of the Society are, for practical purposes, limitless. When a proposal for an expedition is made, a quorum is called, and the matter will be debated and voted on by the group. Often members will volunteer to accompany the supplicants on their mission, which should come as no surprise in a room full of die-hard adventurers. If the proposal is accepted, then money is no object — the Society will do all in its power to make the mission a success.

The Society owns airports on both coasts and the Gulf. Aeroplanes of all description, and skilled pilots, are provided free of charge for Society members. Also available is an extensive motorpool, a dirigible, and a refitted U-boat. The Dark Corner Society has contacts and associates both civilian and military across the globe.

TYPICAL DARK CORNER SOCIETY MEMBER

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats		
13	STR	3	**OCV:** 4		
11	DEX	3	**DCV:** 4		
13	CON	6	**ECV:** 3		
10	BODY	0	**Phases:** 6, 12		
10	INT	0			
10	EGO	0	**Costs**		
10	PRE	0			
8	COM	-1	**Char:**	10	**Base:** 25
3	PD	0		+	+
3	ED	0	**Skills:**	15	**Disad:** 0
2	SPD	-1		=	=
6	REC	0	**Totals:**	25	25
26	END	0			
24	STUN	0			

Cost	Skills
1	Perk: Dark Corner Society Member (low)
2	PS: Adventurer 11-
2	KS: Occult 11-
2	AK: Foreign Country previously explored 11-
2	KS: Native superstitions of AK: above 11-
4	WF: Small Arms, Common Melee Weapons

25+	Disadvantages

Player characters can be members of the Dark Corner Society. The GM can use the Society as an easy adventure hook, since its members are all investigators of horror. However, the DCS should not ride to the rescue of PCs who find themselves in deep trouble with the obligatory murderous cults and vicious monsters that populate the era.

JIMMY HORTON

Archetype: Sailor

Personal Details: Age: 32, Height: 6'1", Weight: 195 pounds, Hair: Brown, Eyes: Hazel

Background/History: Everyone seeks adventure in their own way. Some are content to find thrills vicariously through picture shows or reading. Others scorn the armchair adventurer, and go out into the world as explorers or sportsman. There is another type of person whom adventures seem to seek out, and the boxing sailor Jimmy Horton is all three.

Jimmy grew up in a San Francisco Orphanage, where he had been left as an infant. As he matured he learned to love reading adventure stories, a pastime which led others to regard him as a bookworm. His taunters soon learned that Jimmy was a born fighter, a skill he honed in a nearby gym.

When he was sixteen, Jimmy ran away and found a berth on a disreputable tramp steamer bound for Singapore. Opportunities to display his boxing talents abounded, and soon the exploits of "Knockout" Horton spread throughout the Pacific boxing circuit.

Once away from the safety of the orphanage, Jimmy discovered that he had an uncanny knack for getting into scrapes with crooks and weird cults. Just like the heroes in
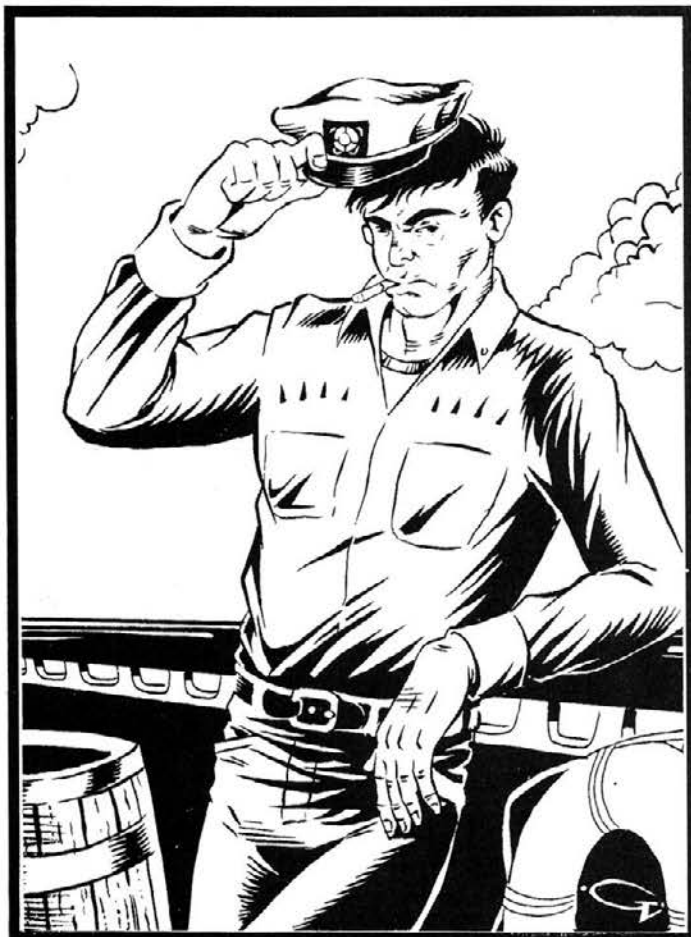
JIMMY HORTON

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats			
18	STR	8	OCV:	5		
15	DEX	15	DCV: 5			
15	CON	10	ECV: 4			
12	BODY	4	Phases: 4, 8, 12			
10	INT	0				
13	EGO	6	Costs			
8	PRE	-2				
10	COM	0	Char:	50	Base:	75
8	PD	4		+		+
3	ED	0	Skills:	65	Disad:	40
3	SPD	5		=		=
7	REC	0	Totals:	115		115
30	END	0				
29	STUN	0				

Cost	Skills			
1	Perk: Dark Corner Society member (low)			
3	Resistance +3			
5	Luck 1d6			
21	Martial Arts — Boxing			

	Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
	Jab	+1	+3	3 ½d6 Strike
	Cross	0	+2	5 ½d6 Strike
	Hook	-2	+1	7 ½d6 Strike
	Block	+2	+2	Block/Abort
	Clinch	-1	-1	STR 28 Hold

Cost	Skills
3	Breakfall 12-
3, 1	Deduction 11-, Interrogation 8-
3, 3	Shadowing 11-, Streetwise 11-
1, 1	Contortionist 8-, Combat Driving 8-
2, 1	KS: Sea vessel types 11-, KS: Boxing 8-
0, 2	AK: New Orleans 8-, PS: Sailor 11-
3	Language: Cantonese Fluent (English is native)
1, 2	TF: Boats, WF: Blades, Pistols
6, 3	+ 2 Levels w/ Boxing, + 1 Levels w/ Perception

75+	Disadvantages
20	Psych Lim: Fearless (V. Com/ Str)
10	Hunted: Tong (As pow, NCI, LGA) 8-
10	Watched: Local Authorities (AsPow, NCI,) 11-

the pulp magazines he voraciously read. For sixteen years he has sailed around the world — Europe, South America, Africa and his favorite — the Caribbean. He has boxed and usually triumphed in ports from Hong Kong to Rio De Janeiro.

He has read everything from Edgar Rice Burroughs to H.P. Lovecraft, and from "Magic Carpet" magazine to "Doc Savage." And no matter how hard he tries not to, he has adventures.

His foes have included ghosts and vampires, but the Cult of Taxlan is his greatest enemy. As a well-regarded member of the Dark Corner Society he has often been tempted to disclose all he has learned about the murdering cult, but his natural reticence and caution have made him bide his time.

Jimmy Horton is a good NPC for players to have on their side; his knowledge of the occult is won from 16 years of personal experience, and he is an excellent fighter and staunch ally. PC's may meet him through the Dark Corner Society or in any number of exotic ports.

VITO LA GARDIA

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
15	STR	5	OCV: 4+
12	DEX	6	DCV: 4
14	CON	8	ECV: 4
11	BODY	2	Phases: 4, 8, 12
13	INT	3	
13	EGO	6	Costs
15	PRE	5	
10	COM	0	Char: 53 Base: 75
4	PD	1	+ +
4	ED	1	Skills: 75 Disad: 53
3	SPD	8	= =
6	REC	0	Totals: 128 128
34	END	3	
31	STUN	5	

Cost	Skills
5	Streetwise 13-
3	Contact: Baltimore P.D. 11-
5	Follower: Ernest Fishman
3	Perk: Licensed Bounty Hunter, Dark Corner Society member
6	Resistance + 6
3	Bribery 12-
3	Conversation 12-
3	Deduction 12-
4	Forgery 12-
3	Interrogation 12-
5	Lockpicking 12-
3	Persuasion 12-
3	Security Systems 12-
1	Sleight of Hand 8-
2	KS: Wanted Felons 11-
2	KS: Standard Criminal M.Os 11-
2	KS: Police Agencies 11-
1	KS: Criminal Law 8-
1	KS: Occult Knowledge 8-
4	AK: Gulf Coast, USA 13-
3	AK: United States 12-
2	PS: Bounty Hunter 11-
1	PS: Safecracking 8-
0	Language English/Italian (Bilingual native)
4	WF: Small Arms, Melee Weapons
3	+1 Level w/Blades

75+	Disadvantages
20	Distinctive Features: Dwarf (Not conc, Major Reaction)
15	Physical Lim: Dwarf (All the time, Slightly)
15	Cursed (All the time) [Vito can only be involved with cases dealing with the supernatural]
3	Package Bonus

VITO LAGARDIA

Archetype: Bounty Hunter

Personal Details: Age: 47, Height: 3'4", Weight: 140, pounds, Hair: Black, Eyes: Blue

Background/Personality: From the moment the head on the table opened its eyes, Vito LaGardia knew with awful clarity that his life would never be the same. Not that his life so far had resembled anyone else's. Who else could truthfully say that they had been born a dwarf, orphaned in an automobile accident at age ten, and taken off the street by a minor gangster boss who thought he would be good for a few laughs?

Everyone in the gang soon learned that the intense young man refused to be a laughing stock. His skills and intelligence impressed them so much that by age seventeen he was a full fledged member. Then began his slow descent into darkness. Vito stole, threatened, and, by age 20, murdered. When he was twenty-five his "father" sent him to kill an old woman in Manhattan who refused to pay protection money. A night of horror ensued …

The lady was caught by surprise; the job was easy. Then Vito saw the head; its eyes opened, and it spit a curse. "Your gang family is dead," it said. "Your responsibility to them is ended. By this act of murder you have damned yourself to fighting the source of your own evil. Darkness will dog your steps. No profit will you earn lest evil be vanquished. I curse you to a life of service."

Vito was on a train fifteen minutes later. The next day he read in the news that the entire gang, himself presumably included, had perished in a gas explosion.

It is now twenty-two years later. The neighborhood gangs of Vito's time are now huge organizations that almost own the country. Vito himself is now a bounty hunter, an occupation at which he excels. The curse has been with him all this time. Potential clients with ulterior motives will not hire him, and never has a case been without the supernatural. Vito hates the occult with a passion. He has recently taken on a partner, an odd but brilliant young occultist named Ernest Fishman. Fishman, an heir to riches limited to a stipend, is Vito's driver and occult advisor (Vito's knowledge of the occult derives solely from experience). Vito succeeds at his tasks through bullheadedness and sheer cunning; his skill with his silver blade cane helps, though.

Vito, now fairly well-off, continues his work as a way of cleansing his soul. Through Ernest, Vito was introduced to the Dark Corner Society. Although he is not an official member he can often be encountered in their halls. His career of late has been tied closely with the Society — he is their 'official' bounty hunter. Although Ernest has indicated that the curse might be dispelled, his dwarfish friend refuses to have it done.

The GM wishing to use Vito and Ernest as NPCs can introduce them in a campaign when their goals coincide with the PCs'. Vito should be played confident but moody; Ernest is a well-meaning social misfit.
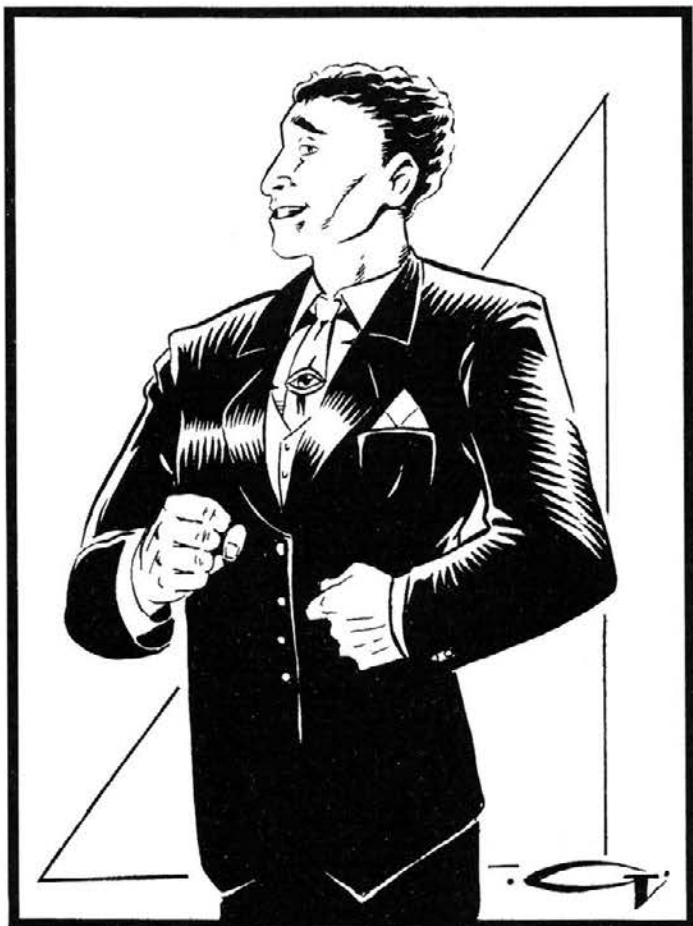
ERNEST FISHMAN

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
8	STR	-2	OCV: 3
10	DEX	0	DCV: 3
10	CON	0	ECV: 3
8	BODY	-4	Phases: 6, 12
18	INT	8	
10	EGO	0	Costs
8	PRE	-2	
8	COM	-1	Char: -1 Base: 25
2	PD	0	+ +
2	ED	0	Skills: 51 Disad: 25
2	SPD	0	= =
4	REC	0	Totals: 50 50
20	END	0	
17	STUN	0	

Cost	Skills
6	Perk: Well Off, Dark Corner Society
3	Contact: Other occultist 12-
3	Paramedic 13-
3	Combat Driving (Small Ground Vehicles) 11-
4	Weaponsmith (Muscle Powered, Slugthrowers) 11-
3	Scholar
6	KS: Occult Knowledge 17-
4	KS: Ritual Magic 15-
2	KS: Supernatural Creatures (Cryptozoology) 13-
2	KS: World Religions 13-
3	Linguist
2	Latin 3 pts
2	Ancient Greek 3 pts
2	Arabic 3 pts
2	Mandarin 3 pts
1	WF: Pistols
3	+1 Level w/Pistols

25+	Disadvantages
10	Distinctive Features: Flame red hair, blotchy skin (Conc w/Disguise)
10	Physical Lim: Myopic (Infreq, Greatly)
5	Psych Lim: Loyal to Vito

PATRICK MITCHELL

Archetype: Private Investigator

Personal Details: Age: 37, Height: 6'1", Weight: 180 pounds, Hair: Brown (Graying), Eyes: Blue

Background/History: "Listen kid, you'd smoke 2 packs a day and drink a little hooch too, if you'd seen what I have." Mitch started out just a kid from the French Quarter, but he had a dream of being better. So after school he went to the police academy, and served 10 years as one of New Orleans' Finest. But Mitch was too good and too honest. After turning down a bribe from the local Capo, he soon found himself up on charges that he had murdered an informant.

With careful skill he was able to prove himself innocent, and set out to find who had set him up. His investigations led him to a warehouse, where he encountered members of a weird cult (The Cult of Taxlan, in fact) and interrupted their ceremonies.

He barely escaped with his life. For two weeks he was able to avoid the assassins and continue his investigation. Then the Taxlanites made a serious mistake; they tried to kill his mother, and no one, but *no one* messes with Mother Mitchell.

After the smoke cleared the cultists were devastated along with the Capo who had set him up. It turned out he was a cultist himself. Mitch hasn't seen any members of the cult since but he knows that they are out there and one day he plans to find out who they are and bring them all down.

PATRICK MITCHELL

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
15	STR	5	OCV: 5+
15	DEX	15	DCV: 5
13	CON	6	ECV: 3
12	BODY	4	Phases: 4, 8, 12
13	INT	3	
10	EGO	0	Costs
15	PRE	5	
12	COM	1	Char: 46 Base: 75
5	PD	2	+ +
3	ED	0	Skills: 70 Disad: 41
3	SPD	5	= =
6	REC	0	Totals: 116 116
26	END	0	
27	STUN	0	

Cost	Skills
3	Brawling
3	Perks: PI License, Dark Corner Society member
3	Fast Draw 12-
5	Deduction 13-
3	Breakfall 12-
3	Bureaucratics 12-
3	Concealment 12-
3	Conversation 12-
3	Criminology 12-
3	High Society 12-
3	Interrogation 12-
3	Lockpicking 12-
3	Stealth 12-
3	Streetwise 12-
3	Shadowing 11-
3	KS: Organized Crime Gangs 12-
2	KS: Criminal Law 11-
2	KS: NO Police Department 11-
2	AK: New Orleans 11-
3	PS: Private Investigator 12-
3	PS: Safecracking 12-
2	WF: Small Arms
6	+2 Levels w/Pistols

75+	Disadvantages
5 (25)	Psych Lim: Protective of Mom (V.Com, Tot)
10	Watched, NOPD (As Pow, NCI) 8-
15	Hunted, Taxlan Cult (As Pow, NCI) 8-
8 (10)	DNPC, Mother (Normal) 8-
3	Package Bonus — Private Investigator

With what he had uncovered and seen, Mitch knew he could never go back to his former life. So he resigned and got his P.I. license, and now he takes cases that are of the unusual nature. He is now a member of the Dark Corner Society, an honor granted him by a perceptive client. Patrick is unique in the Society — he has never set foot outside the United States!

Mitch should be presented as someone who is a little world-weary and sad. Mitch can meet PCs while on a case, through the DCS or from previous clients.

SCENARIO

Players should read no further, or your GM will *know*, and he will kill your character. You have been warned.

THE ESCAPE ARTIST

This scenario is intended to be an introduction to the Cult of Taxlan and the Dark Corner Society. While the events depicted in this scenario do not overtly disclose the existence of the Cult they will leave several answers badly in need of questions. The clues and evidence are presented in the approximate order in which PCs will uncover them. Explanations for the GM are in brackets [].

GMs should expect the adventure to run through at least two game sessions. In game time the adventure takes about a week.

The entire adventure is set in New Orleans in the year 1933.

GETTING PCS INVOLVED

The GMs first consideration is how to believably bring the PCs together. Experienced GMs are encouraged to allow the PCs to investigate independently until the plot brings them together. Beginners may wish to have a relative or friend gather the PCs together to investigate at the onset.

At this point the PCs should not all be members of the DCS although an especially good roleplayer who can keep his cards close to his vest could begin as a member if the GM desires. One of the plot points of this scenario is the reluctance of DCS members to involve outsiders in internal problems.

The adventure begins with the mysterious disappearance of the famed archaeologist Bruno Harrick. He is primarily known for his researches into Indian mysticism.

HARRICK'S HOUSE

Harrick's home is on Franklin Avenue two blocks south of Lake Pontchartrain. It is a moody Victorian with an extensive garden, surrounded by an ornate iron fence. The PCs may search the grounds as they wish but unless keys have been provided they will have to either break into the home or ask the police to let them in.

The police responded to a call from Mr. Ned Keen two days ago. Keen is a big game hunter renowned for his African exploits. Keen had come to Harrick's home, as previously arranged, to discuss future expeditions. When his ring was not answered Keen tried the doors and found the rear door to be open. Lights were burning in the house and a half-eaten meal sat on the table but Harrick was gone.

The investigating officers have given the house a rudimentary search and concluded that Harrick left the house expecting to return very shortly. They are of the opinion that he fell prey to a gang of thieves who operate in the area and consider the case closed.

Harrick's wife is somewhere in the Himalayas and cannot be reached.

An investigation of the house and grounds will yield the following clues. Note that some will not seem important to the PCs until later events unfold. They can return to the site as often as they desire.

A rawhide thong is tied to a low tree branch near the back door. It is apparent that until very recently something was hanging from it, and then was cut off. A search of the grass beneath will yield a black wooden bead. [A JuJu bag was hung here and removed by Harrick a week ago]

A strip of black velvet suggests that clothing was torn by someone climbing the fence at the rear of the house. [The abductor tore his magician's cape]

The fireplace is completely clean except for a small pile of ashes which include several small round chunks of charcoal, perhaps the remains of more wooden beads. Nothing else is identifiable. [Harrick burned the JuJu bag]

A framed photograph on the wall of the study depicts three men standing in front of a ruined temple. The plate on the frame reads, 'B.H., J.D., N.K. — India, 1931'. The men, from left to right, are a middle-aged, hearty looking man in a white suit (Bruno Harrick), a friendly looking younger man in a white tee shirt and blue denim jeans (Jimmy Horton) and a dour looking, smallish man in safari khakis and pith helmet (Ned Keen). The glass in the frame has been smashed.

Harrick's journals are missing the volume covering August to December, 1931. The previous volume ends with Harrick, Ned Keen and a sailor named Jimmy Horton exploring a ruined Kali Temple in India. The next volume begins with him back in New Orleans, and mentions that an unspecified scandal has run its course. It reads:

'N.K. has departed for points unknown, and good riddance. I cannot believe that the Society was so naive in inducting him. We have no regrets about the steps we took and wish the obnoxious toad nothing but ill fortune'.

A search of the other journals will take until the next day. Each is handwritten in a hard to read script. The Dark Corner Society is not mentioned in any except as The Society. If an investigator perseveres he will discover this entry in the July 1927 volume:

'I cannot express my distaste for N.K. openly without causing friction with his sponsors. Here I am under no such constraints. Jimmy reports that the idiotic charlatan became beastly drunk and caused a scene with the doorman that almost brought the officials down on us. The last thing the Society needs is to be publicly identified as a common speakeasy. On my next expedition to India I intend to look into his story closely '.

In the volume for 3 months ago an entry reads:

'Jimmy reports that while in Miami on [GMs date] he read that-' The next page has been ripped out.

[In the missing volume Harrick details how he, Ned Keen and Jimmy Horton discovered that a fellow DCS member named Nick Kouvaris joined under false pretenses in 1927, and the steps they took to have him ousted and blacklisted upon their return from India in 1931. The missing page tells how N.K. murdered his assistant and drowned himself in the ocean]

The 1927 and 1933 entities should only be found after an extensive search. If a PC announces his intention to read them the GM should hint that he be left behind while the others continue their investigations.

At this point the PCs have several options. They will want to speak to Ned Keen and find Jimmy Horton. The 'N.K.' in the journal is designed to make the PCs suspect Ned Keen, of course. Subsequent events will do little to disavow PCs of the notion that he is the villain, but he is not.

PCs might also guess correctly that some type of sorcerous apparatus was burnt in the fireplace, and the black velvet may remind them of some sort of performers garb.

Finally, the PCs will want to learn more about the Society mentioned in the journal.

NED KEEN

Ned Keen left his address and telephone number with the police, who will release it to family members, licensed private investigators or anyone who makes an appropriate PRE based skill roll. Keen has an apartment on Bourbon Street. If the PCs call before they visit him he will reluctantly agree to meet them at his apartment at nine that evening. He will answer no questions over the telephone.

If the PCs go directly to his address they will discover that the address given is for 'Mama Tubman's Herbs and Medicinals'. They will hear incoherent shouting through the open window of an apartment over, and apparently entered through, the store.

The PCs can enter the store or go down an adjacent alley to see if there is a back entrance. If they enter the store they will be met by a beautiful middle-aged black woman. This is Mama Tubman. She is worriedly twisting a strand of rosary beads and glancing at the ceiling. She will ask that the PCs return some other time as she is closing now. If they persevere she will admit that Keen is upstairs but they cannot see him. If she senses that they are suspicious of Keen she will stand her ground. If they indicate a desire to help him she will urge them to go upstairs through a curtain at the rear of the store. Keen will be gone.

Any PC going down the alley will be blocked by three large blacks who will tell them they are trespassing and will resort to violence to prevent their passing. (Use the stats for Taxlan Outer Cultist, armed with knives) Unless the PCs start combat they may spot a Caucasian accompanied by three more black men going into an alley across the courtyard. If they saw the photo in Harrick's study they will recognize Ned Keen. He will not acknowledge the PCs and if pressed will order them to stop interfering. The group enter a taxi parked at the end of the alley and speed away. The three cultists engaging the PCs will try to disperse.

The PCs should be prevented from meeting Keen. If these events occur in the evening the GM should add a Chauche (make it Friday Night) to the ranks of the cultists.

If the PCs wait until nine o'clock both store and apartment will be locked and unlit. A successful Perception roll will reveal an insistent thumping sound from within the store. If PCs enter the unlocked window around back they will find Mama Tubman tied up behind the counter. Keen is nowhere to be found. [Keen has been abducted by the villain. He is overconfident in his abilities and believes he went willingly, on the condition that Mama Tubman not be injured. He has actually been cursed]

CLUES AT KEEN'S APARTMENT

Regardless of how the preceding scene ran the PCs now have an opportunity to speak to Mama Tubman and search Keens apartment.

Mama Tubman has been friends with Keen for several years. She will invite the PCs to sit in her kitchen behind the shop and will ask the PC with the lowest PRE to make tea. She will answer PCs questions as long as they do not involve the DCS or Voodoo (she is a Mamaloi). The GM should play her as rather distant and mysterious — she is deliberately holding back information.

The night before Harrick's disappearance he phoned Keen, who was out of town lecturing; Mama sensed it was a matter of some urgency but Harrick would not discuss it. All he would say was to tell Keen it involved India and to come see him as soon as he returned. She will scoff at any suggestion that Keen is involved in any wrongdoing. If PCs ask to search the apartment she will allow it on the condition that she is present.

In the apartment the following clues can be found :

The desk is locked but Mama has a key. Inside is a cloth pouch tied with a rawhide thong and containing feathers, a lizard skull and several black wooden beads. Perceptive PCs will note that Mama blanches at the sight but she will profess no knowledge of the object. [This type of Juju pouch, hidden in or near a targets residence, increases the chance of a successful abduction]

A notepad near the phone indicates that Keens was an obsessive note taker. It says —

'Call docks — see if the 'Sea Whiskey' is in yet' [this is Jimmy Horton's ship, which docked this morning]

'Inform DCS of possible trouble [PCs will figure out that the S stands for Society. They should be able to find the Dark Corner Society now, have them make AK: New Orleans or KS: Occult Organizations]

Mitch? Vito? [The GM can introduce these NPCs (see 'The Opposition) to bolster the group's firepower if he wishes]

In the pocket of his coat is an unsealed envelope. On a slip of paper inside are several names, all but the last three crossed out. [These are all the stage magicians currently working in the city. Keen had heard rumors that the mysterious N.K. was still alive, and correctly deduced that he was responsible for Harrick's disappearance. For the past three days he has been visiting clubs hoping to spot N.K.]

The names are: The Amazing Johnstone [X], Mulgrew the Magnificent [X], Swami Serbu [X], Merlin the Magician [X], The Wizard Wastrani [X], The Astounding Armstrong, Dylan the Bedazzler and The Amazing Nictzin [who is the villain of this scenario]

At this juncture the PCs have several options. They can find and visit the Dark Corner Society, follow up on Harrick's journals (only if someone stayed behind to read them), look for the 'Sea Whiskey' or start looking for magicians.

AT THE DARK CORNER SOCIETY

A lot depends on the time of day that the PCs visit the DCS. If they approach the building during the day they will find it locked. If they ring at the gate a huge Indian in a turban will leave the building and approach. If the PCs do not look like salesmen he will inquire their business. He will answer no questions concerning the Society or any of its members. Admittance is restricted to members and screened guests only. He will not unlock the gate under any circumstances. He will attempt to discover their reason for the visit, however, and if PCs are reasonably frank he will instruct them to return at eight that evening. [GMs should note that the doorman is a powerful supernatural guardian and if PCs attempt to sneak in they will fiercely regret it]

If they arrive during the evening the building will be noticeably lit up. The doorman will behave as before but after hearing the PCs' story will instruct them to wait a moment. Then he will return with a scruffy, tired looking man in a rather cheap suit. This is Patrick 'Mitch' Mitchell. Mitch will ask them in. PCs will be grilled by Mitch in a sitting room at the front of the club. He will neither confirm nor deny any of their conclusions. The interview will most likely be frustrating for the PCs, but the Society plays its cards close. Mitch will be especially interested in the PCs future plans. If he thinks their ideas are sound he will volunteer to accompany them on their rounds.

THE DOCKS

At the docks passersby can direct the PCs to the 'Sea Whiskey'. [This is Sailor Horton's ship. He is staying in a room at the DCS. None of his shipmates know where he is. If any PCs have interviewed Mitch then Horton may be assumed to have been eavesdropping nearby.]

During the day the crew will be busy unloading the cargo. At night they will all be in town with only a couple left on board to keep watch. [If the game needs a shot of combat some cultists might be on board at night, torturing the sailors in an attempt to find Horton's whereabouts. To add some fear the GM can put an Ictaxlian in their midst. Do not let it fight the PCs too much — at this point in their careers they are no match for it. Just let it fight its way past them and go for the river. The PCs will be real nervous from now on in.]

FOLLOWING UP ON THE JOURNALS

This will clear up a lot. By checking any Miami newspaper on the date of the drowning the PCs will learn that witnesses saw a stage magician named Nick Kouvaris swim out to sea and go under. His body was never recovered. Miami police records show that all of Kouvaris's gear was stolen the next night. By now the PCs should realize that Nick Kouvaris is still at large and is abducting the three DCS members who ruined him.

INVESTIGATING THE MAGICIANS

This can be done several ways. [GMs should note that things will start moving pretty quickly now] The PCs may wish to visit the clubs while the three unchecked magicians are working, they may visit them at their hotels (the club managers might be hesitant to release this information, though), or they could run background checks on them.

Background checks (Newspapers, agencies, etc.) will reveal that of the three suspects only the Amazing Nictzin could be Kouvaris. The Astounding Armstrong and Dylan the Bedazzler are both older men who have been active for many years, while the Amazing Nictzin has only been performing about a year and a half (Nictzin is noted for his astounding ability to hold his breath for almost an hour).

Visiting the magicians will not be easy but persistent investigators (and a charitable donation) will yield the whereabouts of the two oldsters. Nictzin / Kouvaris's employer hasn't a clue where he is. Dylan will be drunk in his hotel room. He will happily reminisce for hours if the PCs allow it. If the other two are mentioned Dylan will say slightly petty things about his rival Armstrong but at the mention of Nictzin he will become quite venomous. He will describe how Nictzin snubbed his offer of congratulations at a club up north last year. If the PCs mention Kouvaris he will be equally irate but will remark on the resemblance between the two, noting that if Nictzin had blonde hair and no mustache they would be almost identical. [Kouvaris is in disguise.]

Armstrong is in his eighties. He is an endearing grandfather type who will fall asleep about five minutes into an interview.

If the PCs visit either of these two men's shows they will learn absolutely nothing. Dylan is playing at the 'Green Room' at the Walker Inn, Armstrong is on Toulane Avenue at the Moonglow Theater.

The Amazing Nictzin is performing at a dive called 'Bottoms Up' which apparently is still celebrating the end of prohibition. It is a madhouse. Nictzin is scheduled to be on at ten, but no matter what time the PCs arrive, the first bartender who is asked will recall seeing him going backstage with a sailor about ten minutes ago. [The sailor is Jimmy Horton. As soon as they got to Nictzin's dressing room, several cultists entered. Horton was overpowered but the room was pretty messed up in the fight. A bouncer who came to investigate the noise started shouting for help. This panicked Nictzin, and he and the cultist escaped out the back, killing the bouncer on the way out]

When PCs go backstage they will see a small group of performers clustered around a body on the floor next to an open dressing room door. The body is that of a bouncer. Witnesses will describe the sounds of a fight followed by a rush for the back door.

Inside the dressing room are several clues which will lead the PCs to the climax of the scenario.

A ripped black velvet cloak will be hanging on a peg.

The missing journal and the ripped out page are here. The pertinent entries are clearly marked.

Kouvaris's coat, forgotten in his flight, is here. In the pocket is a key and a legal document. It is a rental agreement which was signed three weeks ago and gives Nictzin a one year lease on a property called 'The Atlantis Theater'. An AK: New Orleans Skill Roll will allow a character to remember an abandoned theater on the docks. The PCs now know where the missing men and the escape artist are.

As soon as a character gives voice to this realization the lights in the room will dim and it will become very cold. A Baka is here, spying on the PCs to see if they found the clues. The PCs will get an eerie feeling that they are being watched by something malevolent and then it will be gone. Now the escape artist will know that he has more enemies, and he and the cult will be ready.

Atlantis Theater — Ground Floor
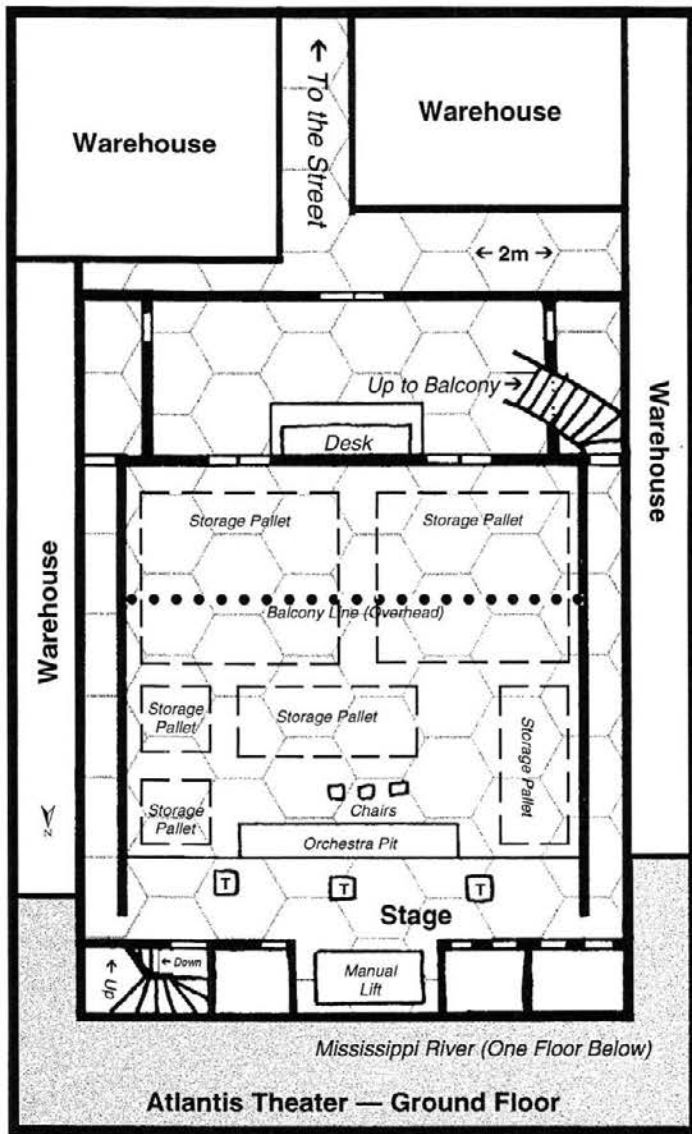
THE ATLANTIS THEATER

The Atlantis Theater is at the end of a cul-de-sac. The warehouses bordering the alley are three stories tall and the crumbling theater is one story shorter. The back of the Theater juts out over the Mississippi. (See Map)

The interior of the building has been used as a warehouse and bears little resemblance to a theater. It has never been wired for electricity — all interior lights are kerosene lanterns. All the inside doors have been removed and many of the walls knocked down. The stage is still intact, however, and it has been set for a show.

Once Kouvaris starts his show he will stop for nothing. His assistant is a surly Ictaxlian whose orders are to save Kouvaris if his life is threatened. If PCs get past the cultists and into the theater it will grab him and go for the basement . If it has to hurt a few PCs to get there he will happily do so. Do not forget to check for the Ictaxlians presence attack.

The GM should track how long it takes the PCs to get to the theater. Kouvaris will begin his show about fifteen minutes after the Baka leaves the dressing room. Twenty five minutes after the Baka departs Harrick will be chained upside down in a tank of seawater, drowning. Ten minutes after that

Keen will be sawed in half. Ten minutes later Horton will be put in a trunk and tossed into the flooded basement as a sacrifice to Taxlan. Therefore, after the Baka leaves the PCs have forty-five minutes before everybody is dead. In an automobile they will get to the theater in about ten minutes. At this point they still have fifteen minutes before the carnage begins. Unfortunately, the Cultists are waiting for them.

THE AMBUSH

There are twelve cultists in all. They are totally fanatical and will fight to the death. Four are armed with pistols, the rest with knives. They will skulk just inside the door to the theater, hiding in alcoves and behind piles of chairs and such. They will wait until the PCs are inside and those with pistols will open fire. If the PCs rush the room the others will spring up and charge. In all likelihood the PCs will fall back and try to come up with a plan. Two other ways the PCs can enter the theater are through the roof and by swimming into the basement via the river. If these are tried a few cultists should be waiting to make it interesting.

WRAPPING IT UP

If even one of the victims is rescued the PCs will be invited back to the DCS and escorted into the lounge where many famed occultists and explorers will congratulate them. They will be asked to donate an item to the museum and tell their story. If the crowd approves they will be invited to join as honorary members.

If they fail in their task (unlikely) the DCS will still want to hear about it. Everyone there has had to face failure before and may be willing to give PCs a second chance if they seem to be of the right caliber.

Atlantis Theater — 2nd Floor

Atlantis Theater — Basement

← 2m →

Interior
(Completely Flooded)

↑ N

Raised Platform

Manual Lift

Up

Dock

Hole at Waterline

Mississippi River
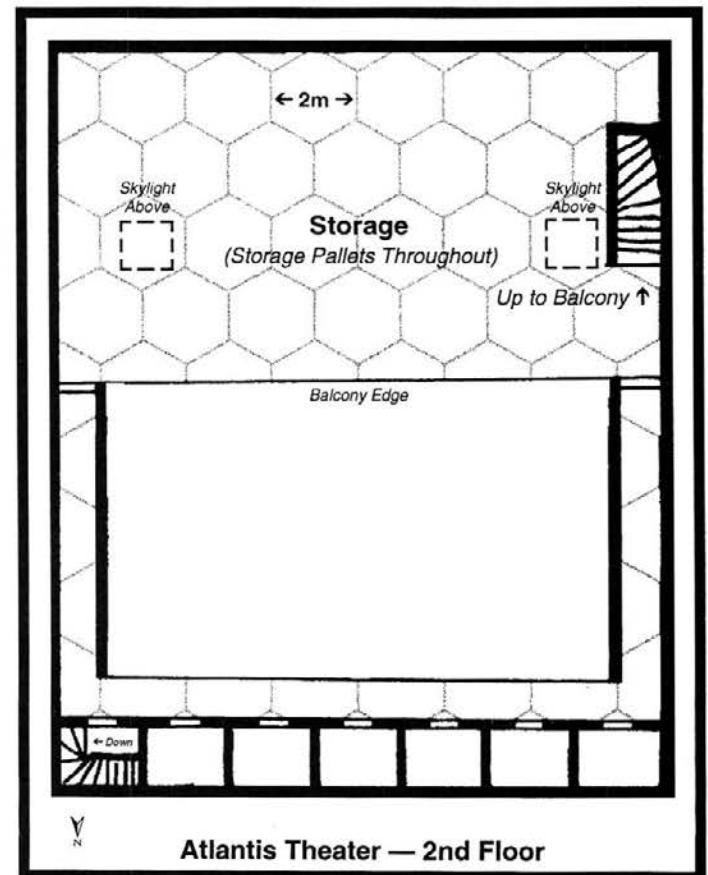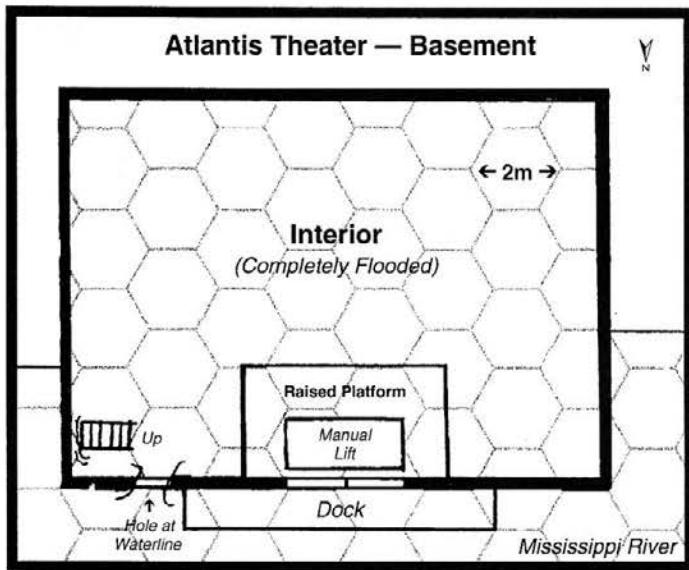
GMING INFORMATION

Take care to steep the game in the atmosphere of New Orleans. Stress the atmosphere of the city, where Spanish moss hangs off the trees and all the graves are above ground. Tell players about the wild mix of races seen on the street and the many languages heard. Let them 'hear' the jazz and the slow spirituals.

No Taxlan cultist will ever tell an outsider about his religion. Ever. Anyone taken prisoner will disappear into the prison system.

The police will arrive five to twenty minutes after any gunplay. Unless PCs can prove that they have a valid reason for bearing arms their guns will be confiscated. The DCS may intervene in any matters of arrest if the PCs have behaved heroically.

And now, meet the escape artist:

Nick Kouvaris — The Fabulous Kouvaris, as he is better known, is an obscure stage magician who has never been the sensation his talents warranted. He traveled the world learning obscure feats of magic, and an accidental encounter with an evil Indian Mystic earned him an undeserved membership in the Dark Corner Society. His act was truly sensational but audiences found something disturbing about his hyperkinetic mannerisms and patronizing banter. Then Bruno Harrick, Ned Keen and Jimmy Horton learned the truth about Nick, had him barred from the Society and leaked a damning story to the press. He was reduced to two years of working in sleazy dives for pennies.

Despite his constant failure Nick persevered, until one night in Miami when he struck his clumsy assistant and was booed offstage. Later that night he murdered the girl and swam out to sea to drown. Instead of dying he embraced the dark promise of Taxlan. But now he was not only a magician; with his new ability to breathe water he would be the greatest escape artist the world had ever seen. He would establish a new identity and start over. But first he would start small, and then he would have his revenge on the three Dark Corner Society members who ruined him.

THE PLOT

Kouvaris' plan is simple. With the assistance of Chantelle Dujon (who should ideally remain off-stage) he learned who was responsible for his misfortune, and how they could be captured. He has rented an abandoned theater. With the assistance of the local Outer Cult he plans to abduct the three DCS members whose Asian expedition revealed his duplicity. Then he will put on a show of magic and escapes. Each act will climax with the death of one of his prisoners.

NICK KOUVARIS

11	STR	13	DEX	15	CON	11	BODY	10	INT
18	EGO	18	PRE	14	COM	4	PD	4	ED
4	SPD	6	REC	26	END	25	STUN	75	Cost

Skills: Perk: Cult of Taxlan member (Low), Stealth 13-, Demolitions 11-, PS: Cultist 12-, Acrobatics 13-, Acting 13-, Breakfall 13-, Concealment 11-, Contortionist 13-, KS: Magic Tricks 12, KS: Cult of Taxlan 12-, Oratory 13-, PS: Magician 12-, PS: Esc. Artist 14-, Sleight of Hand 12-, Double Jointed, LS: Breathe water. Cost: 51 Total: 126

75+ Disadvantages: Watched: Taxlan (MoPow, NCI, 14-, x½), Psych Lim: Fear of Taxlan (Com, Str), Psych Lim: Obsessed with revenge (V.Com, Total), Bonus

MAMA TUBMAN

11	STR	13	DEX	15	CON	11	BODY	13	INT
13	EGO	13	PRE	16	COM	4	PD	4	ED
3	SPD	5	REC	30	END	25	STUN	48	Cost

Skills: Voodoo spells 20 pts (GMs choice), Perk: Voodoo priestess, Stealth 12-, PS: Apothecary 12-. Cost: 36 Total: 84

50+ Disadvantages: Watched: Taxlan (MoPow, NCI, 14-, x½), (19) Psych Lim: Protective of neighborhood (V.Com, Total)

BRUNO HARRICK

15	STR	13	DEX	15	CON	11	BODY	13	INT
11	EGO	13	PRE	10	COM	5	PD	5	ED
3	SPD	6	REC	30	END	27	STUN	44	Cost

Skills: Martial Arts (Dirty Infighting) 10 pts, Perk: D.C.S member (LOW), Survival 11-, SC: Archaeology 12-, PS: Archaeologist 12-, WF: Sm Arms, Blades. Cost: 23 Total: 67

50+ Disadvantages: Watched: D.C.S. (MoPow, NCI, 14-, x½), Psych Lim: Scientific Curiosity (Com, Str)

NED KEEN

15	STR	13	DEX	15	CON	11	BODY	10	INT
11	EGO	10	PRE	10	COM	5	PD	4	ED
3	SPD	6	REC	30	END	27	STUN	38	Cost

Skills: Perk: D.C.S. member (Low), Stealth 12-, Survival 12-, PS: Hunter 12-, Tracking 12-, WF: SmArms/Melee, +1 w/Combat. Cost: 25 Total: 63

50+ Disadvantages: 15- Psych Lim: Overconfident (Com, Str)

• • •

The Cultists are all members of the Taxlan Outer Cult. Their leaders, who do not appear in the scenario, are likely to want revenge.

THE AWFUL TRUTH

There is a period in history of awful uncertainty. Look out the window and you'll see it; walk out the door and you're there. This is the nexus of all horror, the ever changing present. All you mortals stand poised directly between the center of the Earth and the ultimate end of everything. The merest brush with the uncanny can send you spinning into the void. I know — I have but recently returned. Now my one eye watches...

The modern man pays his taxes, washes his car, and goes through the motions that compose his existence. But nagging at the back of his mind come doubts and uncertainties that give him pause. Who really killed JFK? Why does his neighbor have tin foil lining his windows? Where do all the missing persons go?

I read the headlines. Wars and rumors of wars. Military in League with Aliens. Earthquakes in diverse places. The Immortality Diet. Pestilence, War, Famine and Death.

Do you wonder what the night still hides? Does the question coalesce and turn in your mind? Who's really running the world?

PLAYERS GUIDE TO PARANOID HORROR

ROLEPLAYING IN MODERN DAY AMERICA

THE ERA

It is the real world — *your* world — but things are not what they seem...A secret race manipulates the destiny of mankind with sadistic glee...Twisted cultists sacrifice victims and howl at the Moon...Red-handed madmen stalk the unsuspecting through the cities and the wilderness...Secret bases in the desert hide an unholy alliance...and the governments of the world deny everything...And You Are There!

The modern era offers roleplaying opportunities unlike any other. Instead of imagining your characters in distant times and unfamiliar surroundings, the modern campaign lets you adventure in the here and now. Modern characters employ state-of-the-art technology. All of today's vehicles, equipment, medicine and weaponry are at your disposal.

Contemporary Horror draws on the rich heritage of horror that came before. Elements of Eldritch, Gothic, Pulp Adventure and Atomic Horror can be seen in almost every modern terror tale. Entire modern campaigns may be conducted featuring one of these horror styles — all work well in a modern setting -or a new type of horror based on 'true' weird occurrences may be played. *Horror Hero* calls this genre "Paranoid Horror."

Today's world is awash in strange contradictions. As new technology is discovered and science expands the borders of the known universe, thousands turn their backs to rationality and embrace magic and mysticism. Governments appeal to blind patriotism while claiming to desire a peaceful world. Every day the divisions between human beings of different sexes, religious beliefs and races become wider. In a world like this it is easy to believe that somewhere, hidden from view, evil intelligences are controlling it all. That is the reason this chapter is called "The Awful Truth."

What if all the crazies and fringe theorists are right? What if monsters, demons and aliens are victimizing the world with impunity, with the full knowledge and cooperation of secret societies within the ruling powers? What if you discovered that it really WAS a magic bullet that killed JFK? What if vampires and werewolves still stalk mankind, cloaked in disbelief? What would you do if you discovered an inhuman conspiracy ruling the world? Are you ready to face the Awful Truth?

OUTFITTING THE PC

Since this is the time in which the players live, this section will be brief. The entertainment technology of the era has evolved rapidly from the early years of color TV to the laserdiscs, VCRs, CDs and laptop computers of today. Transportation has gone from gas guzzlers to rice burners. Medicine, weaponry and all other types of technology have developed so rapidly that mankind is hard-pressed to keep up. This section is bound to be obsolete within a year of publication!

MEDICINE

Gone are the days of runaway infection and minor wounds proving fatal. Today, with the proper equipment and medicine, almost any injury is treatable with a good recovery almost guaranteed. This is pretty good news for your average player character.

It is recommended that with total hospitalization a PC be given 2x REC to simulate these advances. This is also pretty good news.

Here is the bad news. Special monster attacks (like Lycanthropy) are still a serious matter. Badly injured PCs will have tons of questions to answer. Their doctors could be working for THEM. Finally, if you are dead you are dead.

WEAPONRY

Here is a listing of some of the latest monster-killers on the streets today. Do not forget that a lot of these weapons are illegal and all are subject to various Federal and State regulations.

As with the other weapons lists in this book the following statistics can be used for non-listed weapons. Just match caliber and fire rate and a pip of damage either way will not be important.

Of course the weapons of previous eras are largely available in modern times, so PCs should feel free to choose off previous lists.

CHARACTER SKILL CHANGES

The skill list is essentially unchanged. It is important to note that in a Modern Horror campaign the emphasis on realism may require players to justify the possession of certain skills to the GM (or, during gameplay, to the authorities). Players are encouraged to remember that today's bureaucratic society keeps records of practically everything, and many of the more useful skills will require the PC to hold a periodically updated license. The "real life" consequences and requirements for some skills are listed below. These are in no way intended to detract from the players fun, only to spurn them on to greater ingenuity.

WEAPON TABLE FOR THE MODERN ERA									
Name	OCV	R MOD	DMG	STUNx	STR	SHOTS	CAL	YEAR	NOTES
Automatic Handguns									
MKII Gyrojet	+2	-1	1d6+1	+1	5	8	13mm	1966	Experimental
Ruger P85	+1	0	1d6+1	0	8	15	9mm	1985	
Ruger P90	+1	0	1d6+1	+1	10	7	.45ACP	1989	
Desert Eagle	+1	0	1 ½d6	0	12	9	.357 Mag	1980	Israeli
Desert Eagle	+1	0	2d6	+1	14	7	.44 Mag	1981	Israeli
Desert Eagle	0	0	2d6+1	+1	15	7	.50 AE	1991	Israeli
Bren Ten	+1	0	1d6+1	0	9	11	10mm	1981	
Glock Model 22	0	0	1d6+1	0	9	13	.40 S&W	1988	
Submachine Guns									
Bushmaster	+1	+1	2d6-1	0	12	30	.223	1970	Autofire 5 shots
Ingram MAC 10	+1	0	1d6+1	+1	13	30	.45ACP	1971	Autofire 5 shots
H&K 54	+2	0	1d6+1	0	12	30	9mm	1974	Autofire 5 shots
Beretta M93R	+1	0	1d6+1	0	12	20	9mm	1980	3 shot bursts
VP70	0	0	1d6+1	0	10	18	9mm	1972	3 shot bursts
Mini-Uzi	0	-1	1d6+1	0	8	20	9mm	1982	Autofire 5 shots
Rifles									
L42A1	+2	+2	2d6+1	+1	13	10	7.62N	1966	British
H&K 33	+2	+1	2d6-1	0	10	20	.223	1968	Autofire 5 shots
Styer-Aug	+2	+2	2d6-1	0	10	30	.223	1972	Austrian Autofire
Mini 14	+2	+1	2d6-1	0	8	20	.223	1973	Autofire 5 shots
AK-74	+2	+1	2d6-1	0	14	30	5.54R	1974	Russian Autofire
G11 Caseless	+2	+1	2d6-1	0	8	50	4.7mm	1980	German Autofire
Heavy Weapons									
M-249 SAW	+1	+1	2d6-1	0	11	200	.223	1974	Autofire 5 shots
LAW	0	+1	4d6AP	+1	5	1	—	1972	May not reload
TOW	0	—	6d6AP	+1	—	1	—	1974	No RMod, ½ DCV, mounted
Stinger	+2	—	14d6NEx	—	1	—	—	1975	No RMod
M-203 (Frag)	+2	+1	2d6	0	8	1	40mm	1969	Explosion
(Concussion)	+2	+1	6d6NEx	—	8	1	40mm	1969	Explosion
Armbrust 300	0	0	4d6AP	+1	10	1	—	1972	
M134 Minigun	+2	+3	2d6+1	+1	14	1500	7.62N	1967	Autofire 10 shots
XM214 6 Pack	+3	+3	2d6-1	0	12	500	.223	1974	Autofire 10 shots

ANIMAL HANDLER: An animal is likely to be put to death if it is proven to have been used in an offensive attack.

BRIBERY: Still a favored form of commerce in Washington and the Third World. Players should be very cautious with this skill — fame, trials and imprisonment are likely to follow a failed attempt.

BUGGING: Electronic surveillance by private individuals is highly illegal — do not get caught.

BUREAUCRATICS: A staggeringly useful skill in today's world.

CRIMINOLOGY: Private persons who are discovered to have practiced this skill before an official has an opportunity to do so are considered to have tampered with the scene of a crime and are eligible for arrest. This applies to Forensic Medicine also.

DEMOLITIONS: GMs may wish to expand this skill to include the creation of explosives using legally obtained ingredients, such as those found in *The Anarchist Cookbook*. Otherwise, pre-made explosives may be impossible to obtain without a (easily traced) license. KS: Chemistry can be a complementary skill.

FORGERY: Again, a skill that is strictly illegal. Note that Computer Programming (desktop publishing) can be used as a complementary skill.

LANGUAGES: GM's in a "realistic" campaign may wish to be less lenient with the language chart. Anyone who has eavesdropped on a conversation conducted in a foreign language will realize the great latitude the present rules allow. GMs may wish to use the chart only when the speaker wishes to be understood by someone not entirely fluent in the language.

PARAMEDIC: Bear in mind that a successful roll does not preclude the need for further medical attention. A severely injured character is bound to attract police inquiries, so players should get their stories straight before admitting injured friends to a hospital.

TRANSPORTATION FAMILIARITY: Driver's licenses are required for automobiles. Not only must an airplane pilot be licensed, but is expected to file flight plans as well as keeping current flight hours. Excessive non-compliance with this rule may bring official inquiries. The same goes for most boats.

WEAPON FAMILIARITY: Gun control laws are constantly in flux, but generally any weapon of any use against supernatural horrors is illegal to use outside a licensed firing range. The GM is the final arbitrator on this matter, but in any "realistic" campaign the use of a non-silenced firearm within earshot of civilization is certain to bring the police around to investigate. In most areas melee weapons are subject to similar laws. The labyrinth of red tape that surrounds the ownership and use of firearms would require an entire Sourcebook to explain, so GM's option is the law in this matter.

GM's GUIDE TO PARANOID HORROR

THE SETTING

HISTORY

This chapter of *Horror Hero* explores the possibilities for roleplaying in modern campaigns. Everyone is familiar with the setting; after all, they are living in it. But the "Awful Truth" is that the mystics and quantum physicists are right — the world outside the window is an illusion. The media reports the facts as they see them but they learn only a fraction of what is really going on, and anything which does not neatly dovetail with established 'fact' is related only to be ridiculed. In *Horror Hero* the world is as the paranoids claim — vast unseen forces manipulate reality to suit their needs; discredit and scandal plague those who threaten to expose them. A dark picture, but more fun to roleplay.

The History of the past thirty years will be familiar to almost all GMs and players and really does not bear repeating here. Besides, most of what the public is told can be taken with a liberal dose of salt. With this in mind, the material here will present the past three decades as game settings — the gaming group can make up their own 'History," their own Awful Truth.

The Awful Truth is hidden between the lines of recent history. It is camouflaged as trashy tabloids and strident paperbacks. It is whispered of at night when it is hoped no one listens. In *Horror Hero* the mundane reality of today is peeled back and the ugly mechanisms underneath are exposed. The more unbelievable a rumor or a theory, the more far reaching and frightening its implications, the more likely it is to be true.

It starts with the Sixties. The civil unrest and unprecedented paranormal activity of the times blend nicely for a campaign setting. Players could investigate the assassination of JFK while the trail is still warm, for instance, or be on hand for the massive UFO flap of '66-'67. Or maybe Paul McCartney and Brian Jones *were* sacrificed to the devil. This was an age of hippies and beatniks. The occult was everywhere and misguided kids were bound to get involved in matters beyond their control.

The Seventies had a definite dark side. Cult killings, cattle mutilations and demonic possession all made headlines, and Bigfoot and the Bermuda Triangle sold tons of tabloids and paperbacks. The decade also had its own version of the New Age movement. These are all worthwhile investigations for Polyester Leisure Suit clad PCs. Near the end of the decade players can depict obnoxious punk rockers "aving it out wit "orrible monsters and evil disco dancers. Finally, the Seventies were the home of that classic group of occult investigators, the four meddling kids with the Great Dane.

The Eighties are truly in the spirit of the source material — this was the decade of Mammon, demon god of greed. Money was the grail and its worshippers were heroes. The wealth flowed uphill to a select few. Distrust of those in power surged and the dark mutterings of *conspiracy* grew louder. In the midst of this orgy of shallow materialism and pessimism an astonishing development occurred — the New Age

First, the GM can use recent news stories as stepping-off points for scenarios. This idea will be explored further under the heading 'Creating Intrigue'. Second, the time will be close enough for players to remember, but not so close that the game loses realism. For example, a gaming group convening on May 4th will have trouble believing a scenario set on the same day. After all, something may occur in the 'real world' that day which totally invalidates the scenario. Tying into this, the short time lapse allows the campaign to keep up to date with world developments (political, technological, etc.) without the aforementioned anachronisms dispelling the illusion of reality. No GM wants to fall on his face by using a living person as an NPC only to discover that he has died the night before ("Would you believe...a *ghost*?")!

No matter when it is set, a Modern Horror campaign will be memorable. In no other setting is the horror so immediate, so in-your-face and so exciting to roleplay.

CHOOSING A LOCATION

Modern Horror works best with characters traveling around investigating reports of weird and supernatural events. The GM must decide whether the characters will journey overseas or keep their operations confined to their home country. Both approaches have much to recommend them.

The "homeland" campaign allows the GM to tap into the rich mythos of the land, the subtle shadings that only a native can understand. Whether it is America, Japan, the British Isles or anywhere, the atmosphere engendered by Kerouac-like wanderings through the night is a fine counterpoint to the horrors that erupt shrieking from the shadows. As characters roam from the corridors of power through the porch lights of suburbia out into the moonlit countryside, their journey and the terrors they face will acquire an atmosphere of legend and a surprising resonance.

Many groups will want to travel overseas. An international campaign is more freewheeling. Rather than exploring their homeland (and hence, themselves) the characters are outsiders and explorers. Dealing with NPCs is more difficult; barriers of language and custom must be dealt with. In a world where half the population is shooting at the other, the challenges are many. But this will accentuate the horror. When the unknown rears its grisly head the most foreign of surroundings and the oddest of cultures will seem all the more human. An international campaign will remind players that beneath religious and political differences all men are the same species, and the Awful Truth damns everyone.

GMs should resist the temptation to dwell on these themes during gameplay; let them sneak up on players. After all, the purpose of roleplaying -the jokes, the stories, the dice — is to have fun and experience a few vicarious thrills, not to discover the meaning of life. Whether a group opts for a 'home' or an international campaign, the possibilities for horror scenarios are endless.

movement. Suddenly millions of Americans were casting spells, crystal gazing, Tarot reading, astral traveling and studying the dubious wisdom of "channeled" entities. To the adherents of this new religion the universe was a benevolent place and every man's unconscious desires shaped his personal reality. In short, they became perfect patsies for manipulation. To top it all off the horrifying Abductionists began to make headlines — what was once a tiny percentage of UFO incidents became a major phenomenon.

Now we come to the world of today. Sweeping changes have occurred in the political and social arenas. Some say that the world is for the first time passing into the hands of the people and that the long night is over. But others say that it is all a ruse to raise false hope before it dashed forever. The monsters are still among us, they say, and the real fight for the future of mankind is just beginning.

CHOOSING A START DATE

When a GM starts a Modern Horror game he will probably already have an idea of when he wishes to conduct the campaign. This chapter describes the world of 199-, but the material is suitable for campaigns set from 1964 to the near future.

As the preceding entry illustrates, each of the four modern decades has much to offer as a campaign setting. The recommended option for Modern Horror, however, is the 'yesterday' campaign, which is set a few months in the past. This approach works well for several reasons.

CONDUCTING THE CAMPAIGN

ESTABLISHING THE TONE

The GM of a Modern Horror campaign should give serious consideration to determining the degree of realism he wishes to present in his campaign. The wise GM will consult with his players on this matter — after all, the campaign exists for their enjoyment.

Some players enjoy roleplaying because of the fantasy and the escape it offers from the rat race. For these players, the less reality the better. They want to play characters who can investigate crime scenes and conduct investigations without official interference. They like playing characters who don't have to bother with licenses and permits, and who can travel where — and whenever they wish. At the climax of a scenario they expect to engage in ferocious pyrotechnical gun battles with the enemy. After the dust settles, fans of this type of game want their characters to be able to move on to the next scenario while the authorities look the other way. For the players who favor this type of campaign, the frequent lapses of logic and unrealistic situations are of no consequence.

Other players demand more realism. For them, the accomplishments of player-characters mean little when the mechanics of the universe itself work in their favor. These players relish the challenge of performing outrageous stunts and experiencing terrifying adventures in a setting where hard realism is the rule. Their favored type of game features PCs who rely on cleverness rather than dice rolls to remain alive. Operating outside of a law that is often actively pursuing them, these characters must contend with the knowledge that their efforts to save humanity might end in violent death. This is not to suggest that a realistic campaign is unrelentingly dark, only that it features characters who accept responsibility for their actions within the context of today's reality.

Most Modern Horror campaigns will fall between these two extremes, and the reality level will fluctuate at times. The GM should not be concerned about this — it is perfectly natural. A word of caution — the reality level should not be deliberately changed without unanimous consent. A GM who is tempted to change the rules in order to achieve a desired effect should resist the inclination. Not only is this grossly unfair to players, it can backfire in detrimental ways, damaging everyone's enjoyment of the campaign. The reality level of a campaign is a major factor in establishing the tone; the next step is to determine a general direction (or subgenre) for the game.

Unlike the previous chapters of this book, Modern Horror is more a setting than a separate subgenre. Just like in today's films and literature, Modern Horror can be Eldritch/Gothic, Adventure, or even Atomic (Super-scientific). Especially adventurous GMs might even set Apocalyptic Horror in a modern setting! GMs who wish to run modern-day variants of these styles should read the appropriate sections of this book. Those who wish to present a uniquely modern campaign style should read on for suggestions relating to establishing the tone of Paranoid Horror.

The monsters and villains described in this chapter are derived from true eyewitness reports, the writings of conspiracy theorists, urban legend and tabloid newspapers, or are fictional extrapolations based on these sources. For purposes of brevity these sources and the evil they describe will hereafter be referred to as the Conspiracy. Since these sources are so readily available, the GM can use them early in the campaign as a quick way of setting a scary tone. Remember, all of the source material the GM uses will also exist in the campaign world, and will be accessible to the PCs. When the GM pulls out a copy of the very book the PCs are researching (the players, of course, believing it fictional) the effect will be devastating! The 'real-world' tone of the campaign will be firmly set.

Another good way of establishing the realistic tone so essential to Paranoid Horror is to start out the campaign without a hint of strangeness. The mundane lives of the PCs and their daily routines should be established. Mature players won't even mind if the initial scenario contains no horror at all. But once a comfortable feeling of normalcy is established, introduce a few disquieting elements to throw them off balance.

Disquieting elements might include UFO or monster sightings in the area, a disturbing new neighbor or co-worker, unbelievably weird information overheard, or any number of strange glitches to reality. Don't overdo it — players must believe in the reality of the setting if exposure to the Awful Truth is to be effective.

Then comes the pivotal moment of the campaign when the PCs conception of reality is shattered by their first face-to-whatever encounter with a living embodiment of the Awful Truth. No longer will they dismiss reports of the Conspiracy as the babbling of kooks and charlatans — they have seen what man is not meant to see. The unfortunate recipients of privileged information, they must now decide what they are going to do with it. And as easy as that the tone of Paranoid Horror has been established. PCs will see the hand of the Conspiracy everywhere. They will trust no authority but believe the most outrageous claims. No event, no matter how trivial, will seem important to their fevered imaginations. They will see hidden connections where there are none. And the GM will have fun feeding their paranoia while only he knows the Awful Truth.

CAMPAIGN SCALE

Next, the GM must consider his campaign scale. In Paranoid Horror this does not refer to geographic scale, but the actual degree of involvement his PCs will have with the machinations of the Conspiracy. Again, more than one approach works well.

An entire campaign can be conducted where PCs never once see the "big picture." This approach works well when players are not interested in too much intrigue. In this case, they can travel around, solve mysteries, and kill monsters to their heart's content. As all the monsters in the previous chapters are assumed to have contemporary counterparts, there are a lot to choose from and enough for years of campaigning. It is still Paranoid Horror — this aspect of the game is enhanced by occasional hints of vast invisible forces at work which the PCs have no power over. But players will eventually become dissatisfied with battling manifestations and minions of Evil — they will want to go after the dark masters themselves.

THE MODERN HORROR CAMPAIGN

THE SHAPESHIFTERS INTERNATIONAL CONSPIRACY

This section describes the Shapeshifters International Conspiracy, a modern-style organization of Lycanthropes, Vampires, sorcerers and Demons serving an evil goddess from the past. The S.I.C. campaign focuses upon Horror themes prevalent to current settings — here the GM will find material enabling the running of games featuring ceremonies to an ancient Goddess, murderous cultists, sorcerous rituals, serial killings, and of course the horror of discovering our world is not as we are led to believe.

THE HISTORY OF THE SHAPESHIFTERS

The tale is told wherever they gather. They tell it to inductees in training camps in Tennessee. They tell it to inspire management in Tokyo boardrooms. They tell it to wide-eyed cubs in the well fed exhaustion after the hunt...

Kurten the Great stumbled through the charred ruin of his beloved village. Blind with grief and rage he fell to his knees and howled at the silent moon. Never again, he cried, would he and his people trust isolation to protect them from the men who thought it was God's will to destroy them. He would be a Moses and gather the Folk together; he would be Joshua and conquer their enemies. Kurten prayed and the Mother of Shapeshifters, moved by his grief, came down and dried his tears. Yes, she promised him, he would be Her prophet and Her general. And someday, far ahead in the misty future, the world would be theirs...

... It is a tale designed to inspire righteous anger, to instill a sense of community and to move those who listen to worship. The story is mostly true. But the being telling it is not the same Kurten as he in the story. That Kurten has been dead for centuries, slain by the founder of SIC. The creature who rules SIC under the name Kurten is a Demonic impostor. But the Goddess is real, and exactly what she is claimed to be.

She is one of the ancient ones; her names and aspects are many. In times long past, hunters called her Artemis and wizards called her Hecate. Lunatics cried out to Selene the changing one and she would answer. She is the devourer, the Moon, the shapeshifting demon goddess of the hunt. Scholars call her myth, but she lives. She may yet be the death of us all. Soon every moon will be full, every hunter a changer and every mortal a quarry.

And so the 'Great Kurten' travels the world spreading the false gospel and uniting the tribes. Today, with only two decades left before the uprising, the Shapeshifters number tens of thousands. Despite this seeming imbalance of power, most observers feel that the brute passion of the Shapeshifters may put them ahead if open conflict with humanity occurs. The dark ambition of the Goddess seems destined to be fulfilled.

THE SHAPESHIFTERS INTERNATIONAL CONSPIRACY

The Shapeshifters International Conspiracy, while composed of individuals noted for chaotic behavior, operates on a system of strictly enforced dictates from the Goddess. Advancement in SIC is based on natural law, save that battles for progression are 'publicly' declared and fought. Murder for promotion is punished by slow death. Private behavior is conducted according to SIC codes — unauthorized 'reproduction' is penalized by loss of rank. Disclosure of SIC secrets is rewarded with torture. It is rare for any but the newest recruits to break SIC law.

SIC is run by a council of thirteen — 'Kurten' and twelve regional Governors (Kurten rules the European tribes). Each tribal Governor is served by thirteen lieutenants who are responsible for black magic ceremonies, the induction of new cultists and the military training for their provinces. There are additional squads of troops with special responsibilities. Assigned due to ability rather than race, they report directly to Kurten. SIC also hires supernatural free agents such as Spike Early when the need arises.

SIC places high priority on placing members in positions of political, military and fiscal influence. The infiltration agenda is proceeding well. Most military and civil forces include SIC members and many financial institutions are being systematically looted by those who are considered above suspicion.

Unknown to all but the council, there is another organization lurking within SIC. This group, whose leader is the being which founded SIC, will be detailed in a forthcoming volume. GMs may wish to hint at the existence of this group, the Hunters of the Moonlit Empire, but may consider it a separate organization for now. The leader of HOME founded the inner cult in case SIC is somehow defeated.

Membership in SIC is open to anyone or anything willing to swear total fealty to the cause. A recruit must possess, or be willing to kill to gain, shapeshifting abilities. All manner of vampires, demons and shapeshifting wizards are counted in their number but the ranking officials are always lycanthropes. The cult is most often encountered in connection with devil worshipping activity, smuggling and serial killings. The Shapeshifters can be used as a vehicle to introduce Old World monsters in a New World order. A campaign involving monster-hunters can feature SIC as the main antagonist.

Players should not be told on the outset that the cult exists. Their strict laws were instigated to protect the secrecy of the group. It is strongly recommended that the first half-dozen or so SIC scenarios feature members who are operating on their own recognizance. If any PCs are members of SABER at the onset they should not reveal it to the others until the existence of SIC is disclosed.

CURRENT PROJECTS

THE OCCULT OBJECTIVE

The Shapeshifters International Conspiracy is not the only cult plotting against humanity. Events have hinted of a new Black Dawn, and the Shapeshifters are known to be at odds with a baffling society (or race?) called the Lamplighters. Add to these the conspiracy theorists usual mob of Illuminatis, Satanists, Masons and space aliens and one wonders how ordinary citizens have room to breathe. The common goal of these groups is the acquisition of power. 'Power' is a broad term which variously signifies military might, scientific supremacy, fiscal superiority or, as is the case here, mastery of the mystic arts.

The Occult Objective of SIC is a multitiered undertaking, instituted over a century ago. The breadth of the project makes it likely to be the commonest cause of PC / SIC interaction.

The objective has three declared goals. They are, (1) The acquisition of spells and enchanted objects, (2) The destruction or suppression of inimical items or magic and (3) The identification and purchase of magically charged real estate such as Ley lines, mystery ruins and haunted houses.

(1) The Shapeshifters greed for more magic may be equated with the Arms Race of the Cold War years. There are procedural differences, of course — research and development of new sorcery is but a part of the operation. Minions of SIC prowl the halls of academia, monitoring the status of archeological expeditions world wide. When promising sites are excavated they are there, waiting for the glimmer of lost occult treasures. A disturbing number of artifacts are never logged, never displayed in museums. Some are stolen, never to be seen again. Others are 'found', but only after being replaced with diabolical Iods.

Unsurprisingly, SIC is actively engaged in bibliographical pursuits. They have looted the great repositories of knowledge for over two centuries.

The Shapeshifters are always on the alert for new magic developed by rival cults and independents. They do not share — they are thieves. Many an unexplained 'occult' murder may be laid at their doorstep.

This project is administered by a Demonologist named Bannerman Geovijan and his three sons, who are werewolves of the sorcerous type. Geovijan specializes in scrying magic. He uses mirrors, Tarot cards, astrology, entrail divining and Ouija boards to pinpoint important new finds. His sons, who are well-traveled and skilled thieves, function as a retrieval squad. Geovijan, while committed to SIC, occasionally allows his insatiable curiosity to override his caution. Already his indiscretions have allowed SABER to recapture a horde of Mound Indian relics which may have proven useful in overcoming the 'silver problem'. Kurten is keeping a close eye on him. One more mistake and Geovijan is through. It is possible he may turn traitor to extend his existence...

(2) Part two of the objective follows naturally. The sheer scope of SIC operations renders inevitable the possibility that magic or artifacts inimical to their objectives is occasionally found. By no means does this imply any 'goodness' on the part of the enemy — it may be something more evil than they. But sometimes a saintly being or benign magic comes to light which SIC is compelled to destroy before it is used against them.

This is not a task undertaken lightly. The operatives SIC uses in this phase of the objective are all extremely capable. Their chief is a human wizard named Estelle DeFelice. A native of Chad, she possesses spells which enable her to change into a number of African animal forms. Her squad are all non-magical humans with orders to kill her if she appears to be under the sway of enemy magic. They have all taken blood oaths to the Goddess and after serving for a time are transferred into the Lycanthropic fold. They carry state of the art weaponry and gear. Their exceptional success rate proves that magic need not be countered by magic.

(3) Conventional mystical wisdom holds that magic is a form of energy which, like water, sometimes pools in one place. SIC would add that any pool can be drained. It is true that certain areas on Earth are charged with mystic energy, such as haunted houses, burial mounds, cemeteries, sacred groves, some mountains, ruins, Ley lines, crop circles and religious shrines. These areas are noted for weird phenomena like ghosts, mysterious lights, inexplicable emotional outbursts, psychic events and healings. Some are benevolent in nature; SIC desecrates these. Some are downright evil. Most are not aligned to either moral polarity. Notable

examples include Stonehenge, the Bermuda Triangle, the Great Serpent Mound, the Shrine at Delphi, Ayers Rock, Mt. Kailas and Easter Island. These are well known and useless to SIC. Their bloodshot eyes are cast on the hundreds more around the globe which have yet to become centers of organized worship or tourism. Some are right under our noses — hooray for Hollywood. Others have yet to be found.

What does SIC want with these places? Their sorcerers have discovered that spells cast on enchanted soil have a greater success rate. Magical research is accelerated. Also, supernatural creatures feel more powerful there. Finally, the magic can be 'mined' and stored in mystic batteries until it is needed elsewhere. In game terms this means that, at GMs option, certain spells may have additional dice of effect or require lower Magic Skill rolls.

The identification and acquisition of these areas is the responsibility of a pair of Tormentor Demons (q.v., The Black Dawn, Creatures) called the Surveyor and the Purchaser. They travel together searching for mystic sites and terrorizing any occupants until the land can be purchased through a dummy corporation run by the Tokyo council. The Surveyor is a taciturn, glum being. His partner is a hyperactive wheeler-dealer who shakes more hands than a politician. Both are constrained from committing outright murder (most of the time) but can swiftly summon SIC members if business tactics and terror fail.

As noted above, it is likely that the majority of SIC scenarios will spin out of this project. Here are a few plot suggestions and ideas to help the GM develop stories.

- Always bear in mind that SIC need not be central to the main story. Tales of innocents finding items of power and being corrupted and/or destroyed are horror staples. Run that story and then have SIC appear in a sequel, searching for that item they heard about.

- This is a good opportunity to put PCs in the awkward position of cooperating with an enemy in order to defeat a greater threat. Some things are best left buried; when unearthed they may pose a threat to man and were creature alike.

- For a while PCs may be employed by a SIC representative pretending to be a friend. After all, why dirty your own paws if you can get a crew of idiots to do your work for you?

- PCs may have to protect an individual with benevolent powers who poses a threat to SIC. For example, some people have an uncanny knack for communing with and controlling animals — what if someone had this same power over were creatures?

- Once PCs realize that SIC favors mystically charged sites for habitations and lairs the conspiracy will seem a bit less daunting. PCs will eventually need this edge, but it should not happen too early in the campaign. Remember, the more familiar or flawed a threat the less scary it is.

THE DRAFT

SIC is now entering the final phases of the conspiracy — accelerated recruitment. The project has two main objectives. First, find new members who will be posted according to their abilities. The second is to target positions of power — either through infiltration or replacement.

New cultists may be (1) humans slated for transformation, (2) non-allied monsters, (3) sorcerers, (4) summoned creatures and (5) unique monsters.

(1) Most inductees are recruited from devil cults, asylums, prisons and the military. These are all institutions whose members have the innate bloodlust deemed desirable in a SIC warrior. The recruitment of new members is the responsibility of the thirteen tribal lieutenants serving each regional governor. They follow a predetermined quota in order to prevent overpopulation. Should the targeted recruit be incarcerated and legal attempts at parole or discharge fail then an escape will be arranged. Post offices around the world have pictures on their walls of wanted criminals and madmen who are now safe in the embrace of SIC. Because shapeshifters transformed by contagion suffer from conflicting loyalties (i.e. creator vs. cult), the Goddess has taught SIC a method by which to induce lycanthropy through ritual murder — the resultant creatures are Wereboars (q.v.). These creatures form the bulk of the SIC warrior class.

(2) Non-allied monsters are considered a danger to the clandestine operations of SIC. It is felt that eventually such a being will become publicly known and a 'witch hunt' will commence. Therefore SIC has squads monitoring the mass media for clues of such creatures whereabouts. They are then hunted down and invited to join. Any who refuse are considered enemies and slain. Almost all SIC vampires are recruited in this manner. This process has given rise to great enmity between the organized vampire nations (q.v., Vampyr) and SIC. SABER seeks to take advantage of this bad blood, hoping the opposing sides will decimate each other.

(3) Sorcerers are extremely valuable to SIC. Not only are they largely free of the cyclical transformations which plague Lycanthropes (and render infiltration difficult), their magic is counted on to be SICs edge in the coming uprising. Any who do not possess shapeshifting magic upon recruitment are taught spells that enable them to fulfill membership regulations. While prohibited from attaining leadership roles due to SIC law, the sorcerers are often given great responsibility in specialized projects. The vast magical archives of SIC are a persuasive coin to prospective inductees.

(4) Summoned creatures are defined as any extradimensional being not native to Earth. The majority of these are commonly known as Demons. When the Goddess broke from the hierarchy of Hell many Demons came with her; more stayed but have conflicting loyalties. The Goddess cannot send Demons (except Iods) to Earth due to cosmic law. They must be summoned by men. She is also prohibited from revealing the True Names of her followers, so they must be discerned through research and experimentation. A team of Demonologists works around the clock to find the identities of these beings. These beings, once summoned, cannot roam freely unless protected by a powerful shielding spell which requires the death of the caster. As sorcerers are in short supply, this sorcery is not performed very often. About a dozen SIC Demons are now loose on the planet.

In addition to Demons, several powerful ghosts work with SIC.

(5) Unique monsters are the rarest SIC members. There are only a handful, and are recruited in the same manner as non-allied monsters. One is an Alien who apparently has been on Earth since the nineteen-fifties. It is an amnesiac known by the name John Smith (use the Construct stats for Smith, adding shapeshifting abilities and total immunity to magic. Adjust the Disads.). He is able to assume any bipedal form and often helps spring prisoners slated for recruitment. Other unique creatures are left to the GMs imagination.

Infiltration, the second agenda of the draft, is achieved through standard human forms of promotion (sometimes magically influenced) by current SIC members and by recruiting or replacing individuals currently in position. SICs long range plans require the placement of individuals who will be able to sabotage human counter-attacks during the uprising. To this end the governments and militaries of many nations have been infiltrated. Some of today's greatest military and political heroes secretly labor on an itinerary that would horrify their human peers. The Intelligence community has not been ignored. Even SABER has been penetrated.

The replacement of existing people is achieved through Demonic possession or shapeshifting magic. At least one recently deceased Eastern European head of state was a SIC member (see recent events in Hungary). Because high-profile positions are sometimes difficult for Lycanthropes to maintain (that damned accidental change) most are filled by sorcerers.

Potential scenarios built around this project may include:

- A monster approaching PCs for protection against SIC. The monster may be a Lycanthrope who is not fully aware of his condition or a Vampyr who has mastered his desire to kill and is trying to do 'good'.

- The PCs may get caught in the crossfire between SIC and one of the Vampire nations. Or, they may instigate it!

- The PCs may have to track down an escapee before he joins SIC.

- An investigation of a non-allied monster may involve SIC recruiters. SIC may even (secretly) hire the PCs to capture the critter for them.

- A magic using PC may be approached by recruiters. Will he say no or take the opportunity to infiltrate the group?

- The PCs discover that an important public figure is an impostor. Can they solve the problem without causing a national crisis?

FALSE PROPHETS

It is a measure of SICs intelligence that most of their enemies dismiss them as militaristic idiots. For further evidence one need look no further than the project code named 'False Prophets'. The objective is the proliferation of false and misleading magical, mystical and philosophical beliefs. SIC has a deplorable amount of company in this field. In addition to the relatively harmless horde of con men and tent preachers a very real threat in the form of false messiahs and reckless demonologists vie for the wealth and souls of the unwary. These individuals and groups are often at odds; when SIC enters the fray the outcome is often bloodshed and terror.

SICs current endeavors in this arena are concentrated on the corruption of Wiccan groups and the proliferation of false Devil cults. They see the Wiccans veneration of an idealized Goddess as an affront to the evil Demoness they serve. To make matters worse, the spells of 'White' Wiccans are very effective against the Shapeshifters. SICs goal is twofold. First, infiltrate Wiccan covens and trick the weak-willed and greedy into serving the SIC Goddess. Second, turn public opinion against those who resist their wiles. This is accomplished by framing Wiccans for human sacrifices, corrupting minors and similar crimes. As long as the public perceives all witches to be evil the accidental exposure of the SIC goddess should not draw undue comment.

SIC encourages amateur Devil worship for a different reason. The 'Rock n Roll', 'Devil made me do it' style of Demonology which causes so much excited comment among concerned parents and fundamentalists is not, despite all attempts to prove otherwise, organized in any manner. It has more to do with bad parenting, teenage psychology and schizophrenic behavior than any type of magic. But it gets all the press. As long as the public is exposed to this type of demonology — one that, while awful, demonstrably does not work in a supernatural sense — the real article will not be recognized as the grave threat it is. More importantly, true Demonology will remain an obscure talent.

This may require further explanation. The preceding statements are not meant to suggest that diabolical influence has nothing to do with amateur devil worship — Hell takes what souls it can, and sometimes its emissaries approach likely candidates with horrible whispered suggestions. Despite SICs best efforts, individuals sometimes graduate from amateur status and become the real thing. SIC does not want this to happen. It is a danger.

True demonologists ply their trade in complete anonymity. The books they use have never been translated into any language the typical disaffected teen could hope to read. The ceremonies they employ are beyond the skills of all but a select few. The entities they conjure are real and often opposed to SIC. Why? The Goddess is a renegade Demon who, along with her hordes, is not in favor with the bosses downstairs. Every Demon summoned is a potential danger to her machinations. Therefore, SIC finances the printing of useless grimoires and 'Satanic' music to lure youths into false beliefs which pose no threat.

This project is administered by a sorcerer/werewolf named Miles Greenbough. He is the editor of Destiny magazine, an occult monthly published in Newark, New Jersey. Destiny caters to the current occult craze and is very successful. In addition to the magazine, Greenbough is editor in chief of Desmonda Publishing, whose works on witchcraft and thinly-veiled Demonology are found in every mall bookstore. Greenbough's staff are mostly well-meaning New Agers who do not suspect the horror they are abetting.

Greenbough is the financier of dozens of bogus cults. He often visits various compounds and temples to observe how things are working out. His current pet project is the Transformation Temple. Here the adherents openly worship a version of the Goddess and pay homage to Lycanthropes (not that any of them have seen one). The broad slant of the cult is back-to-nature, with lots of camping out and getting in touch with our 'inner animal'. Soon, Greenbough intends to infect an inner circle of followers.

Greenbough is a celebrity in occult circles. He is often invited to seances and ceremonies. He enjoys his status and the opportunities it offers to help the Goddess. He also secretly attends various Black masses in a masked 'high priest' get-up. Finally, when he encounters Wiccans, occultists and Demonologists of true power who resist recruitment he shapeshifts into Werewolf form and goes huntin'.

The sheer number of phony cults and twisted religions today is staggering. Ritualistic crimes are on the rise. While depressing in the real world, these facts provide the GM with a lot of scenario opportunities.

- The classic plot is the rescue from the cult. A concerned relative asks PCs to sneak into a cult temple and save their brainwashed kin. Of course, he may not want to be rescued...

- A good non-SIC scenario in this vein could be built around the apprehension of a ritualistic killer. For a SIC tie-in, maybe his activities mask a similar SIC crime.
- Greenbough may alert the PCs to a rival cult, letting them do the dirty work.
- The GM may wish the Temple of Transformation to be a bit further along than the write-up suggests. Imagine trying to rescue junior from a cult when junior is a Werewolf.
- For a good moral dilemma, have a rival cult combat SIC with little regard for civilians in the crossfire. What is the greater of two evils?
- The PCs may be approached by a Wiccan coven who are being persecuted by SIC. Do the PCs harbor negative preconceptions about witches?

SIC SORCERY — EX LIBER RENOVARI

Never before in the history of evil has an organization had as cosmopolitan a membership as the Shapeshifters International Conspiracy. Unlike cults of the past, SIC has aggressively recruited without regard for previous belief systems or philosophies. All are rendered void when the blood oath to the Goddess is made. The sorcerers of SIC, then, represent an astonishing variety of magical classes and specializations. Their only common link is a natural or sorcerous ability to shapechange.

In light of this the GM should not feel limited to any particular style of magic when presenting SIC spellcasters. The organization is *international*, after all. Simply make them strange, make them unexpected.

This is not to suggest that there is no central repertoire of SIC sorcery. The spells favored by the Goddess have been compiled in a book called 'Ex Liber Renovari', or 'The Book of Moon Changes'. As the title suggests, the book is a collection of transformation and Moon related spells. The spells listed below are taken from this book, which is widely circulated among the ranks. As a safeguard, the Goddess has ordered that every copy, be it bound, microfilmed or programmed to disk, is to be an Iod replicant. Any SIC member who fails to obey is doomed.

The spells in the Liber are drawn from several sources. Ancient Greek scrolls, medieval German grimoires, Demonic inspiration and modern spell research have all contributed. The book is available to all SIC sorcerers.

ELEMENTS OF SIC SORCERY

As noted above, SIC sorcery encompasses a broad variety of styles — far too many to relate here. The GM is referred to the other magic sections in this book. By slightly retooling the spells and terminology therein the resources of SIC triple. The Terms below deal mostly with specific items of interest to the SIC campaign GM.

Artemis (Latin: Diana): The virginal Greek Goddess of the hunt. One of the SIC Goddesses three aspects.

Girdle: A broad belt of wolfs hide is an essential component in a sorcerous transformation to wolf. A sorcerer whose girdle is lost or stolen must obtain another by killing a wolf bare-handed.

Hecate: The Greek goddess of sorcery. The most dominant of the SIC Goddesses three aspects.

Iod: (see entry) A Demonic race, loyal to the Goddess, able to assume the form of inanimate objects.

Lycanthrope: Any being who, either through sorcery or innate ability, is able to transform into an animal or semi-animal form. The change is most often associated with the cycles of the Moon.

Moon: The Moon has figured in magical rites since time immemorial. Because its phases roughly coincide with the menstrual cycle, it is considered a 'She' by most cultures. She gave mankind the measurement of time and her phases and colors are omens of good and ill fortune. For SIC, the Moon is the symbolic body of the Goddess. Her power is linked with its phases; when there is no Moon above She is incommunicado.

Selene (Latin-Luna): The Greek Goddess of the Moon. Another ancient alias of the SIC Goddess.

Silver: The precious metal most associated with the Moon. Alchemists called it Luna or Diana (Greek: Artemis) because it is always found in pure (virginal) form. Because of its purity it is considered a 'good' metal. Silver has power of creatures of the night. The reason for this is not entirely clear: it may be because of its purity. Another school of thought reminds us of the old adage, 'fight fire with fire', suggesting that night creatures have no defense against an element so integral to their nocturnal existence. Maybe it is the Goddesses way of reminding her creatures who their master is.

Vampire: (see Vampyr and Lesser Vampyr, also see Loup Garou in Pulps) Any of several species of undead creature who exist by drinking the blood of the living.

Wereboar: (see entry) A creature created by SIC magic who transforms into a bipedal, piglike creature.

Werewolf: (see entry) A human being who transforms into a wolf or wolflike creature.

SAMPLE SPELLS

To Suppress a cyclical shapeshift (Werewolf) the sorcerer needs a blood sample taken from the target while in human form. He also needs a magnifying lens which has been consecrated to the Goddess. Finally, fresh blood from a non-lycanthrope must be obtained. During the next full moon the blood samples are mixed and placed beneath the lens, which bathes it in concentrated moonlight. An invocation is read. The target drinks the resultant mixture. If it has been prepared correctly he will not transform during his next cycle. Each use of the potion becomes increasingly risky — there is a cumulatively greater chance the mixture will poison the drinker.

Suppress Shapeshift: Transform Were creature to Human, 8d6 Major Transform, Requires A Skill Roll, Extra Time: One hour, Gestures, Incantations, Concentrate 0 DCV, OAF (Blood and lens), Misc. Disad (Cumulative 1d6 KA, NND/ Potion after first) (-1), Misc. Disad (Only lasts through next Full moon) (-1)
Active cost: 115   Real Cost: 16   END cost: 11
Magic Skill roll modifier: -11

To cause a non-lycanthrope to shapeshift the sorcerer needs the following — a personal item or body part (hair, nails, blood etc.) of the target, a similar item from a were creature, and one other item whose use will explained momentarily. A magic diagram is drawn and the first two materials are imbedded in a lump of clay which is then baked for an hour. Gestures and incantations are performed. The hardened clay is then pulverized. An object is then coated with the dust. This object must touch the intended victim (the GM can be imaginative here). Finally, a symbol must be written or spoken. This instantly triggers the change when the target either sees the symbol or hears the word. The transformation lasts twenty-four hours.

Mortal Clay: 8d6, Major Transformation (Human to Were-creature), Trigger (+½ may change with each use), Invisible power effects (Invisible to all senses except Magic) (+1), Requires A Skill Roll, Extra Time: One hour, Gestures, Incantations, Concentrate 0 DCV, OAF (Magic Diagram and materials), Misc. Disad (Only for one transformation) (-2),
Active cost: 287   Real Cost: 41   END cost: 28
Magic Skill roll modifier: -8

To create a wereboar a series of ritualistic murders must be committed. The potential Wereboar must be accompanied by a SIC sorcerer who instructs the recruit as he goes. Sigils must be drawn on the victim before they are killed; the method of killing cannot involve any artificial weapon, for it must be done barehanded or with natural weapons, such as a pony tail garrote. An attending SIC sorcerer performs the verbal portion of the spell during the proceedings. Murders have to be committed at midnight on six consecutive nights; the final murder must be committed on the first night of the full moon. Should the Goddess be displeased with the inductee due to their failure to complete the ritual, they will be torn apart by unseen claws and teeth.

Hellhog: 8d6 Major Transformation (normal human to wereboar), Requires A Skill Roll, Extra Time: One week, Gestures, Incantations, Concentrate 0 DCV, OAF (Sacrificial victims and materials), Misc. Disad (If inductee fails to complete ritual, Inductee will suffer vengeance of the Goddess... 3d6 RKA, NND)
Active cost: 115   Real Cost: 17   END cost: 11
Magic Skill roll modifier: -11

To summon an Iod the moon must be visible in the sky. The item intended for replication must be at hand, inside a diagram. The timing must be exact — The Book of Moon Changes reveals the times when the Goddess will be expecting a supplication. No summoning is necessary. A ritual prayer, with gestures, must be correctly performed lest the Goddess punish the seeker. No Magic Skill is needed to summon an Iod.

Summon Iod: Summon Iod, Extra Time: One hour, Gestures, Incantations, Concentrate 0 DCV, OAF (Magic Diagram and materials), Side Effect (12d6 EB from Goddess)
Active cost: 67   Real Cost: 10   END cost: 6
Magic Skill roll modifier: N/A

To attack an enemy using the tidal power of the moon the sorcerer needs a drop of the victims blood and an identical amount of sea water drawn during a full Moon. The elements may be mixed beforehand. This is a relatively fast spell suitable for combat situations but normally used as an assassination weapon. A quick incantation, with gestures, will cause the blood of the victim to be drawn upward in their body. Depending on the health of the target he will suffer effects ranging from migraine headaches to aneurysm-like death.

Bloodtide: 1d6 RKA, Requires A Skill Roll, Gestures, Incantations, Concentrate ½ DCV, OAF (Drop of blood), Side Effect (Active points in power)
Active cost: 15   Real Cost: 3   END cost: 1
Magic Skill roll modifier: -1

To induce lunacy in a victim the sorcerer needs to locate his intended victim while he is sleeping. Placing a silver coin over each of the victim's eyes, the sorcerer implores the Goddess to cause the victim to see only those things in the world that are normally unseen. If successful, the victim will perceive even the dearest of friends and harmless of objects as something entirely different. Other PCs will be alarmed to learn about the unseen world around them and hard-pressed to thwart a lunatic with a nigh-unfathomable agenda.

Moon Madness: 10d6 Mind Control, Requires A Skill Roll, Extra Time: One hour, Gestures, Incantations, Concentrate 0 DCV, OAF (Materials), Side Effect (12d6 Mind Control by invoked entity)

Active cost: 50   Real Cost: 7   END cost: 5
Magic Skill roll modifier: -5

For protection against silver-based attacks an admittedly unreliable defense has been engineered. It is an invisible shield which deflects silver. To cast the spell the sorcerer needs to wound himself or the target with a silver blade. The blood is then rubbed all over the body. Then the beneficiary stands in the center of a diagram while gestures and incantations are performed. Once the spell is in place it will protect against silver until the shield is worn away.

Silver Shield: 8 PD Armor, Requires A Skill Roll, Extra Time: One hour, Gestures, Incantations, Concentrate 0 DCV, OAF (Magic Diagram and materials), Ablative (-1½) Already has an 11- activation.

Active cost: 12   Real Cost: 1   END cost: 1
Magic Skill roll modifier: -1

To control animals of a Lycanthropes species (Werewolf — wolves and other canines, Wereboar — Boars and other pigs, etc.) the sorcerer must obtain a live animal. The animal must be slain, barehanded, by the beneficiary of the spell. Then, wearing the skin of the animal, he stands in the diagram while the spell is performed. At a later time, the beneficiary can trigger the spell in the presence of the chosen beasts by emulating their summoning cry. Animals closer to the spell-user are more powerfully affected than those farther away, and must be commanded with simple instructions due to their animal nature. The Moon must be up (but not necessarily visible) for the spell to be triggered. The effects will end when the Moon sets.

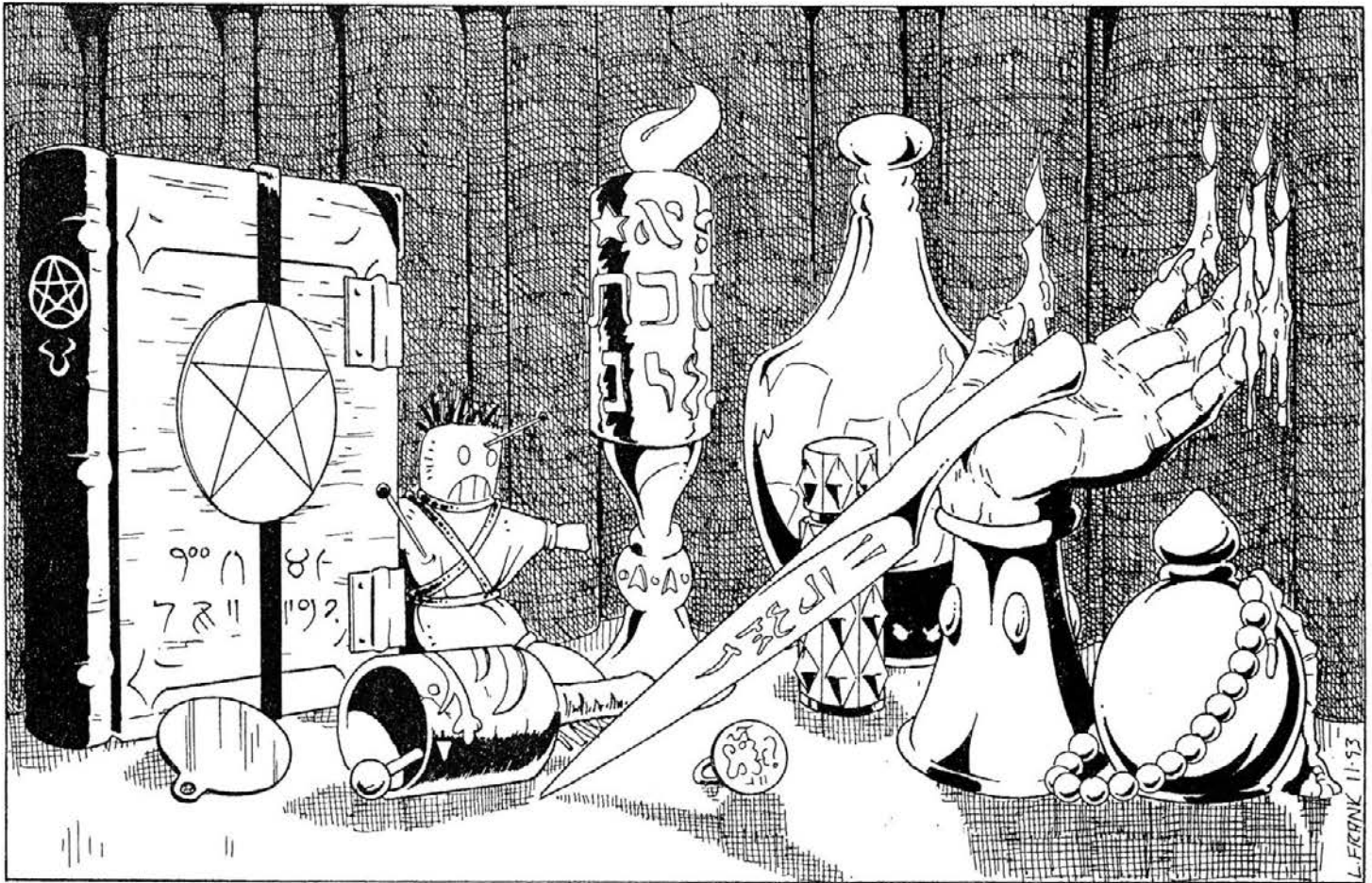**Beast Brother**: 8d6 Mind Control, Explosion, Trigger (beneficiary wills it), Requires A Skill Roll, Extra Time: One hour, Gestures, Incantations, Concentrate 0 DCV, OAF (Magic Diagram and materials), Side Effect (Animals are affected by single command, "Kill the summoner"), Only affects animal from same species as Lycanthrope -½)

Active cost: 70   Real Cost: 9   END cost: 7
Magic Skill roll modifier: -7

NOTABLE S.I.C. MEMBERS

SPIKE EARLEY

Background/ History: Spike was always a problem child. He hated the other kids, household pets, the neighbors and his parents. At the age of fourteen he ripped off a motorcycle and hit the road. Over the next ten years he vented his rage on anyone or anything unfortunate enough to cross his path.

Two years ago he and his cronies formed a club they called "The Death Reapers" and embarked on a spree of bloodshed and terror that ended shortly after it started.

In a small Arizona town the fugitives met up with a handful of citizens who, incensed at their mindless destruction, resisted. Led by the biker-mystic Jude, the group consisted of a vacationing cop from New York City, the local minister and the county sheriff. The battle that ensued claimed the life of Spike and his entire gang. With the full cooperation of the sheriff the incident was never publicized. The residents of the battered town buried the bodies of the Death Reapers in a common grave, and their bikes were sold to help the families of their victims. As far as the survivors were concerned, "good riddance to bad rubbish," and that was that. But such a great evil does not perish so easily...

On the anniversary of his timely demise, the wind howled, the ground shook, the mud boiled over the grave of the Death Reapers and Spike Earley arose to exact his revenge. Crazed before death, a year of suffering the torments of the dead had made him a monster. Leaving the rotting remains of his gang behind, he stole the first bike he saw and roared into the stormy night. He would have his revenge on those who opposed him, and then he would make war on the world.

But first, the Reapers must ride again. His new gang was assembled from the very worst of the outlaw clubs, individuals whose souls were almost as black as his. He keeps them in sway through violence and terror when necessary, but the gang almost slavishly obeys their supernatural master's evil will. Any deviation from his word brings agonizing death.

Powers/Tactics: Spike is no fool. He has no desire to be destroyed again, so he and the Reapers have been careful not to attract official attention toward themselves. Instead of running amok as he did in life, Spike has called on his old connections in the occult/criminal underground and announced his return from the grave and willingness to perform any deed for bargain prices. He makes no attempt to hide his undead state, enjoying the terror it produces in his victims. He and the Reapers have murdered, kidnapped, smuggled and terrorized for a variety of cults and crime lords.

While not a member, Spike has strong connections to SIC. The Shapeshifters like to use him because he is effective and cannot be traced to the organization. Spike likes the Shapeshifters because they're monsters like him. He has no desire to join them and they have not asked.

Spike is not subtle when engaged in full combat — he likes the blunt approach. He will lead his gang of psychos in a charge and crush the foe under their wheels first. Then they will attack the enemy hand to hand until none are left. The Reapers will brave any hail of bullets for their master, so clever ambushes and cover are no advantages when fighting them. Spike's favorite weapons are a baseball bat

(spiked, of course) in one hand and an antique six-gun in the other. The revolver is his one treasure. Nobody knows where he got it or what it means to him, but he will go to any lengths to retrieve it if it is lost.

Appearance: Death was not kind to Spike, but he likes it. His skin is the pallor of raw clay . His sparse hair drips with grave rot. His eyes are hollow and glow with an eerie green light. His stench is almost unbearable.

He wears the leather gear he died in — there is not a stitch of cloth on him. A World War One aviators helmet and yellow sunglasses complete his ensemble.

Spike is offered as a break from the world-spanning conspiracies presented elsewhere in this chapter. Any scenario featuring Spike and the Reapers is bound to be full of rip-roaring combat. He is essentially a revenant without the powers, but he can only be destroyed by burial in consecrated ground. Otherwise, his body will just reform after the good guys leave.

Of course, Spike may have a prior agreement with some underworld types to come and dig him up in case he is interred in consecrated ground ...

SPIKE EARLEY

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
15	STR	5	**OCV:** 5
15	DEX	15	**DCV:** 5
15	CON	10	**ECV:** 3
12	BODY	4	**Phases:** 3, 6, 9, 12
10	INT	0	
10	EGO	0	**Costs**
20	PRE	10	
6	COM	-2	**Char:** 69 **Base:** 100
8	PD	5	+ +
8	ED	5	**Powers:** 226 **Disad:** 195
4	SPD	15	= =
6	REC	0	**Totals:** 295 295
30	END	0	
30	STUN	2	

Cost	Powers	END
15	1d6+1 RKA, 0 END,	
	OAF (Colt Peacemaker Six Gun)	0
11	+5d6 Hand Attack, 0 END, OAF (Baseball bat)	0
20	50% Resistant Physical Damage Reduction,	
	Not vs. blessed or holy items (-½)	
3	Damage Resistance (8 PD),	
	Not vs. blessed or holy items	
13	Regeneration 2 BODY/turn,	
	Not vs. blessed or holy items	
21	Life Support: Need not breathe, eat, sleep, excrete;	
	Immune to disease, aging	
5	Ultraviolet Vision	
15	Does Not Bleed	
15	Cannot Be Stunned	

Cost	Skills
3	Ambidexterity
7	Fast Draw 14-
5	Contact: Cult leader/drug smuggler 14-
20	Followers: Eight @ 25 pts each
24	Martial Arts — Dirty Infighting

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
Disarm	-1	+1	25 STR Disarm
Kidney Blow	-2	0	1d6+1 HKA
Low Blow	-1	+1	2d6 NND
Punch/Kick	+2	0	5d6 Strike
Roundhouse	-2	+1	7d6 Strike
Throw	0	+1	2d6+v/5 Strike, Target falls

Cost	Skills
1	Use Dirty Infighting w/Clubs
7	Streetwise 15-
5	Combat Driving motorcycles 13-
3	Interrogation 13-
3	Gambling 11-
3	Mechanics 11-
3	AK: Southwestern US 12-
5	PS: Gang Leader 14-
5	PS: Terrorist 14-
4	WF: Melee Weapons, Small Arms
2	Fluent Spanish (English language is native)
8	+1 Level w/all Combat

100+	Disadvantages
25	Psychological Limitation: Total psychopath (V Com, Total)
25	Psychological Limitation: Must have his six gun (V Com, Total)
35	Berserks when confronted (V.Com 14-, 8-)
20	Distinctive Features: Corpse (Conc, Extreme reaction)
15	Hunted, PCs (As Pow, NCI) 8-
10	Hunted, local law enforcement (LsPow, NCI) 8-
65	Monster bonus

THE DEATH REAPERS

13 STR	14 DEX	13 CON	10 BODY	8 INT
8 EGO	10 PRE	8 COM	6 PD	6 ED
3 SPD	6 REC	26 END	24 STUN	

Skills: Combat Driving 12-, Mechanics 11-,
PS: Gang Member 12-, Streetwise 11-,
WF: Small Arms, Melee Weapons, +1 w/Pistol or Clubs

25+ Disadvantages: Hunted, Local Law Enforcement (As Pow, NCI) 8-

KURTEN

Background/History: The true story of the Great Kurten is not what his inferiors in SIC believe it to be. The tale of his village being slaughtered and his destiny being ordained by the Goddess is a partial fabrication. Kurten is but a figurehead. He is a false target to enemies of SIC, placed where he is to protect the cults real leader. The true founder of SIC is a being called Andrew Howell (to be detailed in a forthcoming volume) who arrogantly summoned the Goddess and saved himself by proposing the foundation of SIC. Kurten is a Tormentor Demon summoned by the founder to impersonate a werewolf he once slew. In this sense, the Kurten story is true — it has been verified by curious SIC historians — except that the creature claiming to be the historical Kurten is an impostor.

Many men died in the course of casting the spell that hides Kurten's true nature. Only sorcery on the highest level could strip him of the illusion that he is not simply a magically gifted Werewolf.

Despite the deception, much of the credit for SICs success can be attributed to Kurtens labors. He traveled the world for centuries, seeking out the hidden pockets of shapeshifters and spreading the word of SIC and the Goddess.

Kurten is now regional Governor of Europe. He is the final arbitrator of all interorginazational disputes (after consulting with Howell, of course) and looked upon as the paragon of Lycanthropism. He divides his time between Europe and his estate in Africa (q.v.).

KURTEN

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
23	STR	13	**OCV:** 5
15	DEX	15	**DCV:** 5
20	CON	20	**ECV:** 4
13	BODY	6	**Phases:** 4, 8, 12
10	INT	0	
13	EGO	6	**Costs**
20	PRE	10	
6	COM	-2	**Char:** 91 **Base:** 100
10	PD	5	+ +
12	ED	8	**Powers:** 294 **Disad:** 285
3	SPD	5	= =
9	REC	0	**Totals:** 385 385
40	END	0	
40	STUN	5	

Cost	Powers	END
15	1d6 HKA (2d6 w/ STR) [Claws, Bite]	1+
25	2d6-1 RKA [Flame]	2
20	+10 " running (16" Total)	1/5"
5	Mind link with The Founder	0
6	25% Physical Resistant Damage Reduction, not vs. silver, holy items (-½)	
45	Invisibility to normal sight, No fringe, 0 END	0
28	Shapechange	
	(Only to change from Were form to human)	2

	Skills	
5	Defense Maneuver	
20	Universal Translator	
12	Contacts: Two Senators, Two Army officers, Two Businessmen, all 11-	
10	Perk: Lodge Member (SIC Leader, HIGH)	
15	Perk: Wealthy	
3	Acting 13-	
3	Bribery 13-	
3	Bureaucratics 13-	
3	Conversation 13-	
3	High Society 13-	
3	Interrogation 13-	
3	Oratory 13-	
3	Persuasion 13-	
3	Trading 13-	
3	Stealth 12-	
3	Concealment 11-	
3	Cryptography 11-	
3	Gambling 11-	
3	Mimicry 11-	
3	Shadowing 11-	
3	Tactics 11-	
5	AK: Africa 14-	
5	AK: Europe 14-	
2	AK: Russia 11-	
7	KS: SIC Hierarchy 16-	
3	KS: SIC 12-	
3	KS: The Goddess 12-	
3	KS: World Politics 12-	
3	KS: World Economics 12-	
6	PS: Cult Leader 16-	
3	PS: Torturer 12-	

100+	Disadvantages
10	Vuln: 2x Effect from holy items
20	Psych Lim: Must obey those who summon him properly and know his true name (Com, Tot)
20	Physical Lim: Repelled by holy items (Frequently, Greatly)
15	Secret ID (True Name)
15	Secret ID (Not really Kurten)
205	Monster bonus

Personality: For all his bureaucratic gifts and commanding presence, Kurten is not all that bright. His long silences, interpreted by his adherents as periods of deep thought, are actually blessedly free of synaptic activity. Most of his decisions are made through a Mind Link with Howell.

Kurten is measurably less active than before. This is because of his patently stupid actions in the case of Wilton St. John, who stumbled upon SICs existence several years ago. Rather than quietly disposing of the threat, St. John was spared only so Kurten could force him to watch as his family was infected with Lycanthropy. Kurten, then, is wholly responsible for the founding of SICs greatest human nemesis, the organization SABER. Needless to say, Howell and the Goddess are not amused. Kurten has been made aware that he is replaceable.

Powers/Tactics: For all his buffoonery, Kurten is a deadly combatant. The natural armaments of his Wolfman body are enhanced by his Demonic abilities of casting fire and turning invisible. He enjoys the standard Demonic immunities to non-magical weapons.

His minions in SIC obey his slightest command and will gladly fight to the death to protect him. He is always accompanied by an entourage of were creatures.

Appearance: Kurten, in his human form, is a noble looking man of around fifty years of age. He has pale skin, gray eyes and graying blonde hair. He dresses like a banana republican dictator.

In Wolfman form he resembles the Lon Chaney-style Wolf Man with a slightly more lupine cast to his features. His Demonic aspect is now lost.

CREATURES — LYCANTHROPES

The lycanthrope, as every schoolboy knows, is a human who changes into an animal when certain conditions are met. A pupil of the occult will know further that only this most general of definitions can hope to encompass a genus of monster whose forms and impulses range wildly and span the globe.

The transformation of human to were-creature may be attributed to one of two factors — sorcery or contagion. Every primitive culture known has a belief system that includes intentional lycanthropy stemming from the magical powers of their shamans and witch doctors. In contrast, civilized lands are terrorized by lycans who are involuntarily stricken with the bestial state. The inference can be made, then, that the self-control and violence of a lycan is inversely linked with the individual's degree of closeness with the natural world.

WEREWOLVES

Background/History: The werewolf is the most familiar type of lycanthrope known, and it is unique among were creatures in that its condition may be incurred both by sorcery or contagion. History is replete with reports of werewolves; over 20,000 were reported in France alone during the 16th Century, and more sightings and atrocities are compiled yearly. The condition shows no signs of disappearing.

A sorcerer desiring to become a werewolf must follow a complex ritual that includes a body salve and a magic belt of wolf hide. A werewolf who comes about in this manner, while still motivated by blood lust, is intelligently self-aware and may activate or quit the transformation as it chooses. Werewolves of this type often form hunting packs.

A person assaulted by a werewolf generally suffers one of two fates. Transformation, surprisingly, is not the most common fate. Death due to injuries inflicted by the lycan is more likely to occur. To be transformed means surviving the were-creature's onslaught with less-than-fatal wounds and being infected with the lycanthropic curse. When a victim is in his animal state, he is a mad creature guided by a bloodlust far surpassing that of his canine namesake. His unwanted transformation is solely dictated by the phases of the moon, of which he possesses an innate awareness.

Powers/Tactics: Werewolves are hunters, similar to other carnivores in the animal kingdom. Smaller, weaker creatures are preferred as victims over stronger creatures. A werewolf that hunts humans will almost invariably choose children as its prey. Combat with capable opponents is avoided unless necessary, and then only if it can attack individuals singly.

Werewolves will attack using their stealth abilities and attacking from high territory if possible, using concealment if available. Assaults are made to knock the opponent down first, then slashing or biting the prone victim. Because of their innate resistances, a lycan will ignore most attacks against it unless silver is present. The creature's survival instinct is overpowered by the presence of silver. Werewolves hate silver with good reason.

Only injuries inflicted by silver can kill a werewolf, a fact the creatures understand very well. If the creature detects silver

WEREWOLF

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
20	STR	10	**OCV:** 6+
18	DEX	24	**ECV:** 6
20	CON	20	**ECV:** 2
12	BODY	4	**Phases:** 3, 6, 9, 12
8	INT	-2	
5	EGO	-10	**Costs**
20	PRE	10	
10	COM	0	**Char:** 79 **Base:** 100
9	PD	5	+ +
5	ED	1	**Powers:** 271 **Disad:** 250
4	SPD	12	= =
10	REC	4	**Totals:** 350 350
40	END	0	
33	STUN	1	

Cost	Powers	END
15	Multiform (Into 150 pt. person), Extra Time 1 Turn (-1)	
30	2d6 HKA (3d6+1 w/ STR) [Claws]	3+
54	6d6 Major Transform: To lycanthrope, 0 END, No Range, Bite Attack must do Body (-½), Activation 14-	0
30	1d6 HKA (1 ½d6 w/ STR), Continuous [Bite]	3+
6	+3" Running (9" total)	1/5"
40	75% Resistant Physical Damage Reduction, Not vs. Silver (-½)*	
20	50% Resistant Energy Damage Reduction, Not vs. Silver (-½)*	
6	Armor (+3 PD/+3 ED), Not vs. Silver (-½)*	
13	Regeneration 2 Body per turn*, not vs. silver (-½)	
10	Tracking Scent	
10	Discriminatory Sense w/Smell	
10	Detect Silver w/Sense, Range	
5	UV Vision	
5	Concealment 12-	
12	+4 to all Perception rolls	
5	+1 Level w/H-to-H Combat	
	* Marked abilities are retained in the Multiform — human form	

100+	Disadvantages
10	Vuln: 2x Body from silver weapons
20	Dist. Features: not conc, major reaction
20	Reputation, Killer of humans, Extreme reaction 14-
25	Berserk when silver weapons are detected, (uncommon, 14-, 8-)
15	Physical Lim: No Fine Manipulation
15	Psych Lim: Enjoys Killing
15	Secret ID (Alter ego human form)
130	Monster bonus

weaponry, the werewolf will go berserk and savagely attack the wielder immediately. The self-preservation drive of a maddened wolf-lycanthrope is a terrifying sight to behold, or to endure. Remember, werewolves are not drawn to silver, only severely provoked by its presence. While a werewolf in human form is not affected by this curse, they retain the defenses of their monstrous selves in regard to mundane weaponry.

Werewolves form the aristocracy of the Shapeshifters International Conspiracy. The most commonly encountered SIC werewolf is the sorcerous version — the 'naturals' are often too bestial when changed. But very old naturals who retain their identity are revered as elder statesmen.

Appearance: Werewolves are not limited in appearance by the time of day — the moon can be seen during daylight hours. Experienced occult hunters have encountered the creatures in different stages of animalism at all times during the calendar month. These stages, dependent on the phases of the moon, range from a rather hirsute and hot-tempered human to a bipedal wolfman to the true wolf form. Remember that this applies to the victims of an attack only; werewolves born of sorcery wield total control over their transformations.

WEREBOARS

Background/History: These creatures are the footsoldiers of the Shapeshifters International Conspiracy. They are recruited from the ranks of devil worshippers and serial killers, character types well suited to the heinous task which SIC has committed itself to. Created through a ritual featuring the torture/murder of kidnapped innocents, a wereboar is totally committed to its cause. If the inductee fails in his initiation in any way he will be torn apart by invisible entities. A successful initiation culminates in a ceremony wherein he sells his soul to the Goddess and is cursed with the lycanthropic condition.

Powers/ Tactics: A wereboar, while as short tempered as its porcine namesake, retains full command of its faculties while shape changed. They are immensely strong and agile, able to literally rend a normal man limb from limb. Males are equipped with fearsome tusks which they use to disembowel hapless victims. But the worst thing about wereboars is their ability to drive, use weapons and conduct complicated maneuvers while shapechanged.

Appearance: Wereboars are humanoids combining the worst features of wild boars and humanity. They are detectable in human form by observing that they never perspire.

WEREBOARS

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats			
30	STR	20	**OCV:** 7+			
21	DEX	33	**DCV:** 7			
20	CON	20	**ECV:** 4			
15	BODY	10	**Phases:** 3, 6, 9, 12			
10	INT	0				
13	EGO	6	**Costs**			
20	PRE	10				
8	COM	-1	**Char:**	113	**Base:**	100
8	PD	2			+	+
8	ED	4	**Powers:**	92	**Disad:**	105
4	SPD	9		=		=
10	REC	0	**Totals:**	205		205
40	END	0				
40	STUN	0				

Cost	Powers	END
24	2d6 HKA, Red Pen (2 x 1d6; 2 x 2d6 w/ STR) [Tusks]	3+
9	+3 perception	
20	Multiform to a 100 pt. Human	
6	+3" Running (9" Total)	1/5"

	Skills
5	Combat Sense 11-
8	+1 Level w/ combat
2	KS: SIC 11-
2	PS: Cult Member 11-
3	Shadowing 11-
3	Stealth 13-
1	Tactics 8-
3	Tracking 11-
6	WF: Small Arms, Melee, Missile

100+	Disadvantages
20	Berserk when in combat (Com, 11-, 11-)
20	Distinctive Features: Wereboar (Conc w/ effort, extreme)
15	Watched by the Goddess: MoPow, NCI, 14-, Harsh, x½
25	Psych Lim: Murderous (V. Com, total)
25	Psych Lim: Enjoys the power (V. Com, Total)
0(25)	Psych Lim: Dedicated to the Goddess (V. Com, Total)

CREATURES — VAMPIRES

Of all the damned children of the night, the vampire is the most misunderstood. The popular conception of tragic nobility coupled with superhuman prowess holds a romantic allure for many in Europe and America. In other uncivilized parts, the truth is known. The vampire, whatever patrician face it holds up for the world, is a ravenous beast of corruption which exists solely through the treatment of humanity as its cattle.

Vampires are encountered in the folklore of every culture. Many elements of the legend remain constant worldwide, but differ greatly in detail. Presented below are two types of Vampyrs — an older more experienced "Master" and a "Fledgling" or new Vampyr. There are, of course, other types of vampires. The details are left up to the GM.

VAMPYRS

Background/History: The vampyr is the best known species of blood drinking undead, lending its name to the order. This is the familiar creature immortalized by Mr. Bram Stoker in his novel, "Dracula." Stoker, in writing the novel, made use of material he encountered while serving the Arcanum Royale as Distinguished Secretary.

The vampyr, of all its kin, occasions the greatest worry among vampire hunters. This is due to the contagious nature of vampirism, and the ease with which the vampyr impersonates humanity.

If certain conditions are met, the victim of a vampyr will become an undead themselves. A vampyr wishing to create another will bite its prey on three consecutive nights, or force a victim to drink its vampiric blood. If a victim perishes of total blood loss resurrection will not occur. A new vampyr will act bloodthirstily unless its "parent" is present to provide education. Fears of vampiric overpopulation and the possibility of public exposure limit the number of converts a vampyr is likely to create.

Reports of bloodless cadavers will bring vampire hunters on the scene, armed with hard-won knowledge gleaned from years of combating the undead menace. SABER circulates an especially useful booklet that provides step-by-step methods to follow when vampire hunting.

First, the vampyr must be identified. While not true of particularly old individuals like Mr. Stoker's "Dracula," most vampyrs are unable to move about during the daylight hours. They may additionally be identified by their extreme pallor, or their lack of reflection or shadow. Vampyrs cannot bear the odor of garlic or the scent of roses.

Some misunderstanding exists concerning the vampyr and sanctified items. Religious icons hold no power over the undead unless wielded by a true believer. A vampyr may enter holy ground and fondle artifacts *except* for blessed water to its heart's content. Blessed water is detrimental to the undead even in the hands of a heathen or unbeliever. But, if a vampyr believed in a particular creed before their death and rebirth, then icons of that belief, even those of an evil deity, will hold at bay or even injure a vampyr.

The SABER manual describes methods to destroy vampyrs. The creatures are best dealt with during the daylight hours, when all but the most ancient must rest and even the great vampyr lords lose their special abilities. A sleeping vampyr should have its heart punctured, which immobilizes it, and its head removed. It should be noted that contrary to popular belief, a wooden stake is not essential to the task, nor are silver weapons. If the neck of the vampyr is not severed and the head destroyed, resurrection of the creature is likely once the object puncturing the heart is removed. Burning the creature will permanently lay it to rest.

Vampyrs generally belong to clans under the rule of a "parent" vampyr. The leader will see to it that the nocturnal populace does not grow too large, and punishes those who create new vampyrs without permission. On occasion a stronger individual will set out on its own to create a new clan in a previously uninfested area. SIC has aggressively recruited Vampyrs in recent years, due both to their effectiveness and as a hedge against the 'nations'. SIC Vampyrs are required to swear loyalty to the Goddess; these individuals are considered traitors and are actively hunted down. Still, the safety of life within SIC is considered to be worth the risk by those who have joined.

Sometimes competing clans will engage in war over ethical or territorial concerns. SABER agents have reported an entire subculture of nations and creeds, vying for dominance of the vampiric world. Only the stern intervention of the overlords prevents these skirmishes from erupting into human awareness. Population control and utter secrecy remain the cornerstones of vampiric concerns.

Powers/Tactics: The vampyr is a resourceful beast, and has adapted to many of its weaknesses. The need to rest on the earth of its homeland is countered by having dozens of dirt-lined coffins scattered throughout its domain. The proscription against crossing running water is met by having home soil in its shoes. Resourceful vampyrs who are mindful of their vulnerability to heart wounds have taken to wearing armored chest plates.

The inhuman abilities of the vampyr gain strength as the individual ages. Newly resurrected vampyrs will not always possess all the abilities generally attributed to the species, while vampyr lords wield them all with the deadly precision only countless years of practice can bestow.

The most immediate benefits of contracting vampirism are tremendous physical strength and extraordinarily acute senses. Leaving and returning to its sealed and buried coffin are accomplished by turning to mist. Soon, the fledgling vampyr will discover the ability to climb any surface like a spider. Next to develop are its animal transformation powers, enabling it to take the form of a bat or wolf.

By this time the vampyr will have recovered most of its memories and self-control, and it will take more care to cover its tracks. Feeding becomes less of a frenzied attack, taking on the nature of seduction as its fearsome powers of mind control emerge.

The vampyr is a master hypnotist, able to stop a man dead in his tracks if eye contact is made. It can compel a subject to perform any action that is not absolutely contrary to its nature. A sufficiently deep hypnotic state allows the vampyr to establish a mind-to-mind communication of such power that the victim can be controlled at any range. The individual being dominated in this manner is slowly driven to believe that he himself is a vampyr, to the extent of actually stalking prey. The vampyr's sphere of influence extends to the animal kingdom as well. Swarms of insects, rats, and packs of wolves are fearsome weapons when under the sway of the vampyr.

The manual contains a final word of warning — never underestimate the enemy. It is most likely that, having endured for several human lifetimes, he is not stupid. He will have capable servants protecting him while he rests, and he will never allow his movements to follow an easily discerned pattern. He will be in contact with others of his kind, and he will exercise his spirit of self-preservation by making it his business to monitor vampire hunters closely, and to eliminate them if any danger is evident.

Appearance: The vampyr appears as a very pale human. Their canine teeth are slightly longer than normal, but not remarkably. During feeding, however, they may extend as much as an inch past the jawline. A vampyr's eyes are usually bloodshot and slightly reflective.

The familiar, brooding Balkan prince of the night presents roleplaying possibilities beyond the standard hunt-the-blood-drinker-down game. If the tragic count regrets what he is compelled to do, he may elicit sympathy from a PC who wants to help him. Or it could be a trap... Also, older vampires who earn experience through a campaign may buy down a few disads, like that nasty Susceptibility to sunlight.

VAMPYR

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
30	STR	20	OCV: 8
25	DEX	45	DCV: 8
20	CON	20	ECV: 6
15	BODY	10	Phases: 3, 5, 9, 10, 12
18	INT	8	
18	EGO	16	Costs
30	PRE	20	
16	COM	3	Char: 161 Base: 100
10	PD	4	+ +
4	ED	0	Powers: 373 Disad: 424
5	SPD	15	= =
10	REC	0	Totals: 524 524
40	END	0	
40	STUN	0	

Cost	Powers	END
10	1d6 HKA, Must grab (-½) [Bite]	3
14	3d6 Major Transformation (human to vampyr), Cumulative, Linked to bite, Concentrate 0 DCV, Extra time: 1 minute (-1½), usable once/day on target and must succeed with 3 or fewer attempts or attack will never again affect that target (-1¼)	4
62	10d6 Mind Control, Telepathic contact	5
16	8d6 Mind Control, wolves, bats, or rats only (-1½)	4
10	Mind Link, subordinate vampyr or willing human, one at a time	
20	50% Resistant Physical Damage Reduction, not vs. wood, silver, or holy items (-½)	
13	Regeneration 2 Body per turn, not vs. damage done by wood, silver, or holy items (-½)	
24	Life Support: All except vacuum, heat/cold	
37	UV & IR Vision, Discriminatory Smell, Tracking Scent, Telescopic Hearing +8 vs. range penalties to hearing PER only	
10	Clinging, 30 STR	
9	Armor (+8 PD), Not vs. wood, silver, or holy items (-½)	
20	Shape Shift, limited group (bat, wolf, mist cloud)	
2	+1" Running (7" total)	1/5"
5	+4" Running, wolf form only (-½)	1/5"
13	10" Flight, bat form only (-½)	1/5"
13	Shrinking, 2 levels, bat form only (-½)	2
10	Active Sonar, bat form only (-½)	
48	Desolidification, 0 END, vulnerable to magic spells and items (-¼)	0
4	3" Flight, mist form only (-½)	1/5"

	Skills
2	WF: Melee Weapons or two 1 point groups
3, 3	Conversation 15-, Persuasion 15-
3, 3	Seduction 15-, Stealth 14-
3, 7	Concealment 13-, Shadowing 13-
3, 3	PS: Former Occupation 13-, AK: Home Territory 13-
3	KS: Vampire Hunters 13-

100+	Disadvantages
20	Psych Lim: Repulsed by holy icons when presented by believers or if icon represents Vampyr's original religious beliefs (Com, Tot)
20	Physical Lim: Cannot cross running water (Freq, Fully)
20	Physical Lim: Cannot stand scent of garlic or roses (Freq, Fully)
35	Susceptibility 3d6/phase from sunlight (V.Com)
5	Susceptibility 1d6 from holy water (instant effect, Uncom)
5	Susceptibility 1d6 from holy icons (instant effect, Uncom)
5	Dependence — must drink blood once per day or take 3d6 END Drain per phase
5	Dependence — must rest on home soil once per day or take 3d6 STUN
20	Distinctive Features: Casts no reflection (conc, extreme reaction)
15	Watched by superiors (Parent Vampyr or Nosferatu) (MoPow, NCI) 14-
10	Hunted by Vampire Hunters (LessPow, NCI) 8-
20	Secret ID (Human alter ego)
244	Monster bonus

LESSER VAMPYR

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
28	STR	18	**OCV:** 8
24	DEX	42	**DCV:** 8
13	CON	6	**ECV:** 4
11	BODY	2	**Phases**: 3, 6, 9, 12
13	INT	3	
11	EGO	2	**Costs**
13	PRE	3	
10	COM	0	**Char:** 86　**Base:** 100
8	PD	2	+ +
4	ED	1	**Powers:** 121　**Disad:** 107
4	SPD	6	= =
9	REC	0	**Totals:** 207　　207
26	END	0	
33	STUN	1	

Cost	Powers	END
10	1d6 HKA (2d6 w/ STR), must grab [Bite]	1+
34	50% Resistant Physical Damage Reduction, Not vs wood, silver or magic (-¾)	
5	Armor (+6 PD), Not vs wood, silver or magic)	
10	Clinging for STR 28	
24	Life Support: All except vacuum, heat/cold	
14	7" Flight	1/5"
5	IR Vision	

	Skills	
3	PS: Former Occupation 12-	
3	WF: Any combination	
2	KS: Hobby 11-	
9	3 Skills or Talents (Defaults to Seduction 12-, Stealth 14-, Interrogation 12-)	
10	2 Skills at +1 (Defaults to Shadowing 12-, Concealment 13-)	
5	+1 Level w/ one group of weapons skills	

100+	Disadvantages	
5	Dependence: Human Blood (1/Day or 3d6)	
5	Dependence: Rest in soil of either homeland or burial site (1/Day or 3d6)	
10	Psych Lim: Fear of fire	
15	Psych Lim: Fear of holy items	
10	Phsyc Lim: Aversion to garlic	
35	Susc: Direct Sunlight, 3d6/ Phs	
20	Susc: Holy ground, 3d6 STR drain/turn	
20	Susc: Holy items when presented in faith, 2d6/Phs	

LESSER VAMPYRS

Background/History: These are the newly undead, souls introduced to the darkness either of their own accord or by force. The fledgling is still a formidable opponent, able to face most PC groups and still account for themselves in a fight. Since these are new Vampyrs, their knowledges and abilities will reflect the modern age (surfing Vampyrs?).

Depending on how they were created, "lessers" may be totally committed to a life of vampyrism or may simply seek to be at peace with this new way of life. But make no mistake, all are still driven by their hunger and should be watched carefully.

SIC is especially interested in recruiting fledglings. Once excised from the traditional master/servant relationship and the baggage of tradition which accompanies it the fledgling is freed to explore new ways to live. Caught soon enough, lessers are usually eager to cast their lot with SIC.

Powers/Tactics: The lesser's abilities are a step down from the masters. They may use trickery and deception, but they are more likely to rely on their new found abilities to bully their way through a situation. With their knowledge of modern skills and customs, they may blend more easily into society, whereas some of the older ones seem to feel a nostalgia for the "simpler" times of their youth.

Appearance: The lesser appear as do their older kindred, a slightly pale human. They also readily adapt to current styles of fashion and language. (See the videos "The Lost Boys" or "Fright Night" for more details on the modernized vampyr.)

CREATURES — IODS

Background/History The medieval concept of Demons as mirrors of mankind's worst traits is both persuasive and essentially correct. The denizens of the nether regions are petty, vicious, cruel and covetous — in short, they are much like the dregs of Humanity. But among the hordes are beings and species whose desires and motivations are utterly alien. One such species, its members allied with the SIC Goddess, are now encountered with frightening regularity. They are called Iods.

Iods show no emotion, no passion. They have no names and do not speak. Strangest of all, they appear on Earth not as flesh and blood, not as spirits, but as inanimate material — stone, metal, plastic, wood. Are they alive or some Hellish mechanism? As will be seen, they are a little of both.

Powers/ Tactics An Iod cannot be summoned in the traditional manner. They have no names and cannot be bound. Desiring no payment, they perform no favors. Only those Iods in the service of the Goddess will ever be encountered. They serve SIC on her command and no other.

Iods are called by beseeching the Goddess. The key component of the ceremony is an object or device (nothing living!) placed in a magical diagram. Within certain limitations, the Iod will perfectly duplicate the form and function of this object. An object which requires additional components to function can be duplicated but will not function without the other part. In other words, a gun still needs bullets, a camera still needs film and a VCR needs a videotape. However, Iods never require an outside energy source such as electricity or gasoline.
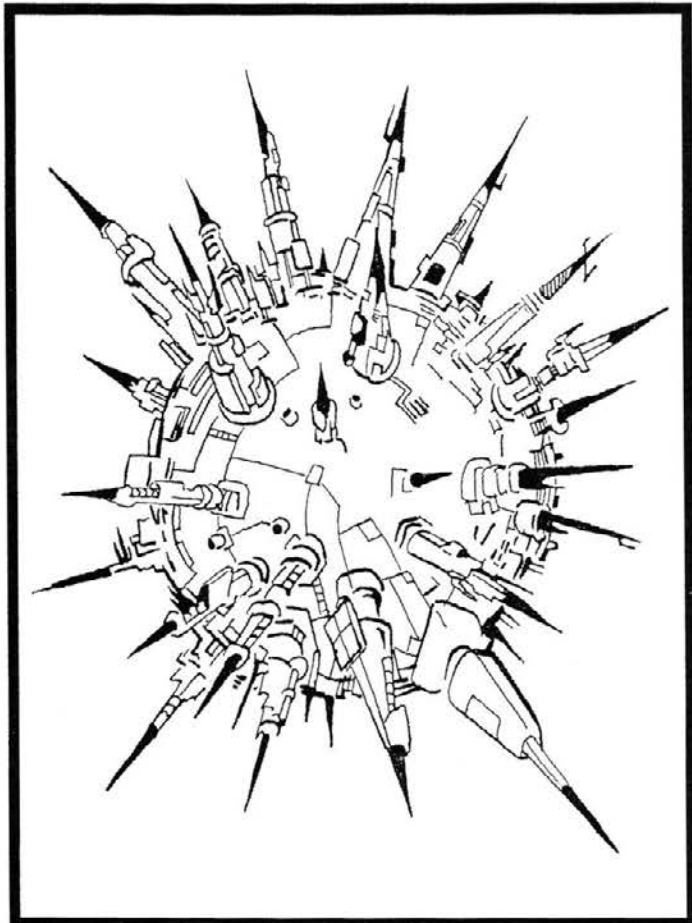
IOD

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
8	STR	-2	**OCV:** 5
16	DEX	18	**DCV:** 5
15	CON	10	**ECV:** 2
12	BODY	4	**Phases:** 4, 8, 12
5	INT	-5	
5	EGO	-10	**Costs**
10	PRE	0	
0	COM	-5	**Char:** 17 **Base:** 100
4	PD	2	+ +
4	ED	1	**Powers:** 168 **Disad:** 85
3	SPD	4	= =
5	REC	0	**Totals:** 185 185
30	END	0	
24	STUN	0	

Cost	Powers	END
22	2d6 HKA (2 x 1d6 w/ STR), Reduced Penetration [Spikes]	3
30	Power Pool (Function of Duplicated Object)	
5	Power Pool Control Cost (-2 Cannot be Changed)	
4	Damage Resistance (4 PD/4 ED)	
30	Full Life Support	
6	3" Flight	1/5"
27	2 Lvls Shrinking (0 END, Persistent, Always On)	0
20	Shapeshift (1 item, Chosen when summoned, 0 END, Always On)	0
15	Cannot be Stunned	
9	Mind Link W/Summoner, Invisible to Mental Sense and Danger Sense (+¾)	

100+	Disadvantages
20	Vulnerability 2x Body vs. Silver, Magic and Holy Items (Com)
25	Psych Lim: Must Obey Orders (V Com, Total)
15	Physical Limitation (Loses Summoned Shape in Presence of Holy Items)
15	Secret ID (as normal item)
10	Watched by the Goddess (More Powerful, NCI) 11-

Iods have been encountered in the form of surveillance cameras, bricks, books, firearms, sound systems and even sections of larger objects such as automobiles. A transformed Iod is detectable only by a faint magical aura. Animals and psychically sensitive people become agitated in their presence.

Iods are used as guardians, assassination devices and secret weapons. Their reasoning capabilities are low but they understand fairly complex orders such as, 'Guard this house and kill any policemen who enter'. When the conditions spelled out in their orders requires mobility the Iod will change to its Demonic form unless its summoned form is capable of locomotion.

Once transformed, an Iod will attack its target utilizing an aerodynamically impossible mode of flight. It is best pictured as a fist on an invisible arm sweeping toward a victim, striking him on the way past and abruptly returning. Once the target is down the Iod will pound on him like a spiked hammer.

Unless destroyed an Iod will remain on Earth until the conditions of its dismissal are met. It is conjectured that some Iods have waited patiently for centuries, biding their time until their orders can be fulfilled.

lods are subject to standard Demon advantages and disadvantages in regards to magic and holy items/ground.

Appearance The true form of an Iod resembles a cross between a stylized star and a sea urchin. They're about two feet in diameter. Its spikes, which vary in number, constantly change as if driven by a rhythmic internal piston. The body pulsates like a diseased heart.

On this plane the body will consist of the same material as its summoned shape. A 'radio' Iod, for example, would be made of plastic, wire and ceramic. The tips of an Iods spikes are the hardest part of the body. The inner core, no matter what it is composed of, is soft and pliable.

Iods are a great way of illustrating how the creatures of darkness adapt to changing times. These creatures are common around SIC hideouts. Their ability to take any non-organic shape should be taken advantage of — PCs will be afraid to open their mail or turn on their TVs.

LAIRS AND LOCATIONS

THE MIC FOR SIC

The Military Indoctrination Center for SIC, covering parts of Hardeman and McNairy counties, Tennessee is the major training center for SICs paramilitary forces. Their top officers run a tight camp, insuring that the departing recruits are in top fighting form (and properly respectful of SIC's agendas). It should be noted not all the attendees are shapeshifters; some are mundane individuals who have sold their services to SIC.

Among the 78 square miles of shooting ranges, confidence courses, and explosive ordnance disposal ranges are real mine fields and lethal booby traps. No slacking of effort is allowed in this re-creation of the best Special Forces training grounds. Modern technology allows the security to discern between a deer and a person from the safety of a command center. The monitors are often Iods (q.v.). Naturally, SIC has shapeshifting walking patrols; what the Iods miss, their finely honed senses normally do not. The roads to the camp are well concealed; the compound is camouflaged from aerial and satellite surveillance to appear as a corporate retreat.

The main compound contains a command and communications center, armory, barracks, motor pool, mess hall, security and detention center. The motor pool contains not only standard trucks and jeeps, but Humvees equipped with light and heavy machine guns and anti-aircraft weapons.

A chapel to the Goddess is present at the center of the compound, and regular rites take place here and in sacred groves throughout the forest. If sacrifices to the Goddess are conducted, the victims will NOT be from the surrounding area.

Personnel encountered will be Wereboars, Werewolves, Demons, Vampyrs and humans. SICs strict chain of command and promotion system are based on ability rather than species. Still, the highest ranking officers are likely to be Demons, Werewolves and Vampyrs. Humans who have survived to the rank of sergeant are likely to be ex-Special Forces themselves, hardened by combat with shapeshifting creatures.

PCs who uncover the identity of this camp and move against it could severely damage SICs capability to provide muscle to its myriad operations. Failure to completely destroy this operation will earn the PCs the undying enmity and pursuit of the Shapeshifters.

THE HUNT CLUB

The Hunt Club in Montana, east of Sumatra in Rosebud County, is only open to the highest-ranking members of SIC. The club's holdings range over 1500 square miles of terrain. This club does not provide the normal entertainment of hunting elk or other endangered species. Its existence is not discussed outside of elite SIC circles, and anyone showing knowledge of it who is not an elite member may find themselves the "guest of honor" at the next hunt. Man is the prey of choice for the elite of SIC.

A large hunting lodge, elaborately provided for, is the heart of the Club. Stables are located nearby (The animals have been raised around shapeshifters). No other structures are on the expanse of territory, save the occasional abandoned line shack.

All servants consider themselves fortunate to be here. Being around the elite is by invitation only, and these servants can usually expect their service to be rewarded at a later date. Grateful allies in the hierarchy are very good to have if one wishes to advance in this dreadful organization. As for the head honchos, they are the military, sorcerous or corporate elite of SIC. Most of them will either know Kurten personally or have attracted his favor somehow.

Prey will be treated with dignity and manners by the servants until the hunt. Given a one hour head start, the prey is turned loose with only the clothes on its back. It should be noted that no prey has ever escaped the hunt. PCs who are the prey may be fortunate to find one of the old line shacks containing a few precious articles of food and weaponry, all dated but usable.

PCs may find themselves here because of the problems they have caused SIC in the past, either as prey to be hunted or as part of a mission against SIC. Destroying the Hunt Club and its occupants would be even more damaging than the destruction of the training center; it takes time for Kurten to select individual elite members.

KURTEN'S GAME PRESERVE

Kurten's game preserve in Kenya is where the unquestioned master of SIC spends most of his time. The area it occupies is mind-boggling: thousands of miles of Savannah teeming with wildlife.

Kurten's home here is huge, with many rooms and a large verandah. Near the house is a major temple to the Goddess, where Kurten communicates with her when he is in need of divine guidance. His staff consists of local people. Kurten does not harm any of the locals. On the contrary, he treats them as a feudal lord would have treated those who worked his land, with generosity and compassion. Nor does he allow others to treat his subjects poorly. His kindness is repaid with a fierce loyalty to the man (they do not know the evil of the man they protect, nor will they believe tales of his treachery.)

PCs traveling here will encounter a population devoted to Kurten, a few select guests of the master, and Kurten himself. This is the den where the monster will flee to if he is driven out from behind the scenes. Any violence the PCs inflict upon Kurten will have to be unobserved; otherwise they will have to recreate the scene from Zulu Dawn where the British engineers held off thousands of attacking tribesmen.

If the PCs are embroiled in a campaign against SIC, this may be where it will end. Destroying Kurten will be a tremendous blow to the morale of the organization. Note that Kurten's mysterious leader, Howell, may have a replacement for the present 'Kurten' waiting in the wings. He may not be missed at all.

THE OPPOSITION

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES BRANCH-EMERGENCY RESPONSE (SABER)

The organization known as SABER is an "Above Top Secret" group commissioned to investigate occult activities. SABER is a government agency so well hidden within the bureaucracy of the government, not even the president knows of its existence; it gives missions, information, equipment, and other types of support. But SABER has no particular hold over PCs. PCs who tend to use excessive force or draw undue attention to themselves will be abandoned by SABER.

To use SABER as a campaign background, simply have players create any archetype (of course this PC must be acceptable to the GM). The PCs can begin as members, or they can be recruited in the course of an adventure.

PCs may then want to create their own group (as per the ones presented below) or they may elect to continue on their own. New PCs can appear as "guest stars " (this allows for those players who cannot make every game or for a novice wishing to try something new) and may even become a new member. This makes the job of GM a little bit easier.

A GATHERING OF THE DARKNESS

The world is full of organizations and conspiracies the normal world never sees. This underworld includes evil cults, inhuman beasts, even human agents acting in the name of these cruel masters and other groups who exist at the expense of the normal man. Mundane law agencies try to fight against that which they can see and understand, but due to their minimal funding, overwork, and a lack of specialized knowledge (although most police forces are beginning to create occult task forces as well as the U.S. Government) they are usually ineffective.

There is an organization of individuals who are willing to do something. In cities around the globe, small groups of highly skilled people have been drawn together to fight back. These groups form the backbone of SABER.

HISTORY

SABER is a very secretive group. Brought together by chance or purpose, rumors persist that the top board are all members of government agencies. This is far from the case, for only one man founded this group; his name is Wilton St. John.

SABER began in the late 70s after the death of St. John's family. He felt that no one should go through what he did; so he committed his life, money, and very existence to the destruction of this evil. St. John worked for the National Security Council and it was as an operative that he discovered SIC. When the tragedy happened to his family, St. John went to the NSC with evidence that convinced the government of the threat of supernatural beings; thus, SABER was born. SIC and other occult groups were uncertain of the reports that began to filter in about a new, anti-occult agency, and began to search for these "unknowns." This proved disastrous for a few groups when their identities became known. Fortunately, most of the savaged corpses of these would-be do-gooders will never be found. It was not until the development of advanced technologies that the members of SABER became a little safer from prying eyes and were able to create a secure system of contacts and communications. Operating on a "blind drop" system, these small groups are virtually untraceable beyond their current members. All contacts are based upon mutual trust between members and these drops. There are no ranks or levels within SABER, simply people who want to make a difference.

Because of this decentralized style, the organization has had time to become more experienced. SABER has grown to about 20 actual core members, with the rest being made up of independents commissioned for a specific job. The exact size is known to only St. John. Most of the organizations that represent some form of evil have had run-ins with members of SABER, though most have no idea that they were anything other than random encounters.

RESTRICTIONS

As a *very unofficial* group, each team operates in their own style, without supervisors. SABER does try to maintain a few rules; those that make a habit of breaking these rules will find themselves denied help from SABER.

1) Operations must be kept secret from the public.
2) Keep security tight.
3) Anyone not trusted will be contacted by drop only.
4) Protect member's anonymity at all costs.
5) Be ready to go into hiding if you are compromised.
6) All are volunteers, treat them as your equals.

STRUCTURE

SABER consists of teams of independents, with each covering certain geographical areas and expertises. These groups contain their own operatives and support teams, as well as a contact with at least one other group (through the use of untraceable satellite networks).

Since each team has not fought or encountered the same creatures, there are times when a team may be asked to "loan" itself out to another team to confront something that is outside the "home team's" area of expertise.

SABER has a core team of operatives who travel the world over, recruiting the above mentioned independents when necessary. GMs may use the pre-made characters below as the core team or as an independent team.

JIM BOB BARNES

Archetype: Inventor

Personal Details: Age: 34, Height: 5'11", Weight: 160 pounds, Hair: Sandy w/ mustache, Eyes: Hazel

Background/Personality: As he tells it, "Jim-Bob" was born in Tulia, Texas and raised just about everywhere else in the state. His parents were the restless kind who never settled on anything or anyplace and they passed this trait on to their brood.

The life-style worked out well for Jim-Bob. He's worked so many jobs that he knows a little bit about practically everything, and his ability to think on his feet has proven invaluable. He's such a nice guy that people enjoy teaching him about things, which has resulted in his being a veritable jack-of-all-trades. He has been a plumber, electrician, carpenter, mason, pilot, Tae-Kwon-Do instructor and wildcatter. It was this latter occupation that exposed him to the horrors at large in the world, and which changed his life forever.

Three years ago Jim-Bob and a buddy were 'catting for oil when their rig shook violently. Expecting a gusher, the two ran up to the rig just as it dropped into the Earth. The tremors threw Jim-Bob to the ground . When he regained his footing he saw huge black tendrils erupting from the pit and entwining his friend. He rushed forward but was slapped back by a tendril. His friends soulful cry for help was the last sound he heard before unconsciousness claimed him.

When he returned with the Sheriff, the pit had vanished, and back at the station three burly men in white coats were waiting. There had been no trial and no hearing — but Jim-Bob was soon in a padded cell courtesy of Uncle Sam.

JIM BOB BARNES

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
15	STR	5	**OCV:** 5
15	DEX	15	**DCV:** 5
15	CON	10	**ECV:** 4
11	BODY	2	**Phases:** 4, 8, 12
13	INT	3	
11	EGO	2	**Costs**
15	PRE	5	
10	COM	0	**Char:** 57　**Base:** 75
8	PD	5	+ +
8	ED	5	**Skills:** 93　**Disad:** 75
3	SPD	5	= =
6	REC	0	**Totals:** 150　150
30	END	0	
27	STUN	0	

Cost	Skills
34	Martial Arts — Tae Kwon Do

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
Arm Sweep	+2	+2	Block, Abort
Crescent Kick	+1	+3	3d6 Strike
Flying Side Kick	++1	-2	7d6 Strike
Front Kick	0	+2	5d6 Strike
Knifehand	-2	0	1d6+1 HKA
Punch	+2	0	5d6 Strike
Roundhouse Kick	-2	+1	7d6 Strike
Takedown	+1	+1	3d6 Strike; Target falls

Cost	Skills
5	Inventor 13-
3	Breakfall 12-
3	Combat Pilot (Planes) 12-
3	Computer Programming 12-
3	Systems Operation 12-
3	Tracking 12-
3, 3	Electronics 11-, Mechanics 11-
1, 1	Demolitions 8-, Navigation 8-
1, 1	Riding (Horses) 8-, Survival 8-
2	+1" Running (7" total)
3, 2	KS: Occult 12-, KS: Tae Kwon Do 11-
4	WF: Small Arms, Melee Weapons
2	WF: Common Martial Arts Melee (Optional category from *Ninja Hero*)
3	Jack of All Trades (All PS are 11-)
9	PS: Carpenter, Construction Worker, Electrician, Inventor, Mason, Plumber, Rancher, Roustabout, Sensei
0	AK: Texas 8-
1	Language: Spanish (basic) [English is native]
0	TF: Small Ground Vehicles
3	+1 Level w/Tae Kwon Do

75+	Disadvantages
15	Psych Lim: Fear of capture/confinement (Com, Str)
10	Psych Lim: Fear of authorities (Com, Mod)
15	Distinctive Features: Cowboy w/laconic drawl (Conc, Major reaction)
15	Hunted, Authorities (As Pow, NCI) 8-
10	Hunted, The Unknown (As Pow, NCI) 8-
10	Style Disadvantage — Martial Arts (Optional rule from *Ninja Hero*)
0 (3)	Package Bonus — Inventor

The next two years were a Thorazine blur. He not only could not communicate or think coherently, he didn't care. Then a stranger came into his cell and removed his restraints. Without a word he threw the stoned Texan over his shoulder and carried him out of the hospital and to a hotel. For the next week Jim-Bob went through withdrawal tied to a chair as his silent companion watched TV. Slowly, Jim-Bob regained his identity.

The man introduced himself as Blake, an agent sent to retrieve him. He told Jim-Bob that certain factions in the government had been responsible for his imprisonment, that what he had seen was real and that he was not insane. Blake himself worked for another faction in Washington who were interested in hiring Jim-Bob. His skills and talents would be useful in the ongoing struggle against horrors such as he had faced and besides, his family had been told he was dead two years ago.

Although he grieved for his family, Jim-Bob felt that for the first time his life had a direction. He could travel wherever necessary, help those in trouble and get paid for it at the same time.

He's surprisingly laid-back for the kind of work he's now involved in. His easy-go-lucky demeanor and laconic Texas drawl off-set his tremendous energy when fixing or creating some device to stop a rampaging horror.

But his experience has left its mark. With the exception of Blake and a handful of fellow agents, Jim-Bob will not trust any doctor or law enforcement personnel. He especially avoids government officials.

He is still being sought by the authorities as "John Doe," an escaped mental patient.

Dark Secrets: Jim-Bob is the one to send PCs to when they need an unusual item to be constructed, such as an auto-fire holy water gun or a two-way TV. He has the knack of showing up just when he would be most useful, either as gadgeteer or as pilot of a getaway plane. Jim-Bob should be presented as a little off-the-beam — no one could undergo experiences like his and remain unchanged. He's a nut.

JUDE

Archetype: Ritualist

Personal Details: Age: 42, Height: 6'0", Weight: 200 pounds, Hair: Dark. Brown w/ beard, Eyes: Blue

Background/Personality: Recently an eminent folklorist began to collect legends in the American Southwest, where they have permeated to the core of society. The flood of stories astonished him. Here were the classic hookman and babysitter stories, vanishing hitchhikers, and spider nest hairdos, but one legend was new. Remarkably widespread and self-consistent, it told of a magical guardian angel whose name was "JUDE."

Jude (the stories said) is a biker; he is not a ghost or a literal angel but a magical shaman whose Harley has carried him from Tijuana to "N'Orleans" since the mid-Seventies. He appears in times of trouble and performs astounding feats of magic. He can find missing persons, heal the wounded, foretell the weather and reputedly cure insanity. No one knows his last name or where he lives; he vanishes as mysteriously as he comes.

The stories were unlike any the folklorist had ever seen. They gave specific dates and named real people. The dates checked out. When Jude rescued a young family from the Fork Killer, the newspapers related the same story with only a reference to the police being helped by a "civilian." A pattern continued through all the stories. The events occurred but Jude was never given credit. It was apparent from reading between the lines that the participants had promised never to include him in their testimonies. After weeks of scouring old newspaper articles the folklorist made a discovery. Two photos, one from 1975 and the other 1991, contained the same Harley-Davidson motorcycle. The plates were the same in both pictures. The legend was *true*.

Finding Jude was easy after that, and within days the researcher was at the door of a trailer far into the Arizona desert near the Navajo Reservation. The Indian who answered his knock said Jude was honored at his interest, and would gladly satisfy his curiosity on the condition that he not publish his findings. The man himself was in the living room with several Indian children and a pile of English textbooks. Jude sat quietly throughout the interview — the kids answered all the questions.

Jude's real name was Martin Figowitz, and he was born in this very trailer. As a child his only friends were on the Reservation; his closest friend was a wizened old Shaman who taught him many things about the land. Jude was drafted in 1972, and served in a secret unit in Laos. Deeply affected by the horrors he'd seen, upon his return he sought out his old friend. He was ready to fulfill a vision, the Shaman said, and would be taught Magic.

And so, Jude the legend was born. The folklorist left after dinner (rabbits that Jude had caught) and drove away. As he pulled off the dirt track onto the highway he felt he'd taken a step between worlds, and it occurred to him that all he'd been told might be lies. Somehow, it didn't matter.

Dark Secrets: Jude can be found among Native Americans, Biker clubs (but not known criminals) or on the road. He has a knack for showing up when there is trouble. In person, he is friendly and soft-spoken. He wears Biker denims at all times.

MARTIN 'JUDE' FIGOWITZ

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
15	STR	5	OCV: 5
15	DEX	15	DCV: 5
14	CON	8	ECV: 5
12	BODY	4	Phases: 4, 8, 12
18	INT	8	
15	EGO	10	Costs
15	PRE	5	
14	COM	2	Char: 70 Base: 75
6	PD	3	+ +
6	ED	3	Skills: 80 Disad: 75
3	SPD	5	= =
6	REC	0	Totals: 150 150
28	END	0	
29	STUN	2	

Cost	Skills
20	Spells: Harmonic Adjustment, Freedom Cage, Clear Thought or others
3	Brawling
7	Magic Skill: Ceremonial Magic 14
3	Scholar
3	KS: Navajo Ceremonial Magic 14-
3	KS: Occult 14-
2	KS: Secret Societies 13-
2	KS: Cults 13-
2	KS: Crystal/Gemstone Properties 13-
1	KS: Mystic Herbs 11-
3	Concealment 13-
3	Paramedic 13-
3	Combat Driving (Motorcycles) 13-
3	Conversation 12-
3	Stealth 12-
3	Streetwise 12-
3	Mechanics 11-
3	Navigation 11-
3	Survival 11-
0	AK: Arizona 8-
0	PS: Metaphysical Minister 8-
1	Navajo language (English is native)
6	WF: Small Arms, Melee Weapons, Missile Weapons

75+	Disadvantages
25	Psych Lim: Driven to help others (V.Com, Tot)
10	Watched, The Supernatural (Mo Pow, NCI) 8-
15	Hunted, Lamplighters (As Pow, NCI) 8-
10	Reputation: Do-gooder 11-
10	Distinctive Features: Biker denim covered w/mystic symbols (Conc, Noticed)
3	Package Bonus — Sorcerer (Ceremonial Magician)
2	Hero bonus

Jude's spells are listed in the Horror Magic Sourcebook under Sample Ceremonial Spells.

WILTON ST. JOHN

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats			
8	STR	-2	**OCV:** 3			
10	DEX	0	**DCV:** 3			
8	CON	-4	**ECV:** 5			
10	BODY	0	**Phases:** 6, 12			
15	INT	5				
15	EGO	10	**Costs**			
20	PRE	10				
14	COM	2	**Char:**	21	**Base:**	75
2	PD	0			+	+
2	ED	0	**Powers:**	81	**Disad:**	27
2	SPD	0			=	=
4	REC	0	**Totals:**	102		102
16	END	0				
18	STUN	0				

Cost	Skills
3	Well-Connected
1	Contact: Judge 11-
1	Contact: Senator 11-
1	Contact: Mercenary Captain (Darian Hawk)11-
15	Wealthy
10	Perk: Bureau Head (equivalent to License to kill)
2	Perk: Passport w/ multiple visas
3	Bribery 13-
3	Bureaucratics 13-
3	Conversation 13-
3	High Society 13-
3	Oratory 13-
3	Persuasion 13-
3	Seduction 13-
3	Computer Programming 12-
3	Deduction 12-
3	Systems Operation 12-
3	PS: Government operative (PRE) 13-
3	KS: S.I.C. 12-
3	KS: World Politics 12-
3	Lang. French 4 pts.
3	Lang. Japanese 2 pts.
3	WF: SmArms, Blades

75+	Disadvantages
20	Hunted S.I.C. (AsPow, NCI, 11-, Harsh)
5	Age 40+
2(25)	Psych Lim: Hatred of S.I.C. (V.Com, Total)
(15)	Secret ID: Financier against S.I.C.

WILTON ST. JOHN

Background/History: When Kurten laughed at the pitiful human on the ground before him, little did he know that he had created a power that would cause him great distress.

Wilton's family was everything to him; he would have done anything for them. Kurten found this out while investigating the man who had discovered his latest operation.

As punishment for finding out about SIC, Kurten decided to kill Wilton's family. But not in a typical manner. He had Wilton bound while his wife and children were infected with lycanthropy. Wilton was then left to suffer for the next month waiting and praying that they would not transform. Then when they did transform, Wilton was forced to destroy them. Wilton was left to suffer in his grief and madness.

This is how Wilton St. John became the man he is today, a man driven to the destruction of SIC and its terrible leader.

He uses all his vast resources to finance and protect anyone who fights against the forces of darkness. He lives in a fortified brownstone in Washington D.C., never leaving or being seen outside the grounds. Most of the core agents feel that it is only a matter of time before St. John has a total collapse. But until that time they do their jobs and keep the world safe for one more night.

Personality: Wilton is a man with a single agenda. He no longer sleeps at night, and when he does sleep it is a fretful sleep. He is forever on his guard for fear of Kurten and the members of SIC. Wilton knows that there are things far worse than death. Wilton is a man with a mission; he should be portrayed as a weary man who will do anything to help those in trouble and to destroy anything supernatural.

Powers/Tactics: Wilton is not a combatant, though he is acquainted with the use of firearms. His weapons are his money and contacts and these he uses to great effect.

Appearance: Wilton is 5'8", 120 pounds, his eyes are green and very sad looking. His hair is white as driven snow; all in all he presents a disheveled and sad demeanor.

Dark Secrets: Wilton has a dark belief, that he will find Kurten one day and do to him what was done to his family. To this end he will work and spend every ounce of effort no matter how great and should he ever meet Kurten there will be a terrible reckoning.

MORGAN BLAKE

Archetype: Intelligence Agent

Personal Details: Age: 44, Height: 6'6", Weight: 270 pounds, Hair: Brown, Eyes: Brown

Background/Personality: Joining the service of his nation's armed forces at the age of seventeen, Morgan Blake has served his country well. At the command of various military officers and well-clothed minor government officials, Blake has combated enemies both in declared and undeclared wars. Who the enemy was does not matter to a gung-ho, highly trained intelligence operative; overthrows and dirty tricks were just tools of his trade. Blake, for all his patriotism and love of country, never really considered that the real enemy had a familiar face: his own.

MORGAN BLAKE

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
15	STR	5	**OCV:** 5
14	DEX	12	**DCV:** 5
13	CON	6	**ECV:** 3
11	BODY	2	**Phases:** 4, 8, 12
10	INT	0	
10	EGO	0	**Costs**
15	PRE	5	
10	COM	0	**Char:** 42 **Base:** 75
6	PD	3	+ +
6	ED	3	**Skills:** 101 **Disad:** 68
3	SPD	6	= =
6	REC	0	**Totals:** 143 143
26	END	0	
26	STUN	0	

Cost	Skills
3	Perk: Federal Authority
6	Ambidexterity, Lightsleep
24	Martial Arts — Commando Training

Maneuver	OCV	DCV	Notes
Block	+2	+2	Block, Abort
Chop	-2	0	½d6 KA (2 DC)
Disarm	-1	+1	25 STR Disarm
Choke hold	-2	0	Grab, 2d6 NND
Throw	0	+1	3d6 + v/5, Target falls
Punch	0	+2	5d6 Strike

Cost	Skills
9	Acrobatics 12-; Climbing 12-; Concealment 11-
9	Criminology 11-; Cryptography 11-; High Society 12-
9	Security Systems 11-; Stealth 12-; Survival 11-
5	Tactics 11-; Demolitions 8-; Interrogation 8-
1	Weaponsmith 8- (slugthrowers)
2	KS: The Law and Agency Procedures 11-
2	KS: World Class Mercenaries 11-
2	KS: North American Intelligence Agencies' Standard Tactics 11-
2	KS: Middle East Intelligence Agencies' Standard Tactics 11-
3	Traveler
5	CK: Saigon, Berlin, Moscow, Cairo, Peking 11-
0	AK: New York State 11-
3	Linguist
8	Languages: Fluent Arabic, Cantonese, Vietnamese, German, Russian
8	WF: Small Arms, Blades, Hand Flamer, Heavy Machine Guns, Rocket Launchers, Grenade Launchers, Flamethrowers
0	English (native)
0	TF: Small Ground Vehicles

75+	Disadvantages
20	Distinctive Features: Tall, beefy man (Not conc, Major Reaction)
5	Age 40+
15	Hunted, Rival mercenary (As Pow, NCI) 8-
10	Hunted, Various foreign gov'ts (As Pow) 8-
15	Psych Lim: Overconfident (Com, Str)
3(7)	Psych Lim: Obsessive (Com, Mod)

He awoke in a military hospital one day after a conflict with rebel forces in some terrible patch of jungle in the Third World, his mind numbed by painkillers, his body filled with antibiotics. His own country had captured him in the act of breaking several international laws regarding the sanctity of elected democratic governments. Where Blake had believed himself to be fighting for his country, he really had been a pawn in a terrible game.

The incident came out after months of psychological therapy. In one of his first training missions over the North Sea his plane had been downed by an unknown force, and he was taken to their stronghold and reconditioned mentally to do their will. Playing up on Blake's patriotism, this force (Which is still unidentified) manipulated him into commanding several missions that were in their own interests and not his own country's. His allies were mercenaries, not American operatives, and they were well financed by the leader of these conspiratorial forces.

Now free of the manipulative influence of this force, Blake is one of only a few operatives to be involved in "black" operations against an enemy the average person on the street would believe to be a fairy-tale: a world of horror filled with terrible monsters and diabolical schemes.

Dark Secrets: Blake is a canny veteran of dozens of military and covert operations, using all the dirty tricks learned over a lifetime to succeed in his mission. He could be encountered in a scenario featuring any enemy that hides behind a facade of proper business (read "horror"), and might aid PCs needing a little extra firepower. Of course, any information he observes about the PCs will be passed along to his superiors.

GM's note: Blake carries a special weapons with him; a "hand flamer." This nasty little device is a .45 caliber sized flamethrower, doing 1½d6 Energy RKA with 8 shots. It is a special creation of a government research and development's department and is the only existing prototype. Sadly, the scientists working on this project lost funding with the last election, and the plans have completely vanished.

SCENARIO

MURDEROUS OPERANDII

This is a mystery scenario that will introduce PCs to the Wereboars. It does not explicitly reveal the existence of SIC, but should intrigue players enough to warrant further investigations. An investigation of the scope described herein could easily become very complex. For this reason some details have been simplified. The GM can beef up the story if he chooses.

The information will be presented in the approximate order the PCs will encounter it. GM notes are enclosed in brackets [ ].

The scenario can be placed in any city.

GETTING PCS INVOLVED

The investigations in this story, by all rights, are the concern of the police. The GM will have to figure out how to involve the PCs in what is a touchy business. An experienced GM may wish to have PCs begin independently of each other, allowing events to draw them together. Possible PC motivations and occupations include: SABER agent, policeman, Federal Agent, reporter, relative of victim, occultist, etc.

THE MYSTERY

A series of murders, each more horrifying than the last, is occurring in the city. The details are being hushed up to prevent panic and facilitate police work. The local police, unknown to the media, have assigned the investigation to their interdepartmental Occult Crime Task Force. Detective Sussman of the OCTF is in charge of the investigation. He will vehemently oppose any outsider interference in the case, and will summarily refuse to cooperate with the press. He will not acknowledge working on the case. The OCTF has been called in because of the presence of occult sigils found on site.

THE VICTIMS

The four victims and details of their deaths are described below. The GM will have to decide how PCs acquire the information. The police have ordered a press blackout on the case — perhaps a disgruntled reporter will approach PCs, or perhaps one has a contact on the force. Federal Agent PCs will have access to the files prepared by the OCTF, but will find them poorly done. The bodies are all in the police morgue.

THE FIRST VICTIM

Name: Mr. Stephen Speece   **Age:** 34   **Hair:** Black
Eyes: Brown   **Ht:** 5'10"   **Wt:** 160
Occupation: Freelance Photographer
Marital Status: Divorced   **Address:** 306 22nd Ave S

Description of body: Speece died when his neck was bitten, crushing his windpipe. He was also bitten on the face and right wrist and hand. The body was heavily bruised. Occult symbols were painted on the body using the victim's blood. Speece was nude when found; there is no evidence of sexual attack. The wounds indicate that no weapons were used in the attack.

Description of Crime Scene: The body was found in a dumpster behind a deli on 22nd Ave S, near the victims residence. The murder occurred in an unknown location [inside a van]. The victim's residence shows no sign of struggle [Speece willingly accompanied the killer].

Other clues; GMs info: The murder occurred four days ago. The police theorize that Speece was abducted on the street and killed elsewhere. They admit to no further leads.

If the PCs investigate the area where the body was found they may discover that the lid of the dumpster won't stay open by itself. Either the killer hoisted the body in one-handed or he had an accomplice.

If the PCs gain entrance to Speeces home (a row house) they will discover (1) a large occult library and (2) two rolls of undeveloped film in a home darkroom.

The library is largely composed of books dealing with demonology. Speece used sales receipts as bookmarks — most are from a store called "Other Shores ."

The first roll of film contains run-of-the-mill 'fluff' photos of street scenes and kids playing. Three of these are different angles on an apparently abandoned church. In one of these a tall man frowns at the camera. The other roll is more interesting. The pictures depict a group of black-robed figures in various activities, taken at night. In two of the pictures a cultist's face can be dimly seen. One picture plainly shows a dog being ritualistically slain. The cultists appear to be inside a smallish red room. It is implicit from the angles and degree of close-ups that the cultists were being photographed willingly. There are no other photos of this type among Speece's collection.

THE SECOND VICTIM

Name: Mr. Francis Lefebre   **Age:** 23   **Hair:** Black
Eyes: Blue   **Ht:** 6'3"   **Wt:** 132   **Occupation:** Freelance Writer   **Marital Status:** Single   **Address:** 86 High Rd #8

Description of body: Lefebre's body was discovered in much the same condition as that above. He died of blood loss from multiple bites. Notably, a large bruise on the rear of the skull indicates that he was struck forcibly from behind.

Description of Crime Scene: Lefebre died at home three days ago. His gagged body was found in an Occult diagram. Again, there is no evidence of struggle [he was knocked unconscious by a visitor].

Other clues; GMs info: Lefebre was new to town, having lived here only a month. The apartment came furnished and there is little in the way of personal effects. His writing was published in porno magazines and occult small press publications under various pseudonyms.

Lefebre is one of the cultists in Speece's pictures. An inquiry into his past will reveal that his latest non-writing job was at a branch of the 'Other Shores' bookshop.

Sussman and his squad were the first on the scene of this and subsequent murders.

THE THIRD VICTIM

Name: Ms. Judy DiFabbio   **Age:** 22   **Hair:** Blonde
Eyes: Brown   **Ht:** 5'10"   **Wt:** 110   **Occupation:** Student
Marital Status: Single   **Address:** Dorm at _____ College.

Description of body: DiFabbio was strangled with her own hair. Otherwise, the body was similar in condition to the two previous except for one important fact. The occult symbols found on her body were drawn in goat's blood before she was killed. The police line is that this is the work of a copycat killer, or a crime of passion disguised as such [it is not].

Description of Crime Scene: Judy was found two days ago in a field outside town by a farmer searching for a missing goat. The goat, partially devoured, was found nearby. If investigators visit the scene they will discover that it has been plowed over, and the goat's body removed, on orders of the police.

Other clues; GMs info: Investigators will find that hardly anyone knew Judy, who was an 'invisible' on campus. A few students thought her strange because she always dressed in black. The police have impounded her belongings; Judy, a never-adopted orphan, attended school on a scholarship.

If PCs are persistent a fellow student will remark that the police seemed almost uninterested in her recollection that Judy often drove off at night with a young man in a dark van. She does not know if Judy left with the man the night she was murdered [the man in the van is the killer].

THE FOURTH VICTIM

Name: Mr. Darren Episcipo   **Age:** 49   **Hair:** Bald
Eyes: Green   **Ht:** 6'1"   **Wt:** 200
Occup.: Bookstore Manager   **Marital Status:** Married
Address: 899 Greenwood Lake Dr.

Description of body: The coroner has determined that Episcipo died of cardiac arrest, possibly brought on by the shock of having all ten fingers broken. This body was marked by the same type of wounds and sigils as the others but was also horribly mutilated and partially devoured after death. Episcipo was gagged.

Description of Crime Scene: The body was found this morning in a shed adjacent to an under-repair runway at the airport. Apparently this is where the murder occurred. See below for a note on fingerprints.

Other clues; GMs info Episcipos wife, Martina, is missing. She had phoned her sister last night and asked permission for her and Darren to visit. She would not explain her distress.

If the PCs gain entrance to Episcipo's home (a humble suburban ranch style house) they will discover several items of interest. It is apparent that the police have not been here.

First, pay receipts on the kitchen table reveal that Episcipo was manager of the "Other Shores" bookshop.

If PCs think to check the telephone answering machine they will hear two messages, recorded the night before. The first is, "Hey — It's Jeff. I'm back. Why is the store closed? If you wanted me to work you could have said so. What's the big mystery? Call me." The second message is, "It's me. I'll be by at eleven to take you to the airport. Pack light. Be ready. All hail." [this message is from the killer]

A pair of brand new workgloves lies on a small table in the foyer. If compared with others in the house it is evident that they belonged to neither of the Episcipos [the killer left them there]. This is important. Sussman and his crew did not dust for fingerprints at the crime scene — there were none at the other sites — and missed a set on the inside of a window in the shed. Let the PCs figure this out themselves. If they have the means to identify the prints they'll discover that they belong to one of the police — a rookie assigned to Sussman's OCTF named Eugene Floyd. The PCs, in light of the clues listed below, may not find this significant unless they discover that Floyd was at the station all morning. Floyd is the killer.

There is more. In the corner of the basement is a partitioned — off room. It is locked. Inside is a chilling sight. The walls are painted blood red. A Pentagram is painted on the floor, an upside-down crucifix is on the wall behind and above a wooden altar. A parchment scroll nailed above the crucifix reads, "On this day, (three weeks ago), we dedicate this chapel and this church to the Lord of Darkness. Long may he reign." Below are thirteen names, printed and signed, in blood.

Darren Episcipo
Martina Episcipo
Jeff Davis
James Hamilton
Judith DiFabbio
Stephen Speece
Francis Lefebre
Edwin Mason
Marvin Keating
Laurie List
Gary List
Russell Marker
Charles Trigula

THE LIST

Here is information which PCs can discover about the people on the list. All but DiFabbio and Lefebre are in the telephone book.

Darren Episcipo is one of the victims. He managed the 'Other Shores' occult bookstore for six years. He recently decided to become a devil worshipper. The other members of the cult are customers and friends.

Martina Episcipo is Darren's wife. She is missing. Her sister in another state is concerned because she was not on her flight. She is being held prisoner in an abandoned summer camp outside of town (see The Final Victim).

Jeff Davis is Episcipo's employee. He has been on vacation for a week and knows only that he is unable to contact any of his fellow cultists. He is an affable, red-haired fellow whose attitude toward devil worship is that of a dilettante. He was already put off by it by the time of the scenario — he went on vacation to clear his head. He cleverly did not sign his full name, Jefferson, to the blood scroll. This, he feels, frees him from any supernatural obligation.

Davis, unable to contact his boss, will have opened the store. Its hours are noon to midnight. If approached by PCs and apprised of the murders Davis will panic. He'll be convinced that a malevolent supernatural entity is after them. He'll confess everything. If the PCs have yet to visit Episcipo's residence he will tell them about the chapel. If shown Speece's pictures he will identify Lefebre. He does not know the other man, who he guesses is a new recruit. The man in the church picture is Charles Trigula.

The police have not contacted him. He is not inclined to contact them, either. He will want to stay in the store, which Episcipo claimed was protected from malevolent entities [it's not]. Unless the PCs force him to accompany them (at which point he will deduce they are the killers and scream for help) he will stay until closing. A sufficiently high Conversation roll may convince him of the PCs' good intentions. See 'The Police' for more on Davis's fate.

James Hamilton. He died in a car crash two weeks ago. His death meant that the cult needed to recruit a new member.

Judith DiFabbio. The third victim. She was the killer's girlfriend. It was through her that he gained access to the cult.

Stephen Speece. The first victim.

Francis Lefebre. The second victim.

Edwin Mason. An insurance salesman, Mason's occult activities were unknown to his wife, who thinks he is having an affair. He left two days ago, telling her he was going to open a new account out of town. In fact, he is hiding and has not called her. She will tell PCs that his whereabouts are none of their business — she already talked to the cops this morning. Ask them.

Marvin Keating. He is an assistant coroner. It was he who warned the others about the killings. He is now barricaded in his house. He has told his boss he is sick. He will not open his door for anyone, and will attempt to shoot trespassers if they try to force their way in. If the PCs do not solve the case then Keating will be framed for the murders and 'commit suicide'.

Laurie and Gary List. They went on vacation last night. They are now in Bermuda.

Russell Marker He is in Bermuda with the Lists.

Charles Trigula Is the smartest of the bunch. He is the man in the church pictures, and is hiding out there. He is conducting his own investigation. An essentially evil person, Trigula is not distressed by the murders. He correctly assumes that Floyd is the killer and deduces that the crimes will either be declared unsolved, or one of the cultists will be framed. In order to protect himself he has made sure that he has alibis for the times of the killings. Until one of the others is revealed as the killer he is content to stay here.

Trigula is a good stand-in for the GM. He knows who the killer is and he knows that the OCTF is rotten. Once he is convinced that the PCs are trying to solve the case he will mockingly offer to help. He won't state right out who the killer is, or directly implicate the police, but will ask leading questions, enjoying the PCs attempts to solve the puzzle. He will neither confirm nor deny their conclusions. Here is what he knows:

He recognized the symbols Keating copied off the bodies as being derived from the Hecatic Rite of Transformation, with a few minor changes. Part of the symbols indicated that six victims were to be slain; Speece and Lefebre were marked one and two. He assumes that if three and four were DiFabbio and Darren Episcipo then Martina Episcipo is being held somewhere to be number five. She'll be killed at midnight tonight. If the killer manages to complete the rite tomorrow night, whatever transformation is sought will occur. He has no intention of being number six.

He will also hint to the PCs that they are in way over their heads (he deduced the existence of SIC several years ago). The killings are identical to thousands of other cases, most of which occurred in the Third World. He thinks that 'Somebody' is being extremely unwise. Their 'masters' will not appreciate this rite being performed in such an obvious manner. He will not elaborate — 'If you keep this up, you'll find out.'

He'll tell PCs that the OCTF know who the killer is. Why don't they go ask? Time, after all, is in short supply. 'Just be careful — it is a full Moon tonight.'

THE POLICE

Much of what happens in this scenario will depend on how the PCs interact with the police. The GM must bear in mind that the very group charged with investigating the killings, the Occult Crime Task Force, are in fact involved in the matter. One is the actual killer, and the other three were present at the scene. They are in a tricky situation — while the regular force largely leaves them alone they are still subject to investigation by internal affairs. Their first priority is to protect their own, the second to keep the details out of the media.

The OCTF will not welcome interference by private or federal investigators. They will refuse to comment. They will put a tail on any PCs who are openly investigating. If they are observed breaking the law the OCTF will attempt to arrest them. They will not be taken to the station, however. They will be taken to the camp described in 'The Final Victim'.

In regards to the three cultists remaining in town — the cops plan to frame Keating for the murders and then fake his suicide. They're reasonably certain that he will stay put where he is.

They've been waiting for Davis to return — he is slated to be victim number six. While PCs are in the 'Other Shores' the phone will ring but the caller will immediately hang up. About an hour later Davis will answer the delivery door at the back of the shop and be arrested. The arresting officer is Richard Watson. If PCs are on the scene he will wait until they leave before arresting Davis.

If Davis accompanies the PCs instead of staying, an unmarked car with Watson inside will be parked down the street. If the PCs approach, Watson will roll up his window, hold up his badge, and indicate that PCs should leave. He will then follow the PCs wherever they go, keeping his distance. He will report their activities to Sussman. If the PCs break the law he will call for Sussman, who will arrive with two other officers.

They want very much to find Trigula. If the PCs visit the abandoned church while Watson is trailing them Trigula will be arrested also.

Davis and Trigula will be taken to the location described in 'The Final Victim'.

The four policemen assigned to the case are detailed below.

Gerald Sussman: The officer in charge of the OCTF, Sussman is a prime example of the stereotypical 'bad cop'. He is stupid, brutal and prone to shoot first and interrogate later. Never a good lawman, Sussman was recruited by SIC several years ago. They are wholly responsible for his current position — he certainly did not earn it.

Sussman is a Wereboar. His immediate SIC supervisor, a regional Governor's Lieutenant, was slain by SABER two weeks ago. Sussman immediately assumed his duties and decided to preside over the transformation of his first recruit, rookie cop Eugene Floyd. Stupidly, he gave Eugene permission to choose his victims from an amateur devil cult his girlfriend belonged to, rather than randomly slaying vagrants as is preferred.

Sussman has black kinky hair and a pencil mustache. He is burly and six inches shy of six feet tall. He does not wear a uniform — his suits look like he sleeps in them (in common with all Wereboars, he does not sweat).

GM Info: *Despite their occasional personal disputes, most policemen are unwilling to speak ill of their fellow officers. This is not true in Sussman's case. PCs investigating his background will discover that his poor record is well known around the station. Many feel that his promotion to the head of the OCTF was politically motivated [It was, by SIC]. The only charitable actions attributed to Sussman is work with children at the Police Athletic League's summer camp. That facility is now closed.*

Richard Watson and **Byron Lewis:** Sussman's two assistants. Like him, they are Wereboars. They are both brighter than their boss, and Watson has doubts about the wisdom of their orders. But, in obeisance to the strict hierarchy of SIC, he will obey his orders.

Watson is a hulking African-American. He is the most qualified for OCTF duties, having broken several local cults before being seduced by the Goddess. He is the scholar of the group and keeps up with the occult underworld; he may recognize Occultist PCs.

Watson, who has limited spell abilities, acts as sorcerer in attendance while Floyd is committing the murders. If Watson is killed Floyd will be unable to achieve his dark dream.

Watson will volunteer to shadow the PCs should the opportunity arise. He is very good at it.

Lewis is small and pale. He is devoted to Sussman and follows him around like a puppy. Of the entire group, he is the most dangerous. Even when shapeshifted he prefers to use firearms, most notably a pair of sawed-off shotguns. His senses are acute (he grew up in the slums) and he stands guard during the killings.

GM Info: *Neither Watson or Lewis are natives of this city. Both enjoyed careers as military police before joining the force.*

Eugene Floyd: This is the killer. He is the second cultist in Speece's pictures. He will not be at the station with the others. He is at the abandoned PAL camp guarding his next victim.

Floyd is a young man, not yet twenty-five. He is clean cut and has classic square jawed features. Women — Judy DiFabbio was the latest — find him irresistibly charming. He is due to come into a sizable inheritance.

GM Info: *Floyd is a vicious killer and has been for years. Five years ago Sussman tracked him down and offered him a career with the police ('where you can kill all the people you want') and hinted of a darker destiny beyond. Now, with the ritual slayings of just two more people, he will be married to the night forever. These are not ordinary killings — the murders are part of the Wereboar transformation ceremony. Tomorrow night at midnight he will kill Davis (or maybe one of these damned investigators) and the transformation will come. As part of the inheritance he is to receive the deed to the land occupied by the PAL camp. A PC background check will uncover this, and that he owns a black van.*

THE FINAL VICTIM

The scenario is reaching its violent conclusion, by this time the OCTF and PCs should be quite aware of each others role in what is going on. It is entirely conceivable that one or more PCs have been "arrested" and taken to the camp. It is equally possible that one or more of the OCTF have been captured or slain by the PCs. Remember that if forced into a non-public combat situation the OCTF members will change shape and use their special abilities. However if publicly confronted with evidence of their guilt they will go quietly, trusting in the resources of S.I.C. to free them at a later date. At any rate GMs should not be overly worried about steering PCs toward the camp. An opportunity will arrive to direct PCs there (Memories of movies about serial killers at camps should do the trick).

The camp is ten miles outside of town at the edge of a small forest. A chain link fence surrounds the thirty acre site. Astute PCs will notice that surveyor markers are placed throughout the area. Several bulldozers are here as well as other construction equipment. Piles of rubble mark the sites of demolished cabins (since Floyd owns the land, he had construction stopped for a while claiming permit problems).

A black van is parked next the only building remaining — the bath house next to the swimming pool. The dried out pool is to be the site of the next slaying. Mrs. Episcipo and anyone else captured during the course of the scenario will bound and gagged inside the bath house.

Wrapping up the scenario is a fairly straightforward task — rescue the prisoners and stop the Wereboars. GMs should be prepared for PCs to create grandiose schemes to get in the camp. Go ahead and let them. When in a combat situation at the camp the Wereboars will use the following tactics. All will transform into Wereboars, including Floyd (but only if he has been able to complete the Spell). Lewis will charge PCs head-on, firing as he closes, using tooth and claw when out of ammunition. He will not retreat. Watson will attempt to flee if the odds begin to turn against the Wereboars. Sussman will attempt to use prisoners as hostages and bargain his way out. If Floyd is interrupted while performing his last kill he will suffer the dire effects of spell failure (i.e. torn apart by invisible entities). If Floyd has succeeded he will attack with vigor, trusting in his new found abilities, but if things go bad he will flee as best as he can. If PCs manage to stop the ceremonies from even beginning Floyd will go mad and attack PCs with his bare hands (+10 to STR is recommended to simulate his insane fury).

THE WRAP-UP

Of course the truth will never be told. A passable fiction about "bad cops" and a PR campaign are all that will be released. PC SABER agents will be expected to file complete reports. Other PCs who have done well will be approached by SABER. Federal or other Law enforcement PCs will have to file some type of report; depending on the Agency this may require a certain bit of creativity.

One last thing...A few days later, the most public PC during the investigation will receive a plain white envelope in the mail. Inside on plain white paper, written in blood, are the words:

"It's not over"

NOTES ON NPCS

All the Wereboars should be constructed using the Detective package; extra levels are not recommended due to the tough nature of Wereboars. Floyd is a regular Detective; use the package and add Stealth. Especially nasty GMs may choose to add the Soldier package to Watson and Lewis.

FINAL NOTE

If the GM really wants to complicate things he can have James Hamilton, the cultist who died in the car wreck, be the local SIC lieutenant. It will be his death that put Sussman in charge and created the necessity for a new member in the cult. Charles Trigula can actually be a SIC member, also. He will be watching Sussman to see whether he is fit for the post of lieutenant. He may even be in the running for the post himself — his assistance to the PCs can be construed as a clever way of getting rid of the competition.

APPENDIX:
SPIRIT EXAMPLES

Note: *These examples previously appeared in HERO System Almanac I.*

Here are some sample spirits for use in different genres. Of course, the nature of certain types of spirits may vary in your campaign according to your view of them. Vampires, particularly, vary widely in the literature, according to the way the author defined them. The particular type of vampire presented here is a way of treating one as an evil spirit rather than as a corporeal entity.

Spirits include such beings as djinn, ifrits, genies, ghosts, (some) demons, poltergeists, banshee and will-o-the-wisps. Some spirits may have realistic seeming manifestations, using Telekinesis and Images to present the illusion of a body (even adding Force Wall if necessary). Of course, they cannot be destroyed by ordinary means. Djinn and ifrits are good examples of such extremely powerful spirits. Some demons may also manifest in this way. Ghosts range from very innocuous spirits that merely create a harmless Image or two (a ghostly figure, a rattling chain and a moan) to powerful spirits that can affect the physical world with TK or even spells. Poltergeists are spirits with TK (often area effect TK). Note that Djinn would have a very high EGO and thus be very difficult to put into a jar. They might even have Power Defense to help defend against Shift Spirits.

Barrow wights would be types of spirits also, as would skeletons, liches, and zombies. Essentially, these are spirits that have physical manifestations of some sort. This makes them very, very dangerous, since they can attack you in physical ways, yet they cannot be directly hurt by physical attacks. Sometimes the spirit is bound to its physical manifestation, and destroying that can free the spirit. A lich might be a spirit bound to some old bones; a skeleton would use the bones as a Focus for its Telekinesis.

It's important to note that many of these spirits have Disadvantages that allow them to be hurt in some fashion by ordinary heroes (those without special powers that can affect spirits). Unless a spirit possesses those types of Disadvantages, though, normal heroes can't do much too them unless they have some powers or weapons designed to affect spirits.

The spirit rules can also be used to write up more diverse creatures, such as extremely tough trolls, androids, or even certain types of aliens. Generally, such unusual interpretations of spirits are considered different special effects for the spirit rules. For instance, a standard Shift Spirit wouldn't work on an android.

These sample spirits can be created in different ways than that presented here, in order to better represent how things work in an individual campaign.

BUILDING SPIRITS IN A FOCUS

Spirits that enter a living container in the course of play don't have to pay points for any abilities the container has. Similarly, spirits that enter a recently dead body get to use its basic capabilities (like STR and movement) without paying for them. If you want to create a spirit that occupies a physical form, though, you have to pay points for the privilege. Spirits can be created from scratch as occupying a body of some sort, whether it's a corpse, a skeleton or an android. The spirit's Characteristics are purchased normally, but the spirit can buy additional Characteristics and powers through the body, which is treated as an Obvious, Inaccessible Focus. Spirits built this way can buy (if desired) STR, BODY, PD, ED, END, REC and COM; but any these that are purchased must be bought from a starting value of 0. Spirits built this way still cannot purchase CON or STUN (since neither have meaning for a nonliving body).

While this "spirit in a Focus" resembles an ordinary character at a casual glance, there are differences. First of all, because of the nature of the spirit, it takes no Stun damage at all and it doesn't get Stunned. You don't need to buy Life Support for the spirit; the Focus is not really alive in the traditional sense, and thus does not need to breathe, eat, sleep or perform other annoying functions. Those can be taken as Character Disadvantages, if you like. On the other side of the equation, any physical Characteristics desired must be bought from a 0 starting value. The spirit in a Focus has no base movement and no senses to begin with; all must be purchased.

All physical Characteristics and all attacks should be bought at a +2 Advantage Affects Real World, with a -½ OIF Limitation. Essentially, most things are purchased at double cost under this rule. Skills, Perks and Talents are purchased at the normal cost, however. Spirits in a Focus are subject to Flash attacks (assuming they've bought some senses, since they start with none) and Entangles. Normal Adjustment Powers will work only against Characteristics bought through the OIF. Mental Powers and Adjustment Powers that work against spirit Characteristics must be bought with the usual Affects Spirit Advantage (and ECV-based, in the case of Adjustment Powers) in order to affect the spirit. However, you get the line-of-sight for free; no special senses are necessary to find the spirit, since it's always in its container.

The Focus Limitation as used here is interpreted differently than the standard Focus Limitation. The body as Focus does not gain any defenses automatically, and is not subject to the "take BODY, lose a power" rule. However, the Focus can lose abilities when damage is taken, according to the special effects. For instance, if you lop off the body's hands, it can no longer use any weapons (or cast any spells that require gestures). If you remove the body's head, it is still "alive" and can still think, but it cannot control its body. (If you want severed parts to continue functioning after they are severed, buy Telekinesis, OIF Body.)

The body Focus does not bleed, but neither does it heal any damage. Damage can be repaired by using Adjustment Powers or with appropriate skills (for an android, anyway; repairing a corpse might be beyond the abilities of hand tools). So it's possible to completely destroy the Focus.

Additionally, since the body is an OIF, you must define some way that it can be rendered inactive. An example might be an Off button for an android, or holy attacks or symbols used against undead.

It's important to note that this is not the only way to create an android or other artificial being. It's equally proper to say that your character is an android, and it's so human that you just happen to feel pain and bleed and do all those other things that normal characters do. The decision is up to you.

BARROW WIGHT

Val	Cha	Cost	Combat Stats			
—	STR	—	OCV: 6			
18	DEX	24	DCV: 6			
—	CON	—	ECV: 7			
—	BODY	—	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12			
14	INT	4				
20	EGO	20	Costs:			
35	PRE	25				
—	COM	—	Char:	85	Base:	100
—	PD	—			+	+
—	ED	—	Powers:	337	Disad:	322
4	SPD	12			=	=
—	REC	—	Totals:	422		422
—	END	—				
—	STUN	—				

Cost	Powers
175	5d6 STUN Drain, No END Cost
78	Telekinesis 15 STR No END Cost
52	Images (sight, sound) 15 pts, No END Cost
15	Night Vision
10	Astral Vision
1	Familiarity with sword
6	2 Skill Levels w/swords

100+	Disadvantages
40	Magic weapons do 1½x damage as Consume Spirit
75	Susceptibility to sunlight, 5d6 per phase
50	Bound to barrow, physically and psychologically
25	Repelled by holy symbols (psychological)
25	Hatred of living things
30	Berserk when damaged, 14-, Recover 8-
15	Watched by local forest spirits, 14-
62	Bonus

This undead creature has no physical form, yet it can use its Telekinesis to wear armor and wield a sword. (The armor is mostly for effect, since there's no physical form to protect.) The barrow wight can be destroyed by magic weapons or by sunlight. The barrow wight is bound to its barrow or burial location.

It uses its STUN Drain to take captives, then it sacrifices them at its leisure. The barrow wight uses its Images to manifest itself; it often uses PRE Attacks to make its targets easier prey. The barrow wight can also wield its sword and shield if it's necessary to physically attack its foes.

DEMONFLAME

Val	Cha	Cost	Combat Stats			
—	STR	—	OCV: 6			
18	DEX	24	DCV: 6			
—	CON	—	ECV: 9			
—	BODY	—	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12			
15	INT	5				
26	EGO	32	Costs:			
25	PRE	15				
—	COM	—	Char:	88	Base:	100
—	PD	—			+	+
—	ED	—	Powers:	317	Disads:	305
4	SPD	12			=	=
—	REC	—	Totals:	405		405
—	END	—				
—	STUN	—				

Cost	Powers
47	12d6 Mind Control, Wielder Only (-2), No Range, No END Cost
47	12d6 Telepathy, Wielder Only (-2), No Range, No END Cost
90	4d6 RKA (demon flame), 16 charges
38	2d6 HKA, No END Cost, STR Min 10 (-¾)
17	1d6 RKA vs. ED, sword flame, Linked to HKA, No Range, No END Cost
17	1d6 RKA flame, 16 Continuing Charges, 1 Turn, No Range, Linked to HKA
35	Change Environment (intense heat) 4" radius, No END Cost
7, 7	Normal Vision; Night Vision
7, 5	Normal Hearing; Astral Vision
	All powers bought as OAF broadsword.

100+	Disadvantages
50	Repelled by holy ground (psychological and physical)
50	Repelled by holy symbols (pyschological and physical)
25	Berserk when thwarted, 14-, Recover 8-
20	Psychological Limitation: Cruel and vicious
160	Bonus

Demonflame looks like a broadsword, but certainly not an ordinary broadsword. This sword has a demon's head at the quillons, so that the sword looks like a giant fang protruding from the demon's mouth. The edges of the sword are jagged, and it makes terrible ragged wounds. The sheath and the hilt are bound in a blood-red leather that's almost like sharkskin, but it's not—it's demonhide. Two blood rubies form the eyes of the demon, and the pommel is an enormous ruby that seems to glow in the sunlight.

The sword is actually a captive demon, bound there by the Sorceror King of ancient Serrunis over a thousand years ago. The Sorceror King was mighty enough to control the demon and bend it to his will, and he used this blade when he went to war. When the Sorceror King was overthrown by the barbarian hordes of the Northlands, the sword was lost during the sack of the palace. Concealed in the ruins for centuries, the sword lay undisturbed until it was uncovered by traders salvaging marble blocks from the ruins. The trader who found it didn't draw it (which was wise indeed), but sold it to a merchant in Kythros. Whence it now passes into the realm of the player characters...

Demonflame will instantly seek to control anyone who draws the sword from the sheath. And with the amount of Mind Control the demon wields, he's almost certain to do just that. Bored after a thousand years of interminable nothingness, Demonflame seeks sensation first, to glut himself on the blood and screaming pain of anyone he can. But the demon is cunning enough to ensure that his wielder isn't slain out of hand, and risk the chance that Demonflame might be stored away where no one can touch him. So Demonflame, after an initial burst of joy at his newfound freedom, will be cautious, though the bloodlust runs strong within him, and he delights in destruction.

After a while, Demonflame will realize that he can achieve more than just being a sword with a handy servant. Indeed, if Demonflame works this aright, he could lead his wielder to great power over other men. Perhaps someday his wielder will grow powerful enough (with Demonflame's help) to hire a wizard to free Demonflame from the sword, when Demonflame will resume his true identity and rule in his true form. Someday…

This is a very nasty sword that can provide long-term interest in a fantasy campaign. Demonflame's famous quote to its new wielder is: "Hello, hands and feet!" But Demonflame will prove his usefulness in combat with his deadly attacks, including the ability to set things on fire, cast flaming bolts of energy, run flames along the sword, and just genereally cause a lot of damage while being light as a feather to wield. But Demonflame will take every possible opportunity to cause pain and slay people, especially those who are dearest to its wielder. A demon loves nothing more than torment, after all.

Demonflame's true demon form could be considered a Multiform, which the GM is free to design to fit the needs of the campaign. The true from would have an entirely different set of powers; this demon in the sword was shaped thus by the magic of the Sorceror King.

DJINN

Val	Cha	Cost	Combat Stats
—	STR	—	OCV: 7
21	DEX	33	DCV: 7
—	CON	—	ECV: 8
—	BODY	—	Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12
5	INT	-5	
23	EGO	26	Costs:
25	PRE	15	
—	COM	—	Char: 78 Base: 100
—	PD	—	+ +
—	ED	—	Powers: 522 Disad 500
4	SPD	9	= =
—	REC	—	Totals: 600 600
—	END	—	
—	STUN	—	

Cost	Powers
101	Transform (create anything) 3d6, No END Cost
169	Telekinesis 50 STR, Area Effect 15" radius, No END Cost
74	Images (sight, sound, -6 PER, 4" radius), No END Cost
38	Images (sound, -2 PER), No END Cost
40	Shift Spirit, 4d6, Self Only (-1), Nonliving containers only (-1), No END Cost
52	Change Environment (weather) 16" radius, No END Cost
7	Normal Vision
7	Normal Hearing
20	Clairvoyance
5	Astral Vision
	All powers (except the minor Sound Images and Shift Spirit) are bought with the -1 Limitation Can't Use While In Container.
2	Familiarity with common melee weapons
3	+1 Skill level with swords
2	KS: Desert environment
2	Fluent in modern language

100+	Disadvantages
25	Bound to bottle, physically
30	Berserk when thwarted, 14-, Recover 8-
25	Psychological Limitation: Very Stupid
420	Bonus

This powerful djinni is stuck in a bottle; his overriding goal is to be free. To that end, he will promise people anything (his minor Sound Images is used for talking to those nearby the bottle). Once he's out, he'll promptly break any promises he's made. And he's so amazingly powerful that only a mighty wizard could put him back in the bottle., unless you take advantage of his incredible ego and incredible stupidity to trick him back inside. The djinni can use his TK directly as Strength to throw the heroes around or punch them, or he can wield a mighty weapon (created with his Transform) or he can combine it with his Change Environment to create immense whirlwinds or other weather effects. The djinni uses his Images to manifest himself as an immense manlike form, normally, though he can take any shape he desires.

Other types of djinn may have greater or lesser powers than this one.

FAIRY GODMOTHER

Val	Cha	Cost	Combat Stats
—	STR	—	OCV: 4
11	DEX	3	DCV: 4
—	CON	—	ECV: 5
—	BODY	—	Phases: 4, 8, 12
15	INT	5	
14	EGO	8	Costs:
15	PRE	5	
—	COM	—	Char: 30 Base: 100
—	PD	—	+ +
—	ED	—	Powers: 233 Disad: 163
3	SPD	9	= =
—	REC	—	Totals: 263 263
—	END	—	
—	STUN	—	

Cost	Powers
101	Transform (create anything) 1d6, No END Cost
98	Images (sight, sound, -6 PER, 1 hex), No END Cost
15	Normal Vision
15	Normal Hearing
10	Astral Vision
2	KS: Fashion design
2	Fluent in modern language

100+	Disadvantages
20	DNPC (generic helpless person), 11-
20	Psychological Limitation: Always Helpful
20	Psychological Limitation: Dotty & Forgetful
103	Bonus

Well, we had to throw in a nice spirit, didn't we? This Fairy Godmother is adept at doing instant clothing alterations, or minor bits of similar magic in order to be a little helpful to people in need. Of course, the FG is a little bit crazy, and she does tend to forget things, so she may end up being more of a bother than a help. She uses her Images to manifest her appearance and to talk to people.

GHOST

Val	Cha	Cost	Combat Stats
—	STR	—	OCV: 4
11	DEX	3	DCV: 4
—	CON	—	ECV: 4
—	BODY	—	Phases: 4, 8, 12
11	INT	1	
11	EGO	2	Costs
20	PRE	10	
—	COM	—	Char: 25 Base: 100
—	PD	—	+ +
—	ED	—	Powers: 150 Disad: 75
3	SPD	9	= =
—	REC	—	Totals: 175 175
—	END	—	
—	STUN	—	

Cost	Powers
35	Images (sight, sound, 1 hex), No END Cost
70	Change Environment (fear) 8" radius, No END Cost
15	Normal Vision
15	Night Vision
10	Astral Vision
5	Lipreading 12-

100+	Disadvantages
50	Bound to house, physically and psychologically
25	Repelled by holy symbols (psychological)

This is your basic spirit, a ghost that's haunting a house. He's got a little bit of Change Environment to create an aura of fear in an area, which can add to his PRE Attacks (the amount is at the GM's discretion). The ghost uses Images to create scary sights and sounds, usually with the intent of adding to the PRE Attacks (rattling chains, moans, horrendous visions). He's also got Astral Vision, Normal Vision and Night Vision so that he can see what goes on. This ghost can't hear, but he can read lips if he has to find out what people are saying. Of course, he can't physically affect normal people, but he can scare the heck out of them. This may cause death or injury, if the ghost picks on the elderly or weak, or scares someone when they're in a hazardous situation (like on a ladder or a weakened stairway).

His goal in all this is to remove the condition which binds him to the house; the GM should create an interesting set of conditions that the players must bring about in order to end this ghost's haunting. You'll notice that this ghost doesn't have the Shift Spirit power, so he is unable to leave a container once placed there.

LICH

Val	Cha	Cost	Combat Stats
20	STR	47*	OCV: 6; DCV: 6; ECV: 9
18	DEX	24	Phases: 4, 8, 12
—	CON	—	Costs
8†	BODY	3	Char: 180 Base: 100
25	INT	15	+ +
28	EGO	36	Powers: 587 Disad: 667
30	PRE	20	= =
4†	COM	4	Totals: 767 767
8‡	PD	—	
4‡	ED	—	* – Bought with Affects Real World (+2) and
3	SPD	2	No END Cost (+½), OIF Body (-½).
—	REC	—	† – Bought with Affects Real World (+2),
—	END	—	OIF Body (-½).
—	STUN	—	‡ – Bought as Armor; see Powers List for cost.

Cost	Powers
47	Life Drain: 4d6 BODY Drain, Ranged, OAF Amulet, Gestures, Incantations, 8 Charges (-½)
213	4d6 Shift Spirit, Ranged, No END Cost Spirit Summoning (all bought with Gestures, Incantations, Extra Time (5 hours), Human sacrifice required (-2), OIF inscribed pentagram (Immobile), 1 Charge. (-9 total Limitation)
16	8d6 Mind Scan, +5 to Roll, Only for spirits (-1), No END Cost
25	16d6 Mind Control, Only for spirits (-1), No END Cost
49	10/4 Force Wall 7", Gestures, Incantations, OAF Amulet, No END Cost
20	Power Defense (15 points), Affects Spirits Both Ways (+1), Linked to Force Wall, Gestures, Incantations, OAF Amulet
96	Suppress Magic, (45 or 15d6), 1 Continuing Charge (5 minutes), Area Effect 7" radius, Gestures, Incantations, OAF Amulet, No END Cost
36	Armor, +8 PD, +4 ED
10	Astral Vision
7	Normal Vision
7	Normal Hearing
28	Running 7"
7	Flash Defense (5 points), OAF Amulet
7	Power Defense (5 points), OAF Amulet

Cost	Skills
2	Familiarity with common melee weapons
6	+2 with sword&shield
3	KS: Magic 14-
3	KS: Necromancy 14-
5	Stealth 13-

100+	Disadvantages
40	Magic weapons do 1½x damage as Consume Spirit
65	Susceptibility to holy water, 5d6 per phase
50	Repelled by holy symbols (psychological and physical)
25	Hatred of living things
30	Berserk when damaged, 14-, Recover 8-
457	Bonus

Note: All Powers are bought with +2 Affects Real World, -½ OIF.

Note: Note that the STR, BODY, COM are all bought from a starting value of 0.

The lich is a powerful undead wizard, essentially an animated skeleton with vast sorcerous powers. The lich will usually be surrounded by servants it has conjured through its necromancy: zombies, skeletons and the like. The lich should have a set of magical powers consistent with your campaign; the ones listed serve as an example of what a lich could do.

The lich uses its Mind Scan and Mind Control along with its Shift Spirit to bring spirits to its pentagram, where it will use the Force Wall to contain the spirit. In the case of especially dangerous spirits, the lich will use its Suppress to prevent the spirit from causing damage outside the Force Wall. The lich often forces spirits to occupy dead bodies, thus becoming its servants.

The lich's other powers are used on any who are foolish enough to cross its path. The GM should feel free to substitute a different set of spells more in keeping with the nature of his or her particular campaign.

Note that the lich doesn't have to buy its Mind Scan and Mind Control with the +½ Affects Spirits Advantage, since the lich is still on the spirit plane. This is an important difference between using a body as a Focus and Possessing a body.

POLTERGEIST

Val	Char	Cost
—	STR	—
11	DEX	3
—	CON	—
—	BODY	—
10	INT	0
11	EGO	2
20	PRE	10
—	COM	—
—	PD	—
—	ED	—
2	SPD	0
—	REC	—
—	END	—
—	STUN	—

Combat Stats

OCV: 4
DCV: 4
ECV: 4
Phases: 6, 12

Costs

Char:	15	Base:	100
	+		+
Powers:	160	Disad:	75
	=		=
Totals:	175		175

Cost	Powers
135	Telekinesis 20 STR, Area Effect 3" radius, No END Cost
15, 10	Normal Vision; Astral Vision

100+	Disadvantages
50	Bound to house, physically and psychologically
25	Repelled by holy symbols (psychological)

The poltergeist is a destructive form of ghost that is mostly Telekinesis. The poltergeist throws things around in the area it is bound to, and works to frighten or injure people. Poltergeists have some root cause which the GM should create; when this essential problem is solved for the poltergeist, it will go away. Until then, though, the poltergeist can give the heroes fits.

POOKAH

Val	Char	Cost
—	STR	—
10	DEX	0
—	CON	—
—	BODY	—
15	INT	5
20	EGO	20
15	PRE	5
—	COM	—
—	PD	—
—	ED	—
3	SPD	10
—	REC	—
—	END	—
—	STUN	—

Combat Stats

OCV: 3
DCV: 3
ECV: 7
Phases: 4, 8, 12

Costs

Char:	40	Base:	100
	+		+
Powers:	70	Disad:	10
	=		=
Totals:	110		110

Cost	Powers
35	6d6 Mental Illusions, No END Cost, Only To Talk & Appear to Friend (-2)
15, 15	Normal Vision; Normal Hearing
10	Astral Vision

100+	Disadvantages
10	Psych Lim: Friendly

This is a friendly spirit, often taking the form of a giant rabbit that only its friend can see, as in the classic movie *Harvey*. Other examples of similar spirits include *Topper*, *Heaven Can Wait*, and numerous other movies where ghosts appear and only one person can see them. The Pookah is a friendly sort of spirit that just wants to help out the human it befriends.

Of course, the Pookah really doesn't have much in the way of powers; all it can do is observe what's happening in the real world, and report to its friend. This can be useful in the right situations; a little knowledge of what someone else is planning can be very helpful.

Unfortunately, the poor human friend of the Pookah may soon be seen as a real loon by others, since no one else can see or hear the thing that the human is talking to. This can be a very interesting plot complication.

SKELETON

Val	Char	Cost
15	STR	30*
14	DEX	12
—	CON	—
8†	BODY	32
9	INT	-1
8	EGO	-4
15	PRE	5
0†	COM	0
2‡	PD	—
2‡	ED	—
3	SPD	6
—	REC	—
—	END	—
—	STUN	—

Combat Stats

OCV: 5; DCV: 5; ECV: 3
Phases: 4, 8, 12
Costs

Char:	81	Base:	100
	+		+
Powers:	54	Disad:	35
	=		=
Totals:	135		135

* – Bought with Affects Real World (+2) and No END Cost (+½), OIF Skeleton (-½).
† – Bought with Affects Real World (+2), OIF Skeleton (-½).
‡ – Bought as Armor; see Powers List for cost.

Cost	Powers
12	Armor, +2 PD, +2 ED
7	Normal Vision
7	Normal Hearing
24	Running 6"
2	Familiarity with common melee weapons

100+	Disadvantages
30	Vulnerability to magic attacks as Consume Spirit
5	Unluck

Note: All Powers are bought with +2 Affects Real World, -½ OIF.

Note: Note that the STR, BODY, COM are all bought from a starting value of 0.

This is the basic model skeleton. Necromancers prefer spirits that are easily handled when they conjure skeletons, so they look for spirits with a low EGO. This skeleton had basic weapon-handling skills when it was alive; optionally, the wizard could put the skeleton in some armor for added protection. A more dangerous skeleton would be stronger, tougher or more skilled. A really dangerous skeleton might use Telekinesis instead of STR to animate itself. This would allow it to keep using limbs that had been hacked off, whereas with STR those limbs become useless.

SOULDRINKER

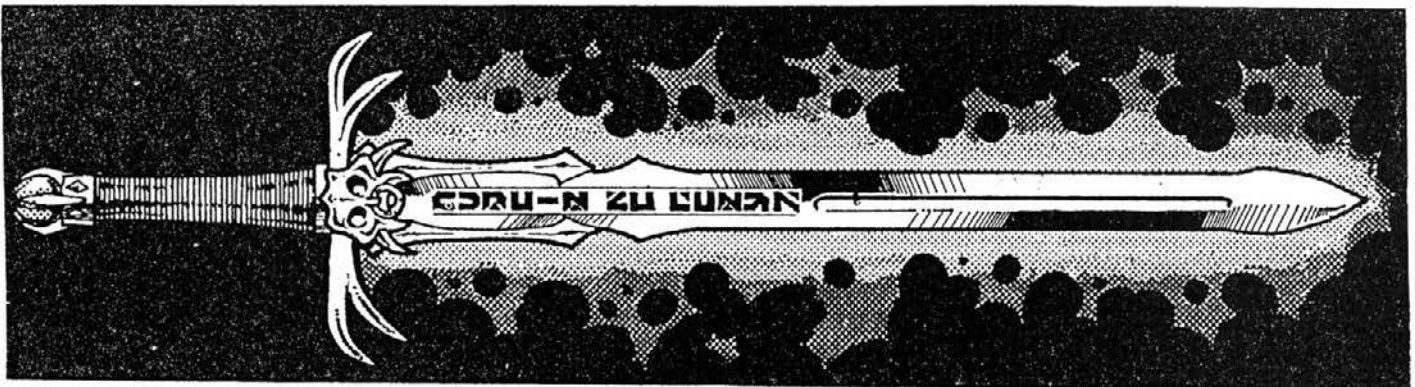| Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
—	STR	—	**OCV:** 6
18	DEX	24	**DCV:** 6
—	CON	—	**ECV:** 6
—	BODY	—	**Phases:** 3, 6, 9, 12
8	INT	-2	
18	EGO	16	**Costs**
25	PRE	15	
4	COM	3	**Char:** 69 **Base:** 100
—	PD	—	+ +
—	ED	—	**Powers:** 574 **Disad:** 543
4	SPD	12	= =
—	REC	—	**Totals:** 643 643
—	END	—	
—	STUN	—	

Cost	Powers
63	3d6 HKA, No END Cost, STR Min 10, 1½ handed sword (-½)
168	4d6 Consume Spirit, transfers to END Reserve, Linked to HKA, No END Cost
24	3d6 STR Aid, Wielder Only (-½), Fade Rate 1 hour (+1)
24	3d6 CON Aid, Wielder Only (-½), Fade Rate 1 hour (+1)
24	3d6 REC Aid, Wielder Only (-½), Fade Rate 1 hour (+1)
24	3d6 END Aid, Wielder Only (-½), Fade Rate 1 hour (+1)
180	1200 pt. END Reserve for Aid
24	Telekinesis STR 20, Sword Only (-2), No Range, No END Cost
7	Soul Vision: sees souls around itself
36	+3 with sword (OCV or DCV only, 8 point levels) All powers bought with the -1 Limitation OAF bastard sword.

100+	Disadvantages
20	Psychological Limitation: Bloodthirsty
10	Vulnerability: 2x Effect from Suppress
20	Reputation: Intensely Evil
10	Distinctive Looks: Rune-carved black blade
483	Bonus

This hand-and-a-half sword eats the souls of those it attacks and feeds the power to its wielder. The points drained from the souls are used to replenish an END Reserve, which the sword uses to feed various Aids that can be given to the wielder. It's important to note that the Aid is completely at the discretion of the sword, not the wielder. The sword will only use Aid when it deems it appropriate. While generally the sword doesn't try to influence events, occasionally its bloodthirstiness will take over and it will use its Telekinesis to direct itself contrary to the wielder's wishes. For instance, sometimes the sword will attack someone that the wielder wanted to spare.

This sword is currently found as the symbiotic companion of an albino prince of a lost race. The prince is a weakling without the sword; STR 5, CON 8, though he is a skilled swordsman and a powerful wizard. But the sword feeds him a tiny trickle of STR when the prince is awake, thus enabling him to function normally. (Occasionally the sword will also supply CON, REC or END, usually in battle.) The sword replenishes itself by feeding off the souls of those it slays, and its appetite for souls is immense. SoulDrinker has an evil reputation, and for good reason.

Aside from its souldrinking powers, the sword is a deadly weapon in combat, doing immense damage and almost seeming to direct itself towards the target at times. The sword's levels can be used for OCV or DCV, but only if the sword can see its opponent with its Soul Vision.

TROLL

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
—	STR	—	**OCV:** 5; **DCV:** 5; **ECV:** 3
14	DEX	12	**Phases:** 4, 8, 12
—	CON	—	
20†	BODY	80	**Costs**
4	INT	-6	**Char:** 104　　**Base:** 100
8	EGO	-4	+ +
25	PRE	15	**Powers:** 371　**Disad:** 375
1†	COM	1	= =
2‡	PD	—	**Totals:** 475　　　　475
2‡	ED	—	
3	SPD	6	* – Bought with Affects Real World (+2),
—	REC	—	OIF Body (-½).
—	END	—	
—	STUN	—	‡ – Bought as Armor; see Powers List for cost.

Cost	Powers
105	STR 30 Telekinesis, No END Cost, acts like STR (no bonus)
43	1½d6 HKA claws/fangs, Reduced Penetration (2 x 1½d6 w/STR)
120	Regeneration 6 BODY/Turn
12	Armor, +2 PD, +2 ED
7, 7	Normal Vision;　　Night Vision
7, 7	Normal Hearing;　　Normal Taste/Smell
20,32	Tracking Scent;　　Running 8"
5, 6	Stealth 12-;　　+3 OCV with claws

100+	Disadvantages
50	Vulnerability to fire, 2x damage
120	10d6 Susceptibility to body destruction, per segment
20	Psych Lim: Very stupid
35	Berserk in combat 14-, Recover 8-
150	Bonus

Note: All Powers are bought with +2 Affects Real World, -½ OIF.

This really nasty troll is based on the one found in Poul Anderson's classic fantasy novel *Three Hearts And Three Lions*. This beast, while very stupid, nonetheless has a keen sense of smell and is nearly unstoppable. The troll regenerates very rapidly, and since it doesn't bleed at all nor care if it is at a negative BODY total, it takes an incredible amount of hacking and hewing to cut it to pieces.

But the trouble doesn't stop even if you've succeeded in severing a limb or opening its belly, because all parts of the troll's body are independently animated. Cut off a hand or an arm, and it crawls toward you to clutch at you. Carve open its intestines and they'll wrap around you like snakes. Pieces that are cut off will either attack or attempt to rejoin the body (a half-phase maneuver to get into the right place, and a couple of segments to regenerate the 1 BODY necessary to heal the cut).

Even if the troll is cut into pieces, thought, it will only get three actions in a turn (as per its SPD rating); the GM must decide which body parts will choose to act. One minor exception: if a body part is clutching something, it may continue to exert its STR every phase the troll has, regardless of other actions being performed. (This is somewhat like having an Extra Limb.)

There is a way to defeat the troll: fire will destroy its body parts and stop the regeneration. If you cast the body pieces into a fire, that will destroy them permanently. When all are destroyed, the troll is vanquished. But be assured that all the players will remember a battle with this sort of troll for a long, long time.

SPIRIT KNIGHT

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
25	STR	58*	**OCV:** 5; **DCV:** 5; **ECV:** 4
15	DEX	15	**Phases:** 4, 8, 12
—	CON	—	**Costs**
10†	BODY	40	**Char:** 140　　**Base:** 100
10	INT	0	+ +
11	EGO	2	**Powers:** 100　**Disad:** 140
20	PRE	10	= =
10†	COM	10	**Totals:** 240　　　　240
8‡	PD	—	
8‡	ED	—	* – Bought with Affects Real World (+2) and
3	SPD	5	No END Cost (+½), OIF Armor (-½).
—	REC	—	† – Bought with Affects Real World (+2),
—	END	—	OIF Armor (-½).
—	STUN	—	‡ – Bought as Armor; see Powers List for cost.

Cost	Powers
48	Armor, +8 PD, +8 ED
7	Normal Vision
7	Normal Hearing
24	Running 6"
2	Familiarity with common melee weapons
12	+4 with swords

100+	Disadvantages
100	8d6 Susceptibility to helmet removal or opening, per phase
40	Vulnerability to magical attacks, 1.5x damage

Note: All Powers are bought with +2 Affects Real World, -½ OIF.

Note: Note that the STR, BODY, COM are all bought from a starting value of 0.

The spirit knight is an empty suit of armor that's nearly impossible to defeat in single combat. Well, of course that depends on how good the hero is, and how the GM chooses to alter this writeup. This particular spirit knight may not be as fast as some heroes, but it is stronger than most and skilled with a sword. The GM may want to give the spirit knight an enchanted blade, too, to make things even more difficult.

Spirit knights are created as servants or guardians by a powerful necromancer, in most cases. They are terribly difficult to stop, since they have heavy plate armor and a fair amount of BODY. However, if you can somehow manage to remove its helmet or open its helmet, this will release the spirit and destroy the creature. (The GM is free to consider the Consume Spirit effect from the Susceptibility as meaning either of two things: the spirit was destroyed, or the spirit was freed and returned to where it belongs, wherever that may be.)

VAMPIRE

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
—	STR	—	**OCV:** 7
21	DEX	33	**DCV:** 7
—	CON	—	**ECV:** 9
—	BODY	—	**Phases:** 3, 6, 9, 12
18	INT	8	
26	EGO	32	**Costs**
40	PRE	30	
—	COM	—	**Char:** 112 **Base:** 100
—	PD	—	+ +
—	ED	—	**Powers:** 773 **Disad:** 785
4	SPD	9	= =
—	REC	—	**Totals:** 885 885
—	END	—	
—	STUN	—	

Cost	Powers
84	6d6 Mind Control, Limited Range (-¼), No END Cost
50	10d6 Mental Illusions, Only To Create Self-Image (-2), Actions Limited By Image (-1), No Range (-½), Area Effect Radius 20" (+1), No END Cost (+½) Always On (-½), Persistent (+½)
72	Telekinesis STR 30, Area Effect 1 hex, Only As If A Body (-1), No Range (-½), No END Cost
315	2d6 Consume Spirit, Recovery per week (+1¾), No END Cost
70	2d6 BODY Drain, Linked to Consume Spirit, No END Cost, Recovery per week (+1¾)
60	2d6 Cumulative Transform, Spirit to Vampire, No END Cost
15, 15	Normal Vision; Night Vision
15, 10	Normal Hearing; Astral Vision

Cost	Skills
24	+3 all combat
3, 3	Conversation 17-; Persuasion 17-
3, 3	Oratory 17-; Seduction 17-
3, 7	High Society 17-; Shadowing 13-
3, 3	Concealment 13-; Stealth 13-
3, 3	Bribery 17-; Bureaucratics 13-
3, 3	Deduction 13-; KS: Transylvania 13-
0, 3	Rumanian (native); English

100+	Disadvantages
50	Vulnerability to wood and other attacks, 2x damage
65	Susceptibility: wood and other attacks, 10d6 damage per phase
75	Susceptibility to sunlight, 5D6, per phase
55	Susceptibility to holy symbols, 3d6 per segment
10	Dependence: Must sleep in native earth, 2d6 per day
5	Dependence: must have blood to survive, 2d6 per day
40	Repelled by holy places, Physical Limitation 20 points, and Psychological Limitation 20 points
40	Repelled by holy symbols, Physical Limitation 20 points, and Psychological Limitation 20 points
15	Repelled by garlic and some other herbs (Physical Limitation)
50	Stays dormant during daylight, Physical Limitation 25 points, and Psychological Limitation 25 points
40	Repelled by dwellings unless invited, Physical Limitation 20 points, and Psychological Limitation 20 points
340	Bonus

Vampires have been the subject of hundreds of stories, and it seems as if each author has their own interpretation of vampire abilities. Certainly there is no one correct way to write up a vampire in game terms; each GM will have his own idea of what vampires should be like. This writeup is closer to the classical vampire, a highly powerful supernatural being that feeds off of the life force of living people. This version of a vampire has no true physical existence, but it's a malevolent spirit that presents itself as having a humanoid form.

Here's a key thing about this vampire; he's not based on raw power, but on cleverness and subtlety. The vampire's weaknesses are many, and to survive he must use his powers, skills, and cunning to the fullest extent possible. Especially when determined heroes, armed with knowledge and weapons, come hunting for him.

This vampire's Mind Control is limited to a fairly close range where good eye contact can be made, generally less than 6 meters or so, but it can be further if the circumstances are right. You'll notice that the vampire's Mind Control isn't that powerful; he relies on his cleverness in setting up situations where this power can be used, and on his overwhelming Presence and personal skills (like Persuasion and Seduction).

His Mental Illusions are merely to create the image of his body (or of his other forms, the bat, the wolf, the mist, and others the GM might wish to use). Because this is a Mental Illusion, the vampire's image will not appear in a mirror or on film. It's all in your mind, in an area around the vampire where he can be seen. You'll note that the vampire's actions are limited by his form, although he is a spirit and can technically

do many "impossible" things. Still, if the vampire wants to go down a sheer wall, he does so by appearing to cling to the surface, or by taking bat form, rather than just showing his body levitating (or indeed, by disappearing and reappearing). The vampire cannot become invisible; he must always show himself in some form. The classical vampire is limited to human, bat, wolf, and mist; the GM may wish to define other forms that the vampire may assume.

The vampire's Telekinesis is used to further the illusion that there is an actual body there. The Telekinesis gives a real tactile impression to someone who might touch the vampire, and of course it also allows the vampire to exert tremendous Strength on the real world. This is the source of the vampire's main "attack," if he is ever forced into such crude methods. (Though the vampire works hard to avoid any such confrontation.)

So the vampire, while appearing to be a real form, is merely a mirage, yet with the ability to affect the real world when he so desires. In this fashion the vampire is immune to damage from almost all sources; bullets pass through him with no more effect than if they passed through smoke. However, the vampire is in some sense bound to this representation of a body, so that attacking with a wooden stake is attacking the spirit directly, too, because of the vampire's Disadvantages.

The vampire normally feeds by draining his victim's life force, defined as a Consume Spirit where the points are transferred to the vampire's EGO (often to restore the effects of EGO lost because of the vampire's Dependence on blood). Note that this really isn't EGO, in the sense that it doesn't add to the vampire's ability to use ECV-based attacks or to resist same. This EGO score is just a marker, as EGO is used in Shift Spirit. The BODY Drain that accompanies the Consume Spirit represents the total blood loss that the victim endures; this is part and parcel of the Consume Spirit, so the two are linked.

Usually a vampire feeds all at once, slaying the victim in a minute or so. The vampire will often approach the victim as a friend, using all his masterful skills to persuade the victim to give in willingly. Willingly, that is, until the fangs enter the victim's neck...by which point it's too late, usually. The vampire's attack takes a number of phases to complete, but generally the victim can't do much, paralyzed by the vampire's immense STR. Help from others is usually the only answer.

The vampire may, if he chooses, convert a victim into a vampire. This is done in conjunction with the Consume Spirit described above. As the final part of this sequence, the vampire completes his Cumulative Transform upon the spirit of his victim, who then becomes a vampire (having died in the process, of course). Since the victim doubtless has far less points than the mature vampire, many abilities will have to be sacrificed or reduced in order to make the points balance, if that is important to the GM.

The vampire has numerous skills, many of them based on Presence, of course. The vampire will use his skills to deflect the curious and to arrange for a steady supply of easy victims, hopefully without endangering the vampire's secret in the slightest. That, of course, is where the heroes come in. The GM should play this vampire as the most cunning adversary the heroes can face.

ZOMBIE

Val	Char	Cost	Combat Stats
15	STR	15*	OCV: 4; DCV: 4; ECV: 3
11	DEX	3	Phases: 4, 8, 12
—	CON	—	Costs
10†	BODY	17	Char: 58 Base: 100
8	INT	-2	+ +
10	EGO	0	Powers: 22 Disad: -20
20	PRE	10	= =
2†	COM	1	Totals: 80 80
3†	PD	3	
2†	ED	2	* – Bought with Affects Real World (+2) and
3	SPD	9	No END Cost (+½), OIF Body (-½),
—	REC	—	Independent (-2).
—	END	—	† – Bought with Affects Real World (+2),
—	STUN	—	OIF Body (-½), Independent (-2).

Cost	Powers
9	½d6 HKA claws/teeth, Reduced Penetration (2 x½d6 w/STR)*
4	Normal Vision†
4	Night Vision†
5	Running 3"†

100+	Disadvantages
30	Vulnerability to fire as Consume Spirit
25	Bound to body, physical
-75	Unused points

Note: All Powers are bought with +2 Affects Real World, -½ OIF.

Note: Note that the STR, BODY, COM are all bought from a starting value of 0.

Zombies are spirits animating recently dead bodies. Usually this occurs because of a necromancer creating servants for himself, but sometimes it's just because of an invading spirit. The zombie body is treated as an Independent Focus for the purposes of this writeup, though of course when zombification happens in the course of a game, you'll just use whatever Characteristics the dead body had when it was alive, and hang the point cost.

Zombies can be much more powerful than this; some zombies are extremely tough (normal weapons bounce off of them; treat as high Armor values). Usually, though, zombies are fairly slow and can't do all that much damage. Zombies usually do well against normal people, who are scared out of their wits by the sight of walking dead men. (As, indeed, are all sane people except for player-characters.) Zombies could also wear armor and use weapons, if the GM desires. This particular zombie isn't a very tough one, except for the fact that you have to do a lot of hacking to carve him up. When the body is destroyed, the spirit is also destroyed (or it leaves, which has the same effect in game terms).

A warrior with good physical Characteristics, wearing armor and bearing weapons, would be a much tougher

Horror Hero
Endless Nightmares™

Be Afraid.
Be Very Afraid.

Add a new dimension of spine-tingling terror to your Hero System roleplaying with *Horror Hero: Endless Nightmares,* the new Hero System genre book! *Horror Hero* is packed with new rules, new characters, new magic systems, new monsters, and several terrifying campaign backgrounds. Plus, there are complete rules for adding, creating and GMing horror stories in any Hero System game. Absolutely the best book on roleplaying horror for any game system!

INSIDE, YOU'LL FIND:

- Horror Magic
- Psychic Powers
- New Rules for Stress and Degradation
- Revised Spirit Rules
- Three Complete Campaign Settings!

Everything you need to start experiencing those spine-tingling chills-down-your-back is inside. Finally, the definitive book for simulating Horror roleplaying for the *Hero System* is here! Don't miss it.

To play Horror Hero, the player must already own the *Hero System Rulesbook* or *Champions.*

Playable with

CHAMPIONS ®
THE **SUPER** ROLE-PLAYING GAME

And all other
HERO SYSTEM™ Games

I.C.E.

HERO GAMES