

DIGITAL HERO

#18

MAR 2004



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DIGITAL HERO

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Issue #18 (March 2004)



When Last We Left Our Heroes...

by Steven S. Long

As most of the *Digital Hero* readers know by now, last month we shook up the schedule a bit. Inserting *Hero System Sidekick* and *Sharper Than a Serpent's Tooth* into December's schedule put me significantly behind on *The Turakian Age*, so we moved up a book I wrote last year in my spare time – *Gadgets And Gear*.

G&G is essentially the technological equivalent of *The UNTIL Superpowers Database*, though it's not nearly as long because so many gadget write-ups can easily stand in for others with a few changes in appearance, special effect, or Power Modifiers. It provides hundreds of pre-built gadgets for use by any *Champions* character, making it a quick and easy matter to create a gadgeteer, a powered armor hero, or a weaponmaster.

The book is divided into six chapters. The first and largest, taking up about half the book, is weapons. If you're looking for a powerful blaster pistol, fear gas, "theme" weapons that match a character's costume or iconic inspiration, energy whips, or the like, you'll find them here.

When you've got weapons, you need defenses, and that's what's in Chapter Two. The first section of the chapter covers powered armor. It includes a series of random generation tables through which you can roll up the basics of a suit of powered armor in just a few minutes. You can then arrange the various weapons and systems to suit yourself and fit them into your character's allotted number of points. The rest of the chapter covers force field projectors, helmets, and other defensive devices.

Chapter Three focuses (no pun intended!) on movement gadgets. Some of these are non-vehicular forms of vehicles from Chapter Four of *The HERO System Vehicle Sourcebook*, such as the Rocketboard and Rocket Flyer. Others, like the Copterpack, Mechano-Stilts, and Teleportation Disks, are completely new. Chapter Four covers sensory and communications gadgets – things like infrared goggles, communicards, and mindscanner headbands.

Chapter Five, "Hot Couture," discusses the subject of gadgets built into costumes or parts of costumes (belts, gloves, capes, and the like). Technically, a lot of the gadgets in this chapter could easily fit into one of the other chapters (they're weapons, or defensive, or what have you), but it seemed both fun and useful to group them into a category of their own.

Last but not least there's a chapter of miscellaneous gadgets. These are devices that don't comfortably fit into any of the other categories, or which have multiple functions.

Naturally, a lot of the gadgets in G&G were inspired by gadgets we've all seen in the comics we know and love. When you read the descriptions and powers for things like the Web Projector, Questionite Shield, Power Staff, or Ice Blaster, you probably won't have much trouble figuring out what their inspiration was. I doubt they'll settle any of the "how do I build so-and-so" debates that crop up from time to time, but at least they give me a standard to reference when people ask about such things. ;-)

What's Missing

Of course, just like the USPD, G&G can't cover everything; it's got to have limits. First, it's not a book of rules about gadgets, or for building gadgets. It's a collection of pre-built gadgets – a resource book rather than a rules supplement.

Second, it doesn't include any mystic artifacts or enchanted items. That's a subject worthy of a book in itself, or of coverage in a book devoted to mystic superheroes. However, you can easily change the special effect of a gadget to make it mystical instead of technological; for example, the Power Staff could easily be a mystic talisman.

Third, it doesn't include real-world weapons or gear, or other mundane items. You can find those in a number of other books, particularly the *Dark Champions* line of supplements.

Fourth, it doesn't have any vehicles. *The HERO System Vehicle Sourcebook* and many other supplements published by Hero Games address that subject thoroughly.

Fifth, it doesn't have any bases or base devices. That, too, deserves its own book.

Sixth, it doesn't include any "doomsday devices" or like items. Many other Hero products, including *Champions* and *VIPER*, cover that subject adequately.

Seventh, it doesn't feature any robots or like devices (though a few of the gadgets are built as Automotons because that's the best way to simulate a particular special effect).

And in Conclusion...

...I'll bet you're as eager to see this book now as I am. Between it and the USPD, we should have all the major tools in place for players to build *Champions* characters of any sort quickly and easily. If I get ambitious, maybe I'll even try to come up with a random character generation system using both books. ;-)

— Steven S. Long
HERO System Line Developer



HEROglyphs by Steven S. Long

Save Versus Rules Conversion Building Avoidance Rules Into Powers

One of the subjects I chose not to cover in *Fantasy Hero* was the topic of general rules for avoiding some types of damage, spells, powers, or other effects – what That Other Game (TM) calls a “saving throw.” In general terms, this means the target of some types of attacks can make a roll of some sort to avoid or diminish the effects the attack, so we’ll call this an “avoidance roll” system.

In *HERO System* terms, creating a rule for this involves two things. First, you have to decide what roll characters can make to avoid an attack. Second, you have to decide the effects of a successful roll, and then represent that in game terms; this includes deciding what attacks can and cannot be avoided with an avoidance roll.

Effects of Avoidance Rolls

Taking the second question first, the effect of an avoidance roll is easily stated: it allows a character to wholly or partly avoid the effects of an attack. He takes less damage, or no damage, or the like.

If an ability – be it a spell, a weapon, an innate power, or something else – doesn’t always fully affect its target, then it’s restricted. In *HERO System* terms, restrictions on powers are represented with Limitations. The accompanying Avoidance Roll Table offers suggested values for this Limitation, based on the protective capacity of a successful roll and any modifiers to the roll. If the protective capacity depends on how successful the roll is (such as “reduce attack by 50%, +5% per point by which the roll is made”), then determine the base value of the Limitation from the base level of reduction (50%, in this case).

Defining avoidance rolls as a type of Limitation also tells you which attacks can and cannot be avoided with a roll: if the attack takes the *Avoidance Roll* Limitation, targets can avoid its affects (partly or wholly) with a successful roll; if it does not take that Limitation, no avoidance is possible. The GM has the final say as to whether an ability should take the Limitation, and if so how the roll should be defined and what affect it has.

The Roll Itself

When determining the rolls involved in an avoidance roll system, the GM has to decide two things:

1. What types of rolls are used?
2. How many rolls are used?

AVOIDANCE ROLL TABLE

| Value | Effect |
|-------|---|
| -½ | Successful roll reduces effect of attack by up to 49% |
| -1 | Successful roll reduces effect of attack by 50-75% |
| -1¼ | Successful roll reduces effect of attack by 76-99% |
| -1½ | Successful roll reduces effect of attack by 100% |

| Value | Modifier |
|--------|---|
| 1 more | Character makes avoidance roll at +4 |
| ½ more | Character makes avoidance roll at +2 |
| ¼ more | Character makes avoidance roll at +1 |
| 0 less | Character makes unmodified avoidance roll |
| ¼ less | Character makes avoidance roll at -1 |
| ½ less | Character makes avoidance roll at -2 |
| 1 less | Character makes avoidance roll at -4 |

The maximum value of the Limitation is -0; modifiers cannot make it an Advantage.

TYPES OF ROLLS

First, GMs need to determine the types of rolls involved. Generally speaking, the options are: Characteristic Roll(s), Rolls using existing Skill(s), Rolls using Skill(s) created solely for the avoidance rule system

In many avoidance roll systems, Characteristic Rolls are involved. Typically, a system uses DEX Rolls to avoid standard attacks that have some sort of physical manifestation, EGO Rolls to avoid mental attacks, and CON Rolls to avoid attacks that affect the character’s hardiness, stamina, or the like (such as diseases or poisons). The benefits to this are that all characters already have those rolls, and this allows the GM to tailor character types by including Skill Levels for one or more of these rolls in Package Deals. The drawback is that it may be too cheap and easy for characters to get high avoidance rolls.

Some avoidance roll systems rely on existing Skills – for example, Acrobatics to avoid standard attacks that have some sort of physical manifestation, Deduction to avoid mental attacks, and Survival to avoid attacks that affect the character’s hardiness, stamina, or the



like (such as diseases or poisons). The benefit to this system is that it's more difficult for characters to obtain high avoidance rolls. The difficulties are that (a) the Skill List doesn't necessarily include Skills that pertain to avoiding attacks in any significant respect, and (b) it encourages characters to buy Skills that don't necessarily fit their character conception just to obtain an avoidance roll.

One way to avoid some of the difficulties of an "existing Skill" system is to create special Skills just for use as avoidance rolls: Avoid Physical Attacks; Avoid Mental Attacks; Avoid Stamina Attacks. The GM could set the cost however he wanted, making them Characteristic-Based or Background Skills as desired. Presumably, all characters would get at least a Familiarity with each of these Skills in the Package Deals they buy during character creation. While this does solve some problems, it may require characters to spend too many points on avoidance rolls, and may set a bad precedent in terms of Skill creation.

Regardless of what types of avoidance rolls a system uses, including them does not remove or change any other rules regarding rolls to avoid or diminish the effects of an attack. For example, even if characters get EGO Rolls to avoid the effects of Mental Powers, a character who fails the roll (or who doesn't succeed in avoiding the entire effect) still gets his normal Breakout Roll.

NUMBER OF ROLLS

The other thing to consider is how many different types of avoidance rolls a system features. All of the above examples use three rolls, but depending on the GM's preference an avoidance system could use one roll, two, five, ten, or the like – it all depends on how the GM wants to subdivide the types of attacks avoidance rolls apply to. Having fewer rolls may reduce some of the cost problems mentioned above, but raise the potential problem of characters buying their avoidance rolls too high.

Example Avoidance Roll Abilities

Here are some example spells for a *Fantasy Hero* game with an avoidance roll system based on using DEX, EGO, and CON Rolls, as described above.

CHARM MIND

Effect: Mind Control 10d6
Target/Area Affected: One character
Casting Time: Half Phase (Attack Action)
Casting Procedures: Focus, Gestures, Incantations
Duration: Instant
Range: LOS
Magic Roll Penalty: -5
END Cost: 5

Description: This spell allows the spellcaster to take control of another person's mind; the target can avoid the effects with a successful EGO Roll.

Game Information: Mind Control 10d6 (50 Active Points); OAF Expendable (special gold coin with a sorcery rune carved in each side, Very Difficult to obtain; -1½), Avoidance Roll (if target succeeds with an EGO Roll, he suffers no effect; -1½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½), Spell (-½). Total cost: 9 points.

INFLICT PLAGUE

Effect: Drain 2d6, any 1 Characteristic at a time

Target/Area Affected: One character

Casting Time: Full Phase (Attack Action)

Casting Procedures: Focus, Gestures, Incantations

Duration: Instant

Range: 325"

Magic Roll Penalty: -7

END Cost: 7

Description: This spell allows a spellcaster to inflict a loathsome disease upon another person. The target may make a CON Roll at +1 to avoid the illness.

Game Information: Drain 2d6, any Characteristic one at a time (+¼), Ranged (+½), Delayed Recover Rate (points return at the rate of 5 per Month; +2) (75 Active Points); OAF Expendable (the tongue of a pig steeped in serpent's venom, Difficult to obtain; -1¼), Avoidance Roll (if target succeeds with a CON Roll at +1, he takes no damage; -1¾), Extra Time (Full Phase; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½), Spell (-½). Total cost: 12 points.

LIGHTNING BOLT

Effect: RKA 4d6

Target/Area Affected: One character

Casting Time: Half Phase (Attack Action)

Casting Procedures: Focus, Gestures, Incantations

Duration: Instant

Range: 300"

Magic Roll Penalty: -6

END Cost: 6

Description: This spell projects a powerful bolt of lightning at a target from the caster's fingertips. A sufficiently agile target may avoid some of the bolt's effects, but not all of them.

Game Information: RKA 4d6 (60 Active Points); OAF Expendable (a small piece of meteoric iron, Difficult to obtain; -1¼), Avoidance Roll (if target succeeds with a DEX Roll at -2, he takes half damage; -½), Gestures (-¼), Incantations (-¼), Requires A Magic Roll (-½), Spell (-½). Total cost: 14 points.

Hero Universe

 by Darren Watts

Ni hao, friends and fellow travelers on the highways and byways of the Champions Universe! Welcome again to Part Five of our ongoing look at the Sentinels, their allies, enemies, and assistants over the course of their long and varied existence. When last we looked in on our heroes, it was 1968, and the regular roster of the team consisted of Microman, Scarlet Archer, Hex, and Ranger, with Dr. Phantom sidelined by injury and Rocketman and Meteor Man II on reserve status due to complications in their own solo careers.

DATELINE: New York City, August 24, 1970
(Exclusive to the New York Daily Bulletin)

Traffic was snarled for blocks downtown yesterday afternoon and two bystanders suffered minor injuries, as the Sentinels clashed with the villain group known only as the Black Circle in a battle that spread from Park Avenue and 52nd Street all the way to United Nations Plaza.

At this time it's unknown what started the fracas, but the first signs of the conflict were reported by witnesses at about 4:30 pm, when Meteorman, Scarlet Archer, Hex, and the newest member of the Sentinels, the mysterious Black Mantis, were seen pursuing the Circle's alleged leader, the alleged terrorist Aslan, south down Park Avenue. Aslan was reportedly leaping across the street from the roof of one car to another, apparently trying to lose himself in traffic. At least one eye witness claimed Aslan was carrying a small device or weapon that the heroes seemed bent on retrieving, but no one involved would comment on that allegation.

Within a few minutes, both the Sentinels and Aslan had additional allies on the scene, and a battle was played out that covered several blocks. The remainder of the current lineup of Sentinels (Rocketman, Dr. Phantom, Microman, and Rainmaker) cut off Aslan's line of escape along 50th Street as he left Park Avenue, while Meteorman soared overhead, and Mantis and Scarlet Archer engaged him in combat in front of Hiram's Deli. Witnesses report that at that point, when it seemed Aslan had no opportunity to escape, the rest of the Black Circle members arrived on the scene and a spirited and violent battle broke out.

According to bystanders, Aslan tossed the device he was carrying to the notorious speedster Jack Flash, who raced off up 50th Street with Rocketman, Meteorman, and Rainmaker in pursuit. The unusual-looking female called Jaundice engaged Dr. Phantom and Microman, reportedly making them ill with her supernatural abilities. While Aslan and Mantis engaged in a hand-to-hand battle almost too fast to follow

with the human eye, the alien creature called Syfon used its own abilities to somehow "steal" Meteorman's powers and then used them against Rocketman, while Rainmaker rescued his now-drained ally from falling into the street. A couple of blocks away, the supervillains called Anvil and Dr. Web engaged Hex and the Scarlet Archer as well, but rapidly retreated once it became clear that Dr. Web's "Web-Gun" was no match for Scarlet Archer's array of arrows.

The young hero Rainmaker rapidly pursued Jack Flash over several city blocks. As the speedy villain ducked and weaved, the Native American matched him, summoning fierce winds that kept him aloft (and incidentally destroyed several display windows at Gerrold's Department Store). Eventually Flash ducked down a side alley and headed west towards Central Park, with Rainmaker still in dogged pursuit. The rest of the fighters slipped off in different directions, with most of the Sentinels heading in the general direction of Jack Flash and Rainmaker. This reporter attempted to ask Scarlet Archer some questions as they went by, but his only comment to me was unfit to print in a family newspaper.

Henry Abong, who works at a gas station on the corner of 50th and 2nd Ave and saw most of the battle as it unfolded, called the experience "one of the most frightening things I've ever seen. You see stuff like that on the news, but nobody tells you how scary it is to be that close to something like that. Rocketman is so loud in person, it hurts your ears when he flies by. And that new guy, Mantis, I'm sure the Sentinels wouldn't have let him in if he wasn't a good guy, but why's he gotta dress all in black? Makes him look like a bad guy, is all I'm saying."

More next month, as our heroes head into space and a city mourns...

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The write-ups for the Sentinels in this and following articles represent the heroes after they've had a few years of experience under their belts. If portraying them at the beginnings of their careers, you may want to lop off some skill levels or secondary powers. Later in their careers, you may want to buy up their skills, levels, and possibly add some new powers to represent tricks they've learned over the years, while diminishing some of their physical stats slightly to represent their advanced age (especially those who served into their late forties and even early fifties).

Rainmaker

Background/History: George Odenaw was a native of the Anagash Indian Nation, born in 1939 and raised on the Long Cloud Village Reservation in northern Maine. George came from a long line of chiefs and healers, but though he showed great respect to the elders of the Anagash, he didn't believe in any of the legends and stories they told. Instead, he wanted to protect his people and help them adopt modern technology and means of business, so he went away to college to study law and politics, returning to his tribe in 1963 and setting up a private practice representing the Anagash and other tribes in property disputes and civil rights cases. For several years he worked from a one-room office in Lewiston, taking on cases against both the State and Federal governments as well as local corporations.

In 1968, he was summoned to an evening meeting with the Anagash tribal elders. Expecting to be discussing assorted contracts and property disputes, he was surprised to instead be invited to an outdoor fireside spiritual ceremony. Annoyed at having his time wasted, George nevertheless felt he could not afford to insult the tribal elders and agreed to join them. As the group sat around the campfire, burning herbs and offering up prayers to the spirits, George found himself greatly enjoying the ceremony, and began to relax. Soon he had drifted off into a peaceful sleep.

In his dreams, George found himself talking to Pajackok, the spirit of Thunder and one of the most important and powerful spirits in the Anagash pantheon. Pajackok told him that a great evil was gathering in the afterworld, as the thousand-year imprisonment of the evil spirit called Chantico was coming to an end and the Anagash needed a champion to protect them (and, incidentally, the rest of the world) from his dark magics. Pajackok told George that thanks to his commitment to the welfare of his people and his fine lineage, he had been selected to wield the power of the Rainmaker.

When George awoke, the tribal elders were watching him intently, as if they knew precisely what he had been dreaming. George was shaken up by his strange vision, but still was dismissive of the ancient beliefs and passed off his dream as a hallucination inspired by the ceremony and his own exhaustion. The elders seemed a bit frustrated with his stubbornness, but let him leave.

Back in Lewiston the next day, George was hard at work at his desk when he heard a strange disturbance in the street outside. Looking out his window, he saw that the street had been overrun with hideous nightmare versions of different kinds of animals, like birds, beavers, foxes and

snakes, smashing windows and chasing after shoppers and workers. In the middle of the street stood a half-naked man with a wolfskin headdress, laughing. He seemed to shimmer from within, as if he wasn't entirely *there*, and the air around him felt charged with negative energy. George felt a powerful revulsion twisting inside him, and realized that his vision had somehow been real. He prayed at that moment for the power to fight off the evil spirit, and when he opened his eyes again he found himself garbed in a costume of animal skin painted with powerful symbols. Thanking the spirits, he leapt out the window to engage Chantico in battle. Using his newfound power to control the weather, he battered his opponent with icy winds and bolts of lightning, finally driving Chantico back to his shadowy realm. (Of course, he was to return over and over again over the next two decades.)

Adopting the name Rainmaker, George became his tribe's mystical protector and New England's foremost superhero over the next year, dealing regularly with Maine's vast population of ghosts, spirits, and mystical travelers. In 1969 he was consulted by the Sentinels on a case involving the malevolent scarecrow Jackstraw, and after defeating him was invited to join the team. He accepted, and over the next twenty years served as one of the team's most stalwart and powerful members as well as acting as the team's lawyer and advocate in dealing with various government agencies.

Rainmaker retired from active service in 1989, and took a job briefly working for DOSPA. However, in 1990 he was poisoned by the superhuman assassin Raul Esparza and was hospitalized for several days in a near-death coma. While in the hospital he was visited by Chantico, who planned to "harvest" his old foe's mystical abilities and use them himself. Instead, Rainmaker passed his powers on to his nurse, Christina Lazzeri, who became the heroine Tempest and carries on the battle against Chantico and other evil spirits today. Rainmaker himself passed to a higher spiritual plane, from where he has occasionally provided advice and visions to Tempest.

Personality/Motivation: Becoming the Rainmaker caused a complete spiritual epiphany in the once-worldly young lawyer. George wholeheartedly adopted the mystical worldview of his tribe's elders and regularly interacted with powerful elemental forces and beings. However, he retained the analytical and thoughtful manner of a lawyer, and was well-known among his teammates for his calm and rational manner even when dealing with outrageous and dangerous situations. He was a rock of emotional stability for many of his younger teammates throughout

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Rainmaker

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|--------------------------|
| 12 | STR | 2 | 11- | Lift 130 kg; 2d6 HTH [1] |
| 20 | DEX | 30 | 13- | OCV: 7/DCV: 7 |
| 18 | CON | 16 | 13- | |
| 12 | BODY | 4 | 11- | |
| 20 | INT | 10 | 13- | PER Roll: 13- |
| 16 | EGO | 12 | 12- | ECV: 5 |
| 20 | PRE | 10 | 13- | PRE Attack: 4d6 |
| 18 | COM | 4 | 13- | |
| 7 | PD | 5 | | Total: 30 PD (23 rPD) |
| 9 | ED | 5 | | Total: 25 ED (16 rED) |
| 5 | SPD | 20 | | Phases: 3, 5, 8, 10, 12 |
| 7 | REC | 2 | | |
| 40 | END | 2 | | |
| 30 | STUN | 3 | | |

Total Characteristics Cost: 125

| Movement: | Running: | 6"/12" |
|-----------|-----------|---------|
| | Flight: | 20"/40" |
| | Leaping: | 2"/4" |
| | Swimming: | 2"/4" |

Cost Powers **END**

| | | |
|-----|--|---|
| 126 | <i>Weather Control:</i> Multipower, 101-point reserve, all slots Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼) | |
| 8u | 1) <i>General Weather Control:</i> Change Environment in 8 km Radius, Temperature Adjustment: 6 Levels, Megascale (1" = 1 km; +¼), Varying Effect (Broad Group, +1), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼) | 4 |
| 5u | 2) <i>Driving Storms:</i> Change Environment in 16 km Radius, -4 to Sight Group PER Rolls, Varying Effect (Limited Group; +¼), Megascale (1" = 1 km; +¼), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼) | 2 |
| 4u | 3) <i>Whirlwinds:</i> Telekinesis (30 STR), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼); Affects Whole Object (-¼) | 2 |
| 6u | 4) <i>Tornado:</i> Energy Blast 8d6, Random Knockback (+0), Area Of Effect (4" Radius, +1), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼); Not Underwater or in Vacuum (-¼) | 4 |
| 7u | 5) <i>Blizzard Winds:</i> Energy Blast 5d6, No Normal Defense (Life Support: Intense Cold, +1), Area Of Effect (5" Radius, +1), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼) | 3 |
| 10u | 6) <i>Gust of Wind:</i> Energy Blast 7d6, Double Knockback (+¾), Area Of Effect (13" Cone, +1), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼) | 5 |
| 6u | 7) <i>Lightning Blast:</i> Energy Blast 13d6, Indirect (Comes from Above, +¼), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼); Only when Cloudy (-¼) | 4 |

| | | |
|----|--|---|
| 4u | 8) <i>Thunderclap:</i> Hearing Group Flash 15d6, Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼) | 2 |
| 3u | 9) <i>Wind Shield:</i> Force Field (15 PD/8 ED), Protects Carried Items, Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼) | 1 |
| 3u | 10) <i>Wind Riding:</i> Flight 20", Usable By Other (+¼), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼); Passenger Must be within 4" of Rainmaker (-½) | 2 |
| 8u | 11) <i>Deep Freeze:</i> Drain DEX 4d6, Continuous (+1), Reduced Endurance (½ END; +¼) | 4 |
| 7 | <i>Climate Control:</i> Life Support (Safe in Intense Cold and Heat), Area Of Effect (4" Radius, +1½); Costs Endurance (-½) | 1 |
| 12 | <i>Spirit Sense:</i> Detect Magic 13-, Discriminatory, Sense | 0 |
| 12 | <i>Calling the Spirits:</i> Summon 50-point Nature Spirits, Expanded Class of Beings, Very Limited Group (+¼) | 1 |
| 45 | <i>Disrupting the Paths:</i> Dispel Magic 12d6, One At A Time (+¼) | 4 |
| 10 | <i>Padded Costume:</i> Armor (5 PD/5 ED); OIF (-½) | 0 |

Perks

| | |
|----|---|
| 3 | Fringe Benefit: Membership: Sentinels |
| 1 | Fringe Benefit: Licensed Lawyer |
| 15 | Contact: Anagash Tribe 11- (Useful Skills or Resources, Very Good Relationship, Organization) |
| 2 | Reputation: Native American Hero 8- (medium sized group), +2/+2d6 |

Talents

| | |
|---|-------------|
| 6 | Combat Luck |
|---|-------------|

Skills

| | |
|---|---|
| 9 | +3 with Multipower |
| 3 | Breakfall 13- |
| 3 | Bureaucratics 13- |
| 3 | Concealment 13- |
| 3 | CuK: Anagash Tribe 13- |
| 7 | KS: Law 17- |
| 5 | KS: Reservation Law 15- |
| 3 | KS: Nature Spirits 13- |
| 3 | KS: Occultism 13- |
| 4 | Language: English (Anagash native) (Idiomatic, native accent) |
| 2 | Navigation (Land) 13- |
| 3 | Oratory 13- |
| 3 | Power: Weather Control 13- |
| 3 | PS: Lawyer 13- |
| 3 | Streetwise 13- |
| 4 | Survival (Arctic/Subarctic Forests, Temperate/Subtropical Forests, Urban) 13- |

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 364

Total Cost: 489



200+ Disadvantages

- 0 Distinctive Features: Native American (Easily Concealed, Not Distinctive in Some Cultures)
- 25 DNPC: Anagash Tribe 8- (Useful, 16x DNPCs)
- 15 Hunted: Chantico 8- (More Pow, Harsh, Character Has Public ID)
- 20 Psychological Limitation: Protective of His Tribe (Common, Total)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Very Aware of His Public Responsibilities to His Race (Common, Moderate)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Code versus Killing (Common, Strong)
- 5 Rivalry: Other Lawyers (Professional, As Pow, Outdo, Rival Aware)
- 15 Social Limitation: Public Identity (Frequently, Major)
- 184 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 489

his career. This inner calmness also served him very well when dealing with politicians and government officials.

George's first priority always was the protection and preservation of the Anagash people, but this was rarely a source of conflict in the team. When not working with the Sentinels, he spent most of his time in Maine, where he frequently worked with other mystical heroes like The Witness and Candlemas.

Quote: "The world is a far more complicated place than you imagine."

Powers/Tactics: Rainmaker is a powerful sorcerer specializing in the manipulation of weather effects through command of the "spirits of nature." By calling on these spirits Rainmaker can create powerful storms over large areas or specific weather effects within small ones, like gusts of hurricane-strength winds or lightning strikes. Unfortunately, when Rainmaker uses his powers too extensively, it tends to affect the weather patterns of nearby areas; for example, if he calls a sizable amount of rain to one location, nearby areas can suffer dryness or even droughts, so he rarely uses his powers on a large scale. He has in the past used his powers more subtly, to blunt the effects of hurricanes, tornadoes, and blizzards without dissipating them entirely.

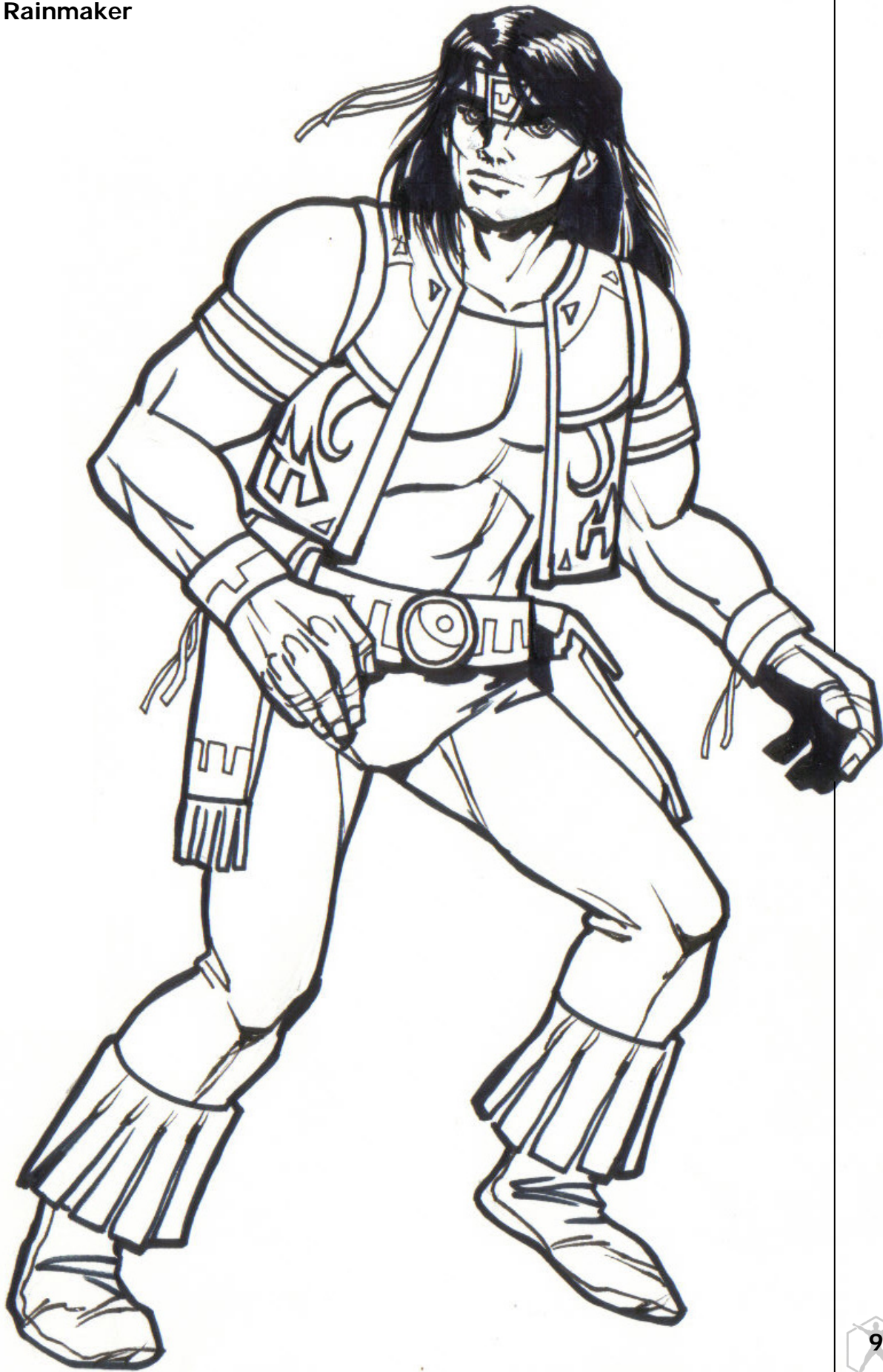
In combat, Rainmaker usually calls upon wind spirits to carry him through the air, while others freeze or batter his opponents. He may also call on such effects as deafening thunder or paralyzing cold, and reserves attacks like bolts of lightning for his most powerful enemies. He is quite capable in combat, though he always prefers to use the minimum force necessary. In fact, his first instinct is usually to try to talk his way out of having to resort to violence, which unfortunately rarely works.

Rainmaker can also call on other spirits of the Anagash pantheon for assistance, usually to ask them for advice or information. He can detect the use of magic of any tradition in his immediate vicinity, and craft counterspells to disrupt the mystical powers of his enemies.

Appearance: Rainmaker is a handsome Native American man with shoulder-length black hair and brown eyes, standing about 6'3" and weighing 190 pounds. His costume is a light-brown skintight uniform with bare arms, over which he wears a maroon vest marked with white mystical symbols along the edges. He also wears a darker-brown leather belt (with several small pouches), boots, and headband.



Rainmaker



Black Mantis

Background/History: David Hong was born in Shanghai in 1946 to a local businessman and his wife who were opposed to the Saru Shin triad, who had David's father killed when he was still an infant. Fearing for her son's safety, David's mother gave the child to a monastery on the shore of the East China Sea. There he was raised by the local monks, of whom it is said their leader studied various martial arts at the mysterious Yengtao Temple. Whether or not this claim is true, they were certainly masters of many different styles of fighting, and David grew up to be a master of the Black Mantis style of Kung Fu.

When he reached adulthood and completed his studies with the monks in the early 1960s, David returned to Shanghai seeking information about the fate of his parents. He learned of his father's murder and sought out the leaders of the Saru Shin, but discovered that most of their number had fled to America after losing an underworld war against Dr. Yin Wu in the mid-1950s. He tracked them to Los Angeles, where he learned that the Saru Shin had become the leading criminal organization in that city's Chinatown. In order to battle them more effectively, he adopted a masked identity as the vigilante Black Mantis and spent the second half of the decade bringing his father's killers to justice, as well as incidentally expanding his focus to battling other mobsters and even the occasional costumed criminal, such as the insane serial killer known as the Mocker. During this time he opened a storefront office in Santa Monica, where ordinary people could request his help, and met his girlfriend Meg Yoon, who he married in 1983.

In 1970 Black Mantis teamed with the second Meteor Man to battle the villain Dragonaxe in the streets of Los Angeles. Meteor Man was so impressed with Mantis that he invited him to join the Sentinels, which he did a couple of months later to replace Ranger. Mantis served with the Sentinels until 1985, though he took frequent leaves of absence to deal with issues of west coast organized crime, his first priority. Upon his retirement, Mantis opened a school of martial arts in Santa Monica, where he continues to train students in various styles of kung fu. Among his more recent "graduates" are Bluestar of the Bay Guardians and Strongarm of the outlaw team Nova. He has two daughters, Jun (born in 1989) and Shan (born in 1992).

Personality/Motivation: Black Mantis was one of the most mysterious of the Sentinels, preferring to remain somewhat distant from his teammates and keep his own counsel. Though he was brave and loyal to his teammates, his emotional standoffishness kept him from becoming particularly close to any of them. He frequently felt somewhat "out of place" battling the more outlandish of the Sentinels' enemies, though his skills were frequently vital to the team's success.

Mantis has a very strong personal code of honor, and he is completely devoted to the protection of the innocent and those unable to defend themselves. He also has a strong streak of competitiveness, and can't resist a physical challenge. He trained several of his teammates in the basics of hand-to-hand combat. He was occasionally prone to quoting great martial arts masters of the past.

Quote: "A man can be broken by an outer strength or an inner weakness."

Powers/Tactics: Black Mantis is one of the most skilled hand-to-hand fighters of his time. He also mastered many other skills during his years at the monastery, including silent movement and acrobatics. In his efforts to battle the Saru Shin, he has also become an excellent detective, and on a team as filled with straightforward fighters as the Sentinels in the '70s this might be the most useful ability he contributes. In combat he moves with precision, identifying targets vulnerable to his attacks and taking them out efficiently, while leaving the noisy and dramatic action to his teammates. He's also quite adept at drawing fire, since he has such an enormous DCV when dodging.

Appearance: Black Mantis wears a slightly-padded black leather costume, with gloves and boots, and a full-face mask open at the eyes and mouth. Both the mask and the chest of the costume are outlined in dark red fiery design, and on his upper left chest he has a symbol of a preying mantis, which is also tattooed on the back of his right hand. He's surprisingly short in person, standing about 5'8" and weighing 160 pounds. His hair is black and cut short, and his eyes are brown with pronounced epicanthal folds.

DIGITAL HERO #18

Black Mantis

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|--------------------------|
| 20 | STR | 10 | 13- | Lift 400 kg; 4d6 HTH [2] |
| 29 | DEX | 57 | 15- | OCV: 10/DCV: 10 |
| 23 | CON | 26 | 14- | |
| 15 | BODY | 10 | 12- | |
| 13 | INT | 3 | 12- | PER Roll: 12- |
| 23 | EGO | 26 | 14- | ECV: 8 |
| 25 | PRE | 15 | 14- | PRE Attack: 5d6 |
| 20 | COM | 5 | 13- | |
| 9 | PD | 5 | | Total: 17 PD (14 rPD) |
| 8 | ED | 3 | | Total: 16 ED (8 rED) |
| 7 | SPD | 31 | | Phases: 2,4,6,7,9,11,12 |
| 9 | REC | 0 | | |
| 46 | END | 0 | | |
| 37 | STUN | 0 | | |

Total Characteristics Cost: 203

| | | |
|------------------|-----------|--------|
| Movement: | Running: | 9"/18" |
| | Leaping: | 9"/18" |
| | Swimming: | 3"/6" |

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|---|--------------------------------|
| | Martial Arts: Black Mantis Kung Fu | |
| | Maneuver OCV DCV Notes | |
| 4 | Arm Block +2 +2 | Block, Abort |
| 4 | Claw Strike -2 +0 | 1½d6K |
| 5 | Crescent Kick -2 +1 | 1d6 |
| 4 | Disarm -1 +1 | 45 STR Disarm |
| 4 | Evade — +5 | Dodge, Abort |
| 5 | Leaping Strike +1 +0 | 7d6 + v/5; FMove |
| 5 | Leaping Throw +0 +0 | 7d6 + v/5; Target Falls; FMove |
| 5 | Mantis Clutch -1 -2 | 1 Limb; 1½d6K Disable |
| 4 | Prayer Strike +0 +2 | 9d6 |
| 4 | Reversal -1 -2 | 2 Limbs, 50 STR Escape |
| 3 | Throw +0 +1 | 7d6 + v/5, Target Falls |
| 12 | +3 HTH Damage Classes (added in) | |
| 35 | <i>Warrior's Eye:</i> Find Weakness 12- with All Attacks | 0 |
| 15 | <i>Iron Palm Strike:</i> HKA 1d6 (2d6 with STR), Penetrating (+½); Requires An EGO Roll (-½) | 2 |
| 3 | <i>Mantis Shell:</i> Damage Resistance (6 PD) | 0 |
| 4 | <i>Chi Manipulation:</i> Healing BODY 2d6; Gestures (Throughout, Requires Both Hands, Complex, -1½), Extra Time (1 Turn, -1¼), Requires An EGO Roll (-½), Incantations (-¼) | 2 |
| 4 | <i>Perching:</i> Clinging; Only to "Perch" (-½), Requires a Climbing Roll (-½), Cannot Resist Knockback (-¼) | 0 |
| 10 | <i>Understanding Chi:</i> Power Defense (10 points) | 0 |

| | | |
|----|--|---|
| 5 | <i>Iron Will:</i> Mental Defense (10 points total) | 0 |
| 10 | <i>Padded Costume:</i> Armor (5 PD/5 ED); OIF (-½) | 0 |

Talents

| | |
|----|--|
| 6 | Combat Luck |
| 16 | Combat Sense 13- |
| 22 | Danger Sense (Sense, Immediate Vicinity, Out of Combat, Intuitual) 12- |
| 3 | Lightsleep |
| 3 | Simulate Death |
| 2 | Trackless Stride |

Skills

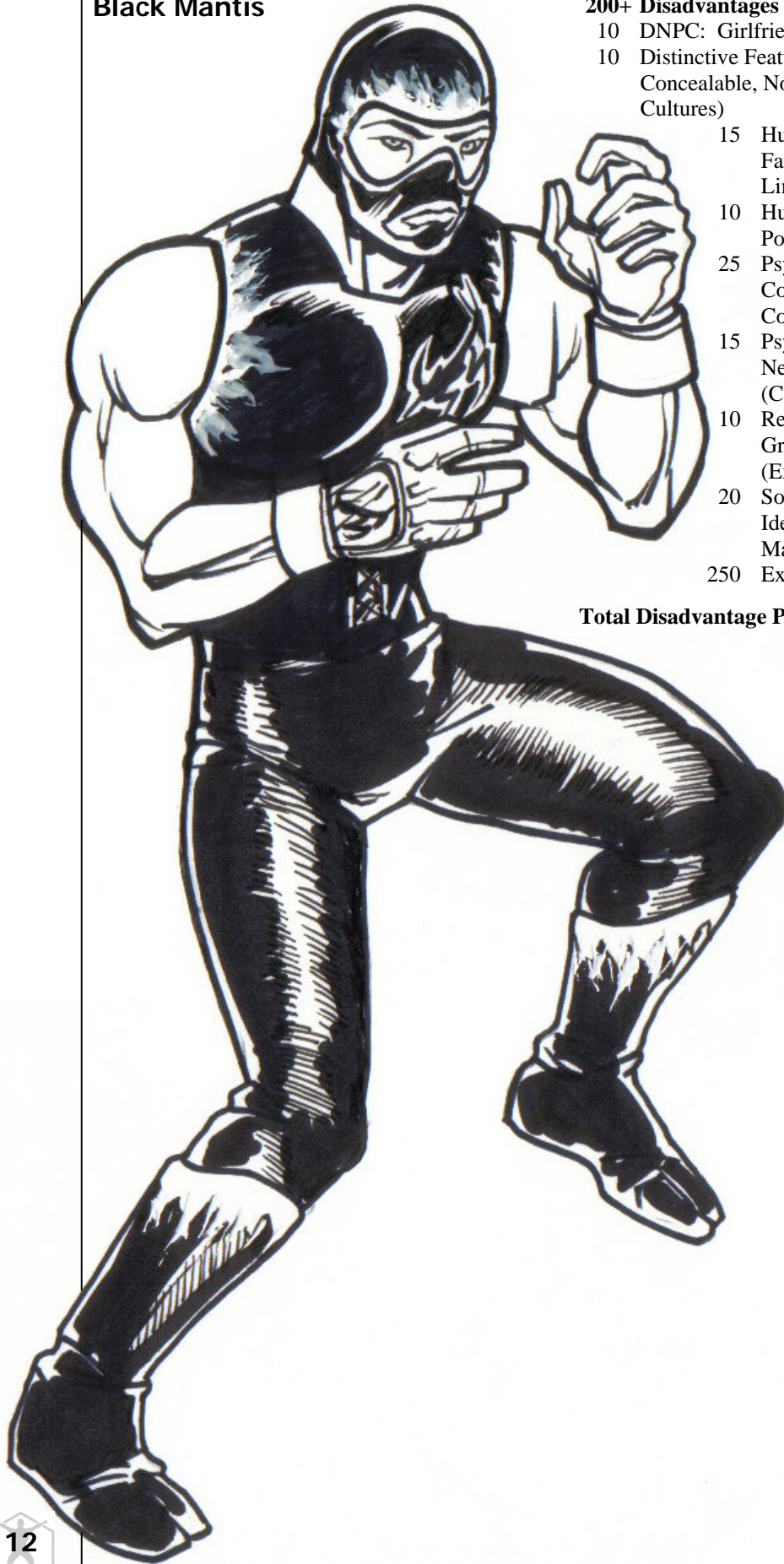
| | |
|----|--|
| 16 | +2 with All Combat |
| 20 | +4 with HTH Combat |
| 9 | +3 with Acrobatics, Breakfall, Climbing |
| 9 | +3 with Concealment, Shadowing, Stealth |
| 3 | Acrobatics 15- |
| 3 | Acting 14- |
| 6 | Animal Handler (Birds, Bovines, Canines, Equines, Reptiles & Amphibians) 14- |
| 7 | Breakfall 17- |
| 3 | Climbing 15- |
| 7 | Concealment 14- |
| 3 | Contortionist 15- |
| 3 | Criminology 12- |
| 3 | Deduction 12- |
| 3 | Disguise 12- |
| 3 | High Society 14- |
| 3 | KS: Crime Families of China 12- |
| 6 | KS: Mantis Style Kung Fu 15- |
| 2 | Language: English (Mandarin native) (Fluent) |
| 1 | Language: French (Basic) |
| 1 | Language: Cantonese (Basic) |
| 3 | Lipreading 12- |
| 3 | Lockpicking 15- |
| 3 | Mimicry 12- |
| 3 | Paramedics 12- |
| 5 | Rapid Attack (Hand-to-Hand) |
| 3 | Shadowing 12- |
| 3 | Sleight Of Hand 15- |
| 3 | Stealth 15- |
| 3 | Streetwise 14- |
| 2 | Survival (Urban) 12- |
| 3 | Tactics 12- |
| 5 | Tracking 13- |
| 12 | WF: Common Martial Arts Melee Weapons, Common Melee Weapons, Common Missile Weapons, Nets, Staffs, Three-Section Staff, Thrown Chain & Rope Weapons, Thrown Sword, Whips |
| 3 | Weaponsmith (Muscle-Powered HTH, Muscle-Powered Ranged) 12- |

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 362

Total Cost: 565



Black Mantis



200+ Disadvantages

- 10 DNPC: Girlfriend (Meg Yoon) 8-
- 10 Distinctive Features: Mantis Style (Not Concealable, Not Distinctive in Some Cultures)
- 15 Hunted: Saru Shin Crime Family 11- (As Pow, NCI, Limited Area, Harsh)
- 10 Hunted: Mocker 8- (As Pow, Harsh)
- 25 Psychological Limitation: Code of Honor (Very Common, Total)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Never Refuses a Challenge (Common, Strong)
- 10 Reputation: One of World's Greatest Martial Artists, 11- (Extreme; Small Group)
- 20 Social Limitation: Secret Identity (Very Frequently, Major)
- 250 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 565

You Gotta Have Character

by Jason Walters

“Life is lived forwards, but understood backwards” — Kierkegaard

The ramshackle church had been constructed far from any inhabited place. Hidden beneath the protective branches of the forest's dark old trees like a deformed baby clutched to his mother's bosom, it had escaped the notice of revenuers, lawmen, and unbelievers for decades. Only a few people ever worshiped there, lean folk who had grown up hardscrabble on the mountaintops and in the wild hollows of Appalachian Tennessee. Every Sunday they left their isolated cabins, farmhouses, and trapper's shacks to travel down a series of winding dusty roads that brought them to the lonely spot where their house of worship had been raised, fabricated out of pine boards which had been hewn straight from the surrounding forest.

Like the men and women who frequented it, the little church was careworn, plainly featured, and roughly constructed. Its unpainted frontage was topped with single rude cross which had been carved from a single cypress branch. Its front doors were kept locked during the week, but on Sunday they were opened early in the morning to allow the suffocating heat and smell generated by the bodies of two dozen men, women, and children dressed in their very best clothing to escape in visible waves into the morning air. These were adherents to a strict strain of the Pentecostal creed known as the Church of God with Signs Following. They wore plain, long sleeved clothing, forswore ornamentation of any sort, shunned intoxicants and stimulants of every kind, and devoted a majority of their private time to scriptural study and prayer. Yet the most remarkable thing about this unusual congregation was its pastor, the Reverend “Little George” Hensley, the first man in America to take up serpents.

Little George stood behind the church's crude wooden podium with a dog-eared Bible gripped fervently in his left hand. He was old, thin but none too tall, and handsome in a stern sort of way. Though Tennessee law would have classified him as white, he was honestly more of a bright pink color with hair a

carefully towheaded grey. He wore white cotton suits which always seemed to be streaked with dirty sweat. A cheap German “Rosco” revolver had been shoved carelessly into his belt with its barrel pointing downwards toward the toes of his scuffed leather shoes. Brother Hensley never went anywhere unarmed.

“Luke 10:19!” he cried with a surprisingly authoritative voice, “I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you.”

A Bible held high over his head, Preacher Hensley began to move in a strange shuffling dance toward a wooden fruit crate which had been set in the little church's main aisle. A terrific amount of hissing and commotion was issuing from this mysterious box. As the Reverend moved forward the normally stoic congregation became more animated, singing or swaying slightly as all of their eyes turned to follow his progress.

“I am anointed by the Holy Spirit!” Little George shouted shaking his Bible at the box, the volume of his voice escalating with each pronouncement “I am protected by the shield of my faith! I fear not the wiles of the serpent! My heart is filled with the love of Jesus!”

Suddenly he thrust his empty hand into the box. When he withdrew it, he held an enormous rattlesnake the length of a man's body in his fist. The monster serpent seemed fairly contented, however, and hung limply from Little George's arm as he raised it high over his head.

“Mark 16:17!” he cried holding the snake aloft in one hand and his Bible in the other, “And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands upon the sick, and they shall recover.”

The congregation began to go wild in a circle around Little George, knocking over pews or dropping

AUTHOR'S NOTE

I would like to thank my friend, colleague, and fellow HERO writer Ben Seeman for providing me with the research notes necessary to complete this column. Without his help I would never have discovered this fascinating and enigmatic man nor gained any real understanding of the often misunderstood church which he founded.

MOVIES ABOUT MINISTERS

Night of the Hunter (1955):

Although almost totally forgotten today, this suspense classic set in a small riverbank town during the Great Depression stars Robert Mitchum as a psychopathic preacher bent upon the relentless pursuit of two children who possess their dead father's stolen fortune. With hate tattooed on one hand and love on the other, Preacher Harry Powell's twisted murderous rage against all things female is frightening to behold. Whenever he sees an attractive woman he just can't help but produce his stiletto knife.

Leap of Faith (1992): Steve Martin plays glib traveling evangelist Jonas Nightingale, a faith healing, Bible-thumping con man. When one of his trucks breaks down in the impoverished town of Rust Water, Kansas, Jonas sets up his tent and invites the town to a revival. But the local sheriff is determined to stop him from separating the poor townspeople from what little money they have. Somewhere along the line an actual miracle occurs, forcing a confrontation between the pretend minister and a suddenly very real God.

hymnals in the process. Several began to speak in tongues while others flung themselves onto the ground, convulsing wildly as demons attempted to flee their bodies. Older members of the group wandered amongst them, translating for those who had been possessed by the Holy Spirit or performing spontaneous excommunications on those who were trying force evil entities from their breasts. All the while the Preacher shouted quotations from the Bible as held the huge serpent aloft.

Suddenly, as if waking from a long slumber, the rattlesnake's diamond shaped head inexplicably snapped upwards. Bounced up and down in a loud environment, its frightened inhuman eyes scanned the room in search of the source of its irritation before settling on the dancing, shouting figure holding its body in a firm yet gentle grip. With a single quick strike it drove its dripping fangs deep into Little George's neck, sending a prodigious stream of venom directly into the hapless minister's jugular vein.

As if on a cue the entire writhing assembly froze then slowly rose to their feet, all the while staring quizzically at Little George who stood there holding the gigantic snake in his hand. With a sigh he placed it back into its pine box home.

"Well, folks," he said resignedly, "sometimes the magic works, sometimes it don't."

Then he crumpled to the ground.

*I would risk the serpent's bite,
I would dance around with seven,
I would kiss the diamondback
If I know it would get me to heaven.
— "Get Right with God"
Lucinda Williams*

One fateful Sunday in a small church in eastern Tennessee, itinerant preacher and reformed bootlegger "Little" George Hensley experienced a revelation: since Pentecostals believe in exorcisms, speaking in tongues, and laying hands on the sick, why should they not take up serpents as well? So he closed his sermon on that day by removing a large rattlesnake from a box hidden behind the altar with his bare hands, then challenged his congregation to do likewise or else be "doomed to eternal hell." To avoid this dreadful punishment and as a demonstration of their triumph over the forces of evil, each member of the congregation took turns handling the dangerous animal.

Thus, was the now infamous Appalachian Snake Cult born.

DIGITAL HERO #18

Reverend George W. Hensley

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|-----------------------|
| 13 | STR | 3 | 12- | Lift 150 kg; 2½d6 [1] |
| 14 | DEX | 12 | 12- | OCV: 5/DCV: 5 |
| 18 | CON | 16 | 13- | |
| 13 | BODY | 6 | 12- | |
| 10 | INT | 0 | 11- | PER Roll: 11- |
| 14 | EGO | 8 | 12- | ECV: 5 |
| 18 | PRE | 8 | 13- | PRE Attack: 3½d6 |
| 12 | COM | 1 | 11- | |
| 7 | PD | 4 | | Total: 7 PD (0 rPD) |
| 4 | ED | 0 | | Total: 4 ED (0 rED) |
| 3 | SPD | 6 | | Phases: 4, 8, 12 |
| 8 | REC | 2 | | |
| 38 | END | 1 | | |
| 29 | STUN | 0 | | |

Total Characteristics Cost: 67

Movement: Running: 6"/12"
Leaping: 2"/4"
Swimming: 2"/4"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|--|-----|
| 7 | <i>I Cast the Demon Out!:</i> Dispel Summon 13d6; Increased Endurance Cost (8x END; -3½), Requires a PRE Roll (-¾), Incantations (-¼) | 32 |
| 14 | <i>Laying On of Hands:</i> Healing BODY 2½d6; Activation Roll 14- (-½), Incantations (-¼) | 2 |
| 3 | <i>Snakeproof:</i> Life Support: Immunity to Venom from Poisonous Snakes; Immunity to Poisons); Activation Roll 13- (-¾) | 0 |
| 1 | <i>Fireproof:</i> Life Support (Safe in Intense Heat); Activation Roll 12- (-¾) | 0 |

Perks

1 *Minister:* Fringe Benefit: Right to Marry

Talents

3 *Faithful:* Resistance (+3 to Resist
Interrogation)
5 *Power of the Anointed:* Turn Undead;
Requires a PRE Roll (-¾), Incantations
(-¼), Costs Endurance (Only Costs
END to Activate; -¼)
10 *Speaking In Tongues:* Universal
Translator 12-; Activation Roll 12- (-¾),
Incantations (-¼)

Skills

2 +1 with PRE Rolls
3 +1 with any Persuasion, Oratory, and
Seduction
2 Animal Handler (Reptiles/Amphibians) 13-
3 KS: Bible Learning 12-
4 KS: Moonshine 13-
3 KS: Snakes 11-
3 Oratory 13-
2 PS: Bootlegger 11-
3 PS: Minister 13-
3 Persuasion 13-
3 Seduction 13-
3 Sleight Of Hand 12-
3 TF: Common Motorized Ground
Vehicles, Equines
2 WF: Blades, Handguns

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 83

Total Cost: 150

75+ Disadvantages

5 Distinctive Features: Insane Snake
Handling Preacher (Easily Concealed;
Noticed)
15 Hunted: Tennessee State Police 8- (Mo
Pow, NCI, Limited Geographical Area,
Mildly Punish, PC has a Public ID or is
otherwise very easy to find)
25 Psychological Limitation: Extremely
Religious (Very Common, Total)
15 Reputation: Insane Snake Handling
Preacher, 11- (Extreme)
10 Social Limitation: Insane Snake Handling
Preacher (Occasionally, Major)
5 Unluck: 1d6

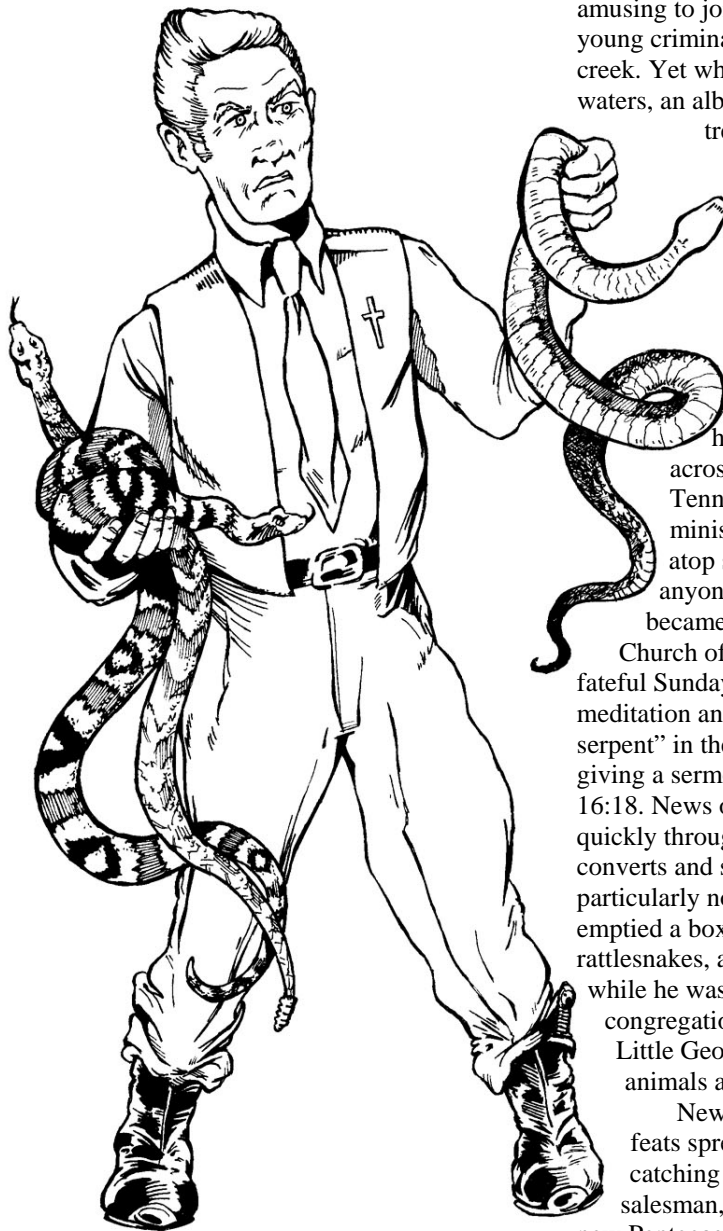
Total Disadvantage Points: 150

The Apostle (1988): This engrossing movie about personal redemption was written, directed, and personally financed by actor Robert Duvall who also starred in its leading roll. The man character is the deeply religious "Sonny" Dewey, a Pentecostal preacher whose life is forever altered when he commits a horrific crime of passion in response to his wife's infidelity. Haunted by the enormity of his wrongdoing, Sonny sets about rebuilding an abandoned church both physically and spiritually as he charts his own course to salvation.

SIGNS FOLLOWERS AND THE LAW

Snake handlers have suffered very real persecution at the hands of law enforcement throughout the last century. Since the beginning of their movement they have found themselves under the almost constant scrutiny of local and state government. In the 1940s six southern states including Kentucky, Georgia, Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina, and Alabama forbade the practice of the Sign Follower religion. Each of these states based their legislation on the premise that the danger to non-participants superceded First Amendment rights to the free practice of religion. In Alabama and Georgia the "taking up of serpents" was deemed to be a felony crime, while in the other four it was merely a misdemeanor. Both states later reduced this punishment to misdemeanor status.

More often than not, however, there was not enough evidence to prosecute snake handlers effectively. This was even further complicated by the fact that most local sheriffs believed (reasonably enough) that if a person felt



Background/History: George W. Hensley was born in 1881 in the Grasshopper Valley region of Tennessee a few miles away from the city of Cleveland. The youngest son of a former confederate soldier turned bootlegger, "Little" George, as he came to be known, grew up solidly walking in his father's nefarious footsteps. By the time he was 18, George was well-known by his kinsfolk for being "light on his feet," running from revenue agents, chasing women of easy virtue, and sneaking corn whisky across "dry" county lines. It seemed to all that the feckless youth was fated for an early grave or a long career breaking rock on a chain gang. Yet oddly George was destined for greater things.

One fine summer's day in 1901, while smuggling a mule load of booze through an isolated valley, Little George stumbled upon an outdoor religious revival being led by a blind colored preacher. Thinking that it would be

amusing to join in the festivities, the lighthearted young criminal lined up to be baptized in a creek. Yet when he came up from below the waters, an albino crow descended from the treetops to alight upon his head. In an instant Little George was transformed from an easygoing hoodlum into a brooding miracle worker able to cast out demons, speak in tongues, and banish the restless dead back into their cold earthy beds.

Haunted by his newfound powers Little George left his home to begin a decade-long voyage across the hills and mountains of Tennessee as an itinerant wandering minister. He preached on street corners, atop soapboxes, and in tent revivals to anyone that would listen. Eventually he became the minister of the small, isolated Church of the Holy Witness. Then one fateful Sunday in 1910 after a period of meditation and prayer Little George "took up the serpent" in the form of a large rattlesnake while giving a sermon on the true meaning of Mark 16:18. News of his unique ministry spread quickly throughout Appalachia, bringing both converts and skeptics to his tiny church. In one particularly noteworthy incident a practical joker emptied a box filled with cottonmouths, rattlesnakes, and copperheads onto the floor while he was preaching. Although his congregation ran screaming from the building, Little George calmly picked up the frightened animals and placed them back in the box.

News of Little George's snake handling feats spread throughout eastern Tennessee, catching the attention of evangelist, Bible salesman, and Church of God of Prophecy (a new Pentecostal denomination) founder A.J. Tomlinson who quickly ordained Hensley into his gospel ministry. For the next ten years Little George demonstrated the power of The Lord by faith healing, handling serpents, drinking strychnine, and performing the odd exorcism as a minister of the Church of God. Then, while on a preaching tour far from home, he got word that his teenage wife was having an affair with their next-door neighbor. Returning home to confront his faithless bride Little George entered his own home only to find her engaged in an act of marital infidelity of a particularly shocking nature. Enraged he drew his trusty Arkansas toothpick from its leg sheath before plunging it repeatedly into the man who had cuckolded him.

Disillusioned and thinking himself a murderer (his neighbor recovered), George turned his back on God. He set aside his Bible, shaved off his evangelist's pompadour, and returned to the hills above Grasshopper Valley

where he rebuilt the family still so that he could resume his bootlegging career. During a run across a county line he was apprehended by the police. Convicted of attempted murder Little George was given a ten-year sentence on a Tennessee chain gang, but within a few months he executed a brilliant escape to Ohio. Feeling that the grace of the Lord once again upon him, he picked up the serpents for a second time. Heading to Kentucky, he continued making a name for himself as a wandering Oneness Pentecostal miracle worker who could (on a good day) heal the sick, cast out demons, return the restless dead to their graves, and drink poison with impunity. Always popular with the ladies yet perpetually unsatisfied, he married and divorced four more times in his life.

By 1928 the increasingly respectable Church of the God in Prophecy was had become thoroughly scandalized by the colorful ministers' antics. Revoking Hensley's license to preach, it forbade the handling of snakes all of its members. Undeterred, unrepentant, and facing increased harassment by law enforcement officials, Little George once again retreated back to a cabin the hill country to live amongst the birds and beasts. For a decade he lived as a semi-mythical spiritual Robin Hood, periodically appearing to his former parishioners to provide assistance with supernatural problems. Then in 1943 a disciple of Little George's named Raymond Hayes led a revival of snake handling in the Grasshopper Valley which resulted in a large number of local Pentecostals once again taking up serpents. Feeling that the time had come for him to live amongst men once again, Hensley returned from his self-enforced exile to help found the Dolly Pond Church of God with Signs Following. Located on the site of his previous church from 30 years before where the first snake handling service was conducted, it remains the most sacred site in the movement to this day.

Little George would be bitten by serpents many times over the next decade, refusing medical treatment each time yet surviving. Many of his followers were not so fortunate; lacking his unique abilities, an increasingly large number of them died at church. Alarmed, various state legislatures passed laws which forbade the taking up of snakes in religious services. Hensley refused to follow these laws and was repeatedly arrested for endangering the lives of others. In court Hensley insisted that he was innocent because lawmakers were being led by the devil to outlaw serpent handling. State judges, who considered him something of a local character, never seriously punished Little George on the assumption that his malfeasance would prove inevitably self-correcting. They were right, too: on June 24th, 1955, he died of snakebite at age 74.

Personality/Motivation: Little George Hensley is an odd bird. Part con man, part holy man, and part Appalachian Casanova he is essentially the author of an ill-conceived religious stunt which inadvertently ignited a religious movement that endures to this day. Mystifyingly gifted by God with genuine (if unreliable) supernatural powers, he is a man of stark contradictions defined as much by his weaknesses as his strengths. He is outgoing yet melancholy, abrasive yet subtle, devout yet sinful, and chaotic while at the same narrowly directed. Pastor Hensley is also possessed of a wicked temper which, when combined with his absolute contempt for the authorities, leads him to commit violent acts with little regard for their consequences.

Little George's primary obsession is with his spiritual life. He has the sort of delinquent-son-to-patient-father relationship with God that certain key Old Testament figures such as Jonah and Job once had. Much like one of these ancient prophets he spends a great deal of time questioning God's motives, testing his own faith against the tribulations of his eventful life. On several occasions he has lost his faith completely, abandoning his special spiritual gifts to take refuge in his former sinful existence as a bootlegger. Yet each time the desire to experience this close intimacy with The Divine leads him to "take up serpents" once again.

Quote: "Now it's handlin' serpent that's again' the law, but after a while it'll be against the law to talk in tongues, and then they'll go after the Bible itself!"

Powers/Tactics: Reverend Hensley has a wide variety of potent and interesting powers which have been granted to him by the Lord of Hosts for the express purpose of doing battle with the forces of evil. He can heal a considerable amount of BODY (his *Laying On of Hands* power), turn the undead (*Power of the Anointed*), act as a universal translator (*Speaking In Tongues*), and with a great deal of effort banish demonic entities (*I Cast the Demon Out!*). Since these abilities are based on his often-wavering faith they are a little shaky, requiring Activation Rolls, PRE Rolls, and Incantations in the form of riotous evangelical preaching to be effective.

Little George has also been granted several abilities with which he can display God's power to protect men from harm... or at least to protect them when they are faithful and true. With the proper activation rolls he can handle or walk through fire without being burned, drink deadly poison without suffering ill effects, or receive the deadly bite of a viper without dying. He uses these abilities in conjunction with his remarkably proficient Oratory skill complemented by PS: Minister to deliver the signature sermons for which he is known or to boost PRE attacks

that he was in personal danger, he would simply leave. Thus in many municipalities the legal clause mandating that bystanders be endangered before an arrest could take place was rendered void.

LITTLE GEORGE HENSLEY PLOT SEEDS

With a string of snakebite deaths on their hands, local authorities have asked the PCs to help track down and apprehend the renegade preacher known as “Little George” before his “missionary work” produces any more fatalities. Thus begins an odyssey through the backwoods of Tennessee filled with heavily armed (and hostile) locals, demons, zombies, and giant snakes.

The PCs receive word that a strange and sinister cult has taken over a small Kentucky town. Sent to investigate, they find that most of the townspeople have converted to the Church of God with Signs Following. Is this religious epiphany voluntary or are darker forces at work?

With infestations of the living dead breaking out all over Appalachia, the PCs are badly in need of assistance from a true man of God. After doing some research they find out that there may only be one person alive who can help them with their plight: the semi-mythical Reverend George Hensley. But can they find him in time?



should he choose to make them. Although he appears at first to be a relatively rough and uneducated man, Little George genuinely does know a great deal about the Bible. He’s able to present his theological arguments in a convincing (if rustic) manner when given the chance to do so. Additionally, Preacher Hensley genuinely does know a great deal about the care and handling of snakes. Like other members of the Church of God with Signs Following he is careful to release the animals used in his sermons back into the wild before they become sick, distraught, or hungry.

Finally, Little George isn’t the least bit shy about using either the enormous hunting knife (HKA 1d6) he keeps strapped to his ankle or the small caliber “Rosco” revolver (RKA 1d6+1, five shots) he keeps tucked lazily into his belt when confronted with a situation he feels requires a bit of old fashioned violence.

Campaign Use: Although more than appropriate for use in a *Western Hero*, *Victorian Hero*, or *Pulp Hero* setting, Little George Hensley is most fundamentally at home in a *Horror Hero* game set in America’s deep South. He is spooky Southern Gothic personified; it’s almost impossible to think about the man without hearing Deliverance banjos played in the background. With his focus on snake handling, casting out demons, and destroying the undead, Little George makes an entertaining and appropriate NPC for the PCs to stumble across when they are hunting zombies on the bayou or chasing werewolves through the hill country. An inventive GM could have him either help or hinder them depending on a variety of factors, not the least of which should be their ability to handle poisonous serpents....

With a little bit of tweaking he could also serve as the basis for an interesting *Horror Hero* PC built on the 150-point heroic level, or a villainous cult leader bent on taking over a small Appalachian town. To turn him into a character suitable for use at higher levels, simply remove his Activation Rolls, PRE Rolls, and Increased Endurance Cost. Little George could serve as a sort of “spiritual guide” to any PC who comes from rural Southern or evangelistic roots. He could also be a sort of creepy uncle to any “occult” character whose powers come from his belief in God.

Appearance: Little George Hensley is a slight man with a florid complexion. He has wild blue eyes which glow with an unearthly light when his various powers activate. His hair is sculpted into a careful grey pompadour which quickly becomes disheveled when he becomes excited. Little George likes to wear white cotton suits with tiny gold cross pins on the lapels.

Unfortunately, the combination of his animated manner, unorthodox lifestyle, and the natural humidity of the southeastern United States often causes his clothing to have sweat stains in the armpits, grass stains on the cuffs, and lipstick stains on the collar. He generally carries a dog-eared King James Bible tucked under his arm, a cheap revolver tucked into his belt, and a buck knife tucked into his boot.

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Your Horoscope For: Sagittarius

by Allen Thomas

This installment of *Your Horoscope For: Sagittarius* details a selection of magical bows appropriate for a Fantasy Hero campaign. The bows range from the comical to the legendary, a range well suited to the Sagittarian who embodies both esthetic and refined senses with the more physical and sensual aspects of human nature, a duality that is seen in one of the symbols for the sign, the centaur wielding a bow, four hooves planted firmly on terra firma while aiming into the heavens.

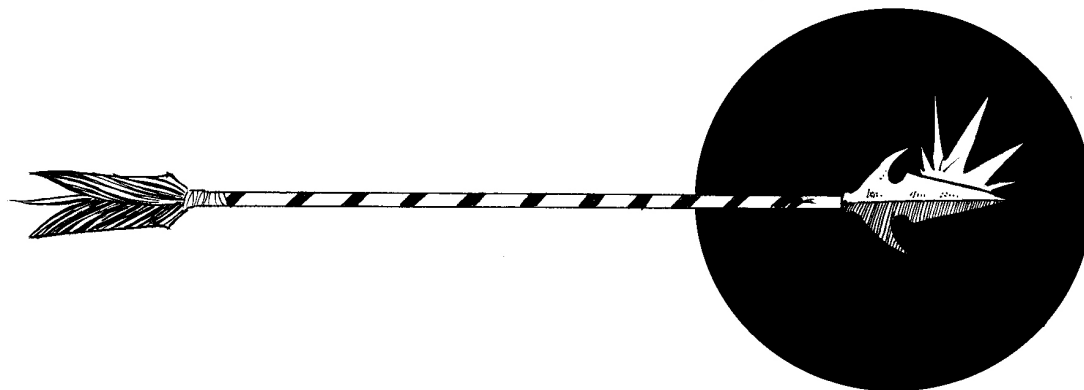
ARROWS OF THE SUN'S BENEFICENCE

The centaurs of the plains worship the Sun in all its myriad forms from the rose and pink dawn who blesses their marriages, to the Sun at high noon that burns away impurities, to the blood-red and violet sunset who curses their enemies. In battle, the most skilled of the centaur archers carry these arrows which the priests have blessed, tempering the arrowheads in the sacred fires. The arrows appear little different than mundane ones – but the metal arrowhead and the tip of the shaft is scorched black. When an archer fires an arrow, he speaks a prayer to the Sun, and if the Sun approves of the centaur's action – in other words, if the Sun deems the foe a true enemy of the centaurs – it grants the arrow miraculous powers.

The archer speaks his prayer as he launches his arrow; if the arrow strikes and damages the target, one of the effects from the Multipower occurs. But the Sun is not some distant and far-removed deity; it takes an active role in the magic and determines which effect is most correct. In terms of the rules, this means the player tells you which effect he's hoping for, and you decide if the Sun grants the power or not, and if it does, which power occurs.

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|---|-----|
| 3 | <i>Arrow</i> : RKA 1½d6; OAF (-1), Independent (-2), Real Weapon (-¼), Beam (-¼), 1 Charge with Never Recovers (-4) | [1] |
| 5 | <i>Sun God's Beneficence</i> : Multipower; 50-point reserve; all OAF (-1), Independent (-2), Linked (to Arrow; -½), Only If RKA Does Body (-½), No Conscious Control (-1), 1 Charge which Never Recovers (-4) | [1] |
| 1u | 1) <i>Bolt of Fire</i> : RKA 2d6, Indirect (always comes from the sky; +¼); OAF (-1), Linked (to Arrow; -½), Only If RKA (arrow) Does Body (-½), No Conscious Control (-1), 1 Charge which Never Recovers (-4) | [1] |
| 1u | 2) <i>Ray of Light</i> : Sight Group Flash 8d6, Indirect (always comes from the sky; +¼); OAF (-1), Linked (to Arrow; -½), Only If RKA (arrow) Does Body (-½), No Conscious Control (-1), 1 Charge which Never Recovers (-4) | [1] |
| 1u | 3) <i>Purifying Ray</i> : Dispel Necromancy Spells 13d6, Indirect (always comes from the sky; +¼); OAF (-1), Linked (to Arrow; -½), Only If RKA (arrow) Does Body (-½), No Conscious Control (-1), 1 Charge which Never Recovers (-4) | [1] |

Total cost: 11 points.



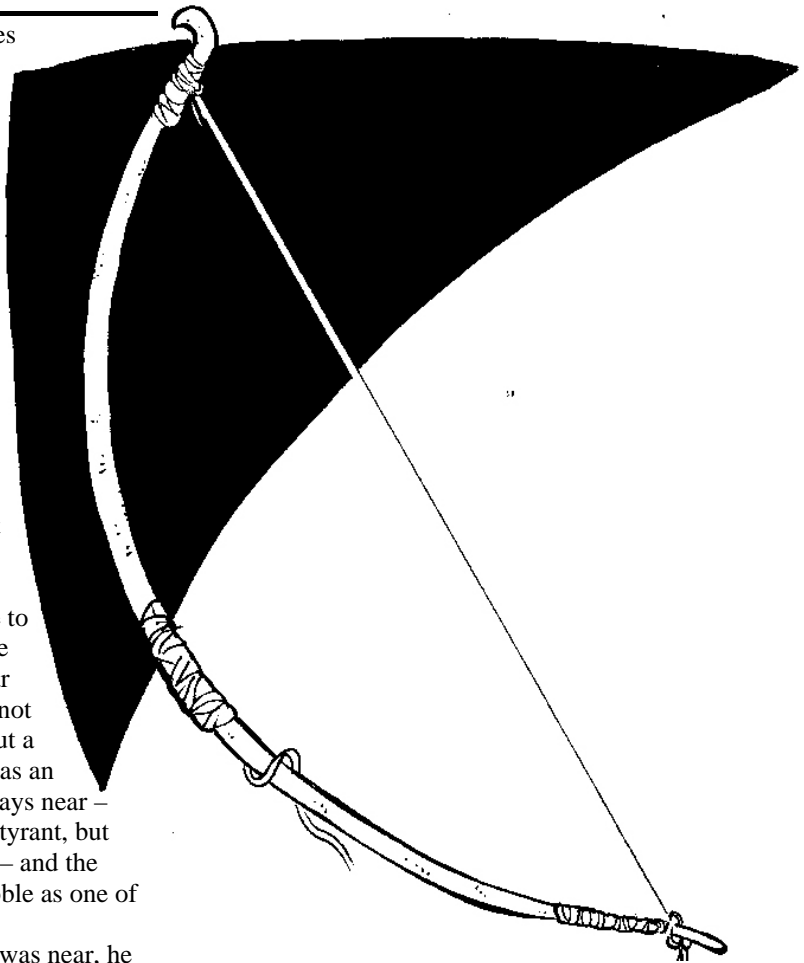
BOW OF THE FINAL REST

A noble once fled the injustices of a tyrant, and abandoning his life of easy leisure, waged a war on that tyrant. The noble haunted the roads and byways of the kingdom, living the life of a highwayman – but he was not a vicious criminal like many others of that sort. Instead the sole subjects of his deprivations were the tyrant’s men who helped the ruler oppress the common people, and over the course of his life, the noble’s skill with a bow became legendary. Eventually the noble did overthrow the tyrant and help place a just king on the throne, but the story doesn’t end there.

The tyrant rose from death as one of the undead, and again came to rule his former kingdom. Again the noble fled his estates to wage a war against the tyrant’s injustice, now not only motivated by simple greed, but a blasphemous evil. But the noble was an old man and knew the end of his days near – he could start the fight against the tyrant, but never live long enough to finish it – and the tyrant had promised to raise the noble as one of his undead servants once he died.

When the noble felt his death was near, he put his faith in his bow just as he had over a lifetime of desperate fights. He nocked an arrow and raised his bow up high, leaning far back as if aiming at the sun itself. Then he loosed the arrow. Later witnesses would swear they saw the arrow shift this way, then that as it arched high through the air. The noble, when he died, was buried on the spot where the arrow plunged into the earth, and despite the mighty magicks the undead tyrant wielded, despite disinterring the noble’s body and moving it to his unholy sanctum, he could never raise up his most hated enemy to serve his will.

Though the story of the rebellious and good-hearted noble ends there, that of the bow continues. It would next appear at the battle with the tyrant where he was finally slain, once and for all, and throughout the centuries the bow has reappeared at times when men struggle for freedom from oppressors whose evil should have died with them, rather than rise up as a vampire or lich.



| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|---|-----|
| 4 | <i>Heavy Longbow:</i> RKA 2d6; OAF (-1), Independent (-2), STR Minimum (15; STR Cannot Add Damage; -1¼), Two-Handed (-½), Concentration (½ DCV throughout loading process; -½), Beam (-¼), Cannot Be Fired from Horseback (-¼) | 3 |
| 6 | <i>The Final Rest:</i> Armor Piercing, Penetrating, and Affects Desolid for RKA; OAF (-1), Independent (-2), STR Minimum (15; STR Cannot Add Damage; -1¼), Two-Handed (-½), Concentration (½ DCV throughout loading process; -½), Beam (-¼), Cannot Be Fired from Horseback (-¼), Only Versus Undead (-1) | +3 |
| 6 | <i>A Blessed Grave:</i> Power Defense (30 points), Inherent (+¼); Always On (-½), Only to Protect Corpse from Necromancy (-2), Body Must Be Buried in Appropriate Spot (-2) | 0 |

Total cost: 16 points.

THE DWARVEN VERY HEAVY BOW

Once there was an unlikely pair, a dwarf and an elf, who became fast friends over the course of many long and dangerous adventures together. Despite their friendship and the understanding each came to have for his companion and their respective races, the one argument they never settled was over archery... never settled, that is, until the creation of the Dwarven Very Heavy Bow.

The elf, as is typical to his kind even today, was a fine archer with a skill and accuracy beyond that an archer of another race could ever hope to possess. The dwarf, however, didn't see it that way. Though those of his race were never known for their skill at archery, the dwarf maintained the reason for the lack of dwarven archers was because no dwarf would lower himself to work with only wood, and no dwarven smith had ever turned his skilled hands to the art of bow-making. Ergo, a bow fit for a dwarf didn't exist, and no dwarf would ever practice archery without a suitable bow.

During a lull in the pair's many adventures, the dwarf set out to prove his point once and for all. He retired to his smithy and barred the doors, allowing no one to enter. The tales tell of the heaving bellows and bellowing curses that came out from the smithy during the weeks that followed – though few tale-tellers are willing to relate the entirety of the dwarf's long and imaginative curses. But despite the trials and travails, the dwarf emerged from his smithy triumphant, for he held in his horny hands, a proper dwarven bow.

His bow was short, only two feet long, but made entirely of metal – two flat flanges of steel, finely worked with dwarven runes dedicating the weapon to all the gods of craftsmanship, which curved away from a leather-wrapped grip at the center and tapered to a fine point at either end. The bow's string was also metal – steel spun so impossibly fine it looked like a strand in a spider's web. This, the dwarf proclaimed, was a proper dwarven bow, and truly the bow was a work of weaponsmithing only a dwarf had the skill to craft.

The elf humored his friend and forever courteous stifled his laughter, as the two made their way to a clearing around back of the smithy. Once there, the elf pointed out a tree a hundred yards distant – an easy shot for a skilled archer, he deemed that tree. The dwarf set down his bow and spit into his hands, as if he made ready to hurl a hammer and needed a better grip. Then he took up the bow, put an arrow to the string, and attempted to pull the string back. The string wouldn't budge. The dwarf turned red from the effort; his breath came in harsh gasps. He pulled the string back, halfway to his ear. The veins in his neck bulged; the vein near his temple throbbed. He pulled the string back to his ear. The muscles in his arms and back trembling, he took aim as the bow shook in his hands. With a relieved gasp, he loosed his arrow. The bowstring twanged, and the arrow sped past the tree the elf had pointed out. The arrow then hit a nearby boulder and struck with a sound like thunder as the rock split in two, the arrow burying itself in the ground well beyond the broken boulder.

The elf was suitably impressed – never had one of his arrows split a boulder in two – and politely asked his friend if he had been aiming at the boulder. The dwarf grunted that he had, of course, been aiming at the boulder – only rock was a suitable target for a proper dwarven bow. Wood would never do, since it was far too soft. Both dwarf and elf retired from the field and never again spoke of archery, each feeling he had proven his point.

This bow, and others like it crafted by dwarfs who couldn't resist the challenge of hammering steel so well it would flex without breaking and snap back into its original shape, have sometimes been taken up by dwarves seeking to prove either how strong they are or how excellent dwarven archery is. As it turns out, the bow also makes a very good club, far superior to any bow of wood and horn.

| Cost | Powers | END |
|-------------|--|------------|
| 15 | <i>Dwarven Very Heavy Bow:</i> Multipower, 60-point reserve; all OAF (-1), Independent (-2) | — |
| 1u | <i>Arrows:</i> RKA 2½d6, Armor Piercing (+½); OAF (-1), Independent (-2), STR Minimum (20; STR Cannot Add Damage; -1½), Two-Handed (-½), Concentration (½ DCV throughout loading process; -½), Beam (-¼) | 6 |
| 1u | <i>Good Club:</i> HA +5d6; OAF (-1), Independent (-2), HA Lim (-½), STR Minimum (12; -½), One-And-A-Half-Handed (-¼) | 2 |

Total cost: 17 points.

THE FLEE BOW


The bards sing of a man named Sylarin Silkfoot, a rapsallion and cat burglar, second to none, whose daring thefts were legendary from the emerald earrings taken from a queen's ears as she slumbered, to the slaver's gem-encrusted goblet that lost all of its sapphires and rubies over the course of one feast, to the lich-king who lost his crown as he sat his throne of bone and raised his dead steward to unlife – but none of these feats are as legendary as Sylarin's impossible escapes.

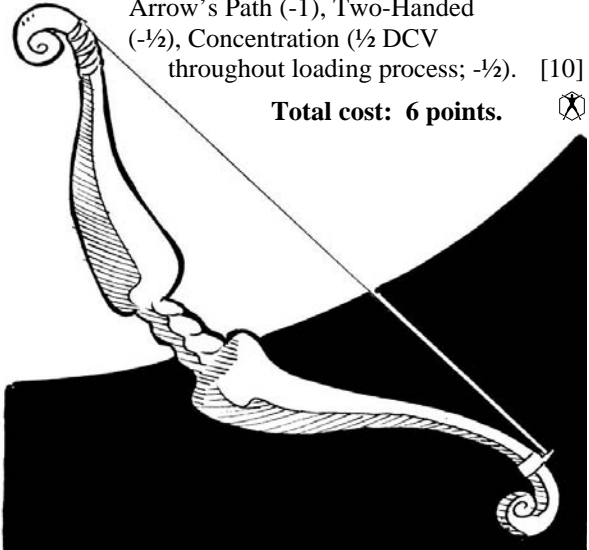
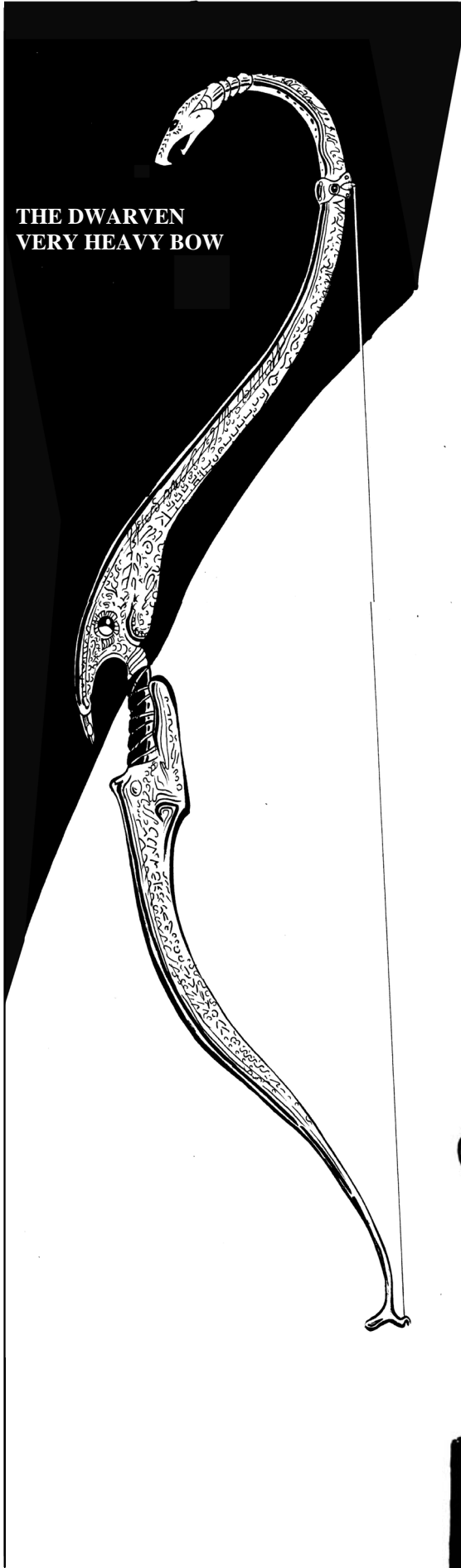
In these stories, a favorite among children and the downtrodden, Sylarin carried a bow of no mean enchantment. The bards describe the bow as small, almost like a children's toy, but Sylarin was not one to cross swords with the victims of his thievery, and the bow, regardless of its size, was perfect for a burglar who would rather flee than fight.

When Sylarin fired an arrow – if one can believe the bards, then any old arrow would do – it halted just past the bow. Suspended there, it spun crazily in the air before shooting off in some random seeming direction, dodging and diving through open doors and windows. And this arrow always showed the true path to safety. Following the arrow's path, Sylarin was never once caught no matter how many men pursued – until the last time he fired an arrow from his bow, and there the story tells that Sylarin heeded the call of his beautiful lover and turned away from the arrow's path.

The bards, as is their wont, have many names for this bow: Silkfoot's Flight, Arrow's Escape, Sylarin's Sure Path – but most often, especially among the common people, Sylarin's legendary bow is simply called the Flee Bow.

Cost Powers **END**
 6 Luck 6d6, 10 Continuing Charges lasting 1 Turn each (arrows; +¼); OAF (-1), Independent (-2), Only When Fleeing and Following Arrow's Path (-1), Two-Handed (-½), Concentration (½ DCV throughout loading process; -½). [10]

Total cost: 6 points. 



The Beast Within

 by Michael Surbrook

Lycanthropy Around the World

Even a man who is pure in heart and says his prayers by night may become a wolf when the wolfbane blooms.

— *The Wolf Man*

The belief that certain humans have the ability to assume the shapes of wolves (and other animals) goes back for thousands of years, before recorded history, and can usually be traced to shamanist beliefs in the power of animals and their relationship to the men who hunt them. A shaman (tribal priest) would be asked to find the location of suitable prey or to ask animal spirits advice on hunting, the weather, or the motives of other tribes. The shaman would then journey to the world of animal spirits or assume the form of an animal himself to learn these answers. Hunters, impressed with the power and skill of certain animals, would in turn try to become more like the successful predators in the local area, often dressing in the skins of such animals in the hope that by acting like a certain animal they would gain some of the animal's power.

In Scandinavia, the Norse took the idea of assuming an animal's form for hunting and applied it to battle. There, men are recorded as fighting without coats of mail, biting on their shields, howling in battle, and fighting without thought to their own wounds. The Norse called this sort of man a *berserk*, which is usually translated to mean "bear-shirt," and the battle-rage they displayed was known as *berserkgangr*, or "going berserk." A similar type of warrior was called a *ælfhednar*, a "wolf-coat." Like the *berserks*, these men fought without mail coats, wearing wolf skins instead. Both types of men were greatly feared, as their ferocity was enough to overwhelm almost anyone on the battlefield. The Norse were not alone in this practice, however, as there are similar instances throughout the world of warriors who dress in the skins of fierce predators in order to hopefully assume some of the animal's power in battle. In Africa, there were men who dressed in leopard skins, while certain Aztec warriors (called "Jaguar Knights") used jaguar skins.

Although shapeshifters can be found the world over, the werebeast most people are familiar with is a product of Europe. Whereas stories of humans transforming themselves into wolves can be found throughout Europe, most of them seem to be concentrated in France, which was gripped by werewolf hysteria several times during the Middle Ages. A significant number of people, mostly men, were executed in France

after being charged with lycanthropy. Interestingly enough, in the latter part of the 17th Century, suspected werewolves were not executed, but instead confined to insane asylums, as the lawmakers of the time started to suspect that people accused of lycanthropy were, in fact, suffering from mental illness and were not supernatural monsters.

The Werewolf in Europe

Freddy: Werewolf.

Igor: There.

Freddy: I beg your pardon?

Igor: (pointing to the woods) There wolf! (pointing up the road) There castle!

— *Young Frankenstein*

Probably the earliest accounts of werewolves in Europe come from the ancient Greeks. They had several stories of humans who became, or were turned into, wolves. The most famous was the tale of King Lykaon, who was turned into a wolf after sacrificing a child to Zeus. Another Greek story concerns the Arcadians. Every year, the Arcadians gave a sacrifice to Lykaian Zeus. During this ceremony, one of the worshipers was turned into a wolf, and would remain so for nine years. After the nine years were up, he would once again resume his normal form unless he'd eaten human flesh during that time, in which case he was doomed to remain a wolf forever. This theme recurs in a number of myths of the time, in which someone who had transgressed against the gods was turned into a wolf (or other animal) as punishment.

The first written account of a werewolf which can instantly be recognized as the ancestor of more modern werewolf stories is found in the novel *Satyricon*, written by Petronius in the 1st Century A.D. In the section known as *Trimalchio's Banquet*, Petronius' character Niceros tells a story to an assembled group of feasters; the tale goes something like this:

Traveling to meet his mistress one moonlit night, Niceros is accompanied by a soldier. Stopping by the side of the road to rest, Niceros is amazed to see his companion remove his clothing and set it beside the road. Urinating in a circle around his clothing, the soldier then transforms into a wolf. Niceros examines the soldier's clothing and sees it has turned to stone. Terrified, he flees to his mistress's house, slashing with his sword at the shadows. When he gets there, his mistress (a woman named

LYCANTHROPES

A lycanthrope is the name used for someone who exhibits lycanthropy, the belief that one has transformed into a wolf. The word derives from the story of the Greek king Lykaon, who was turned into a wolf by Zeus, king of the Greek gods. Since people are described as assuming more than just wolf shapes, the proper term for such shape shifters would be "theriomorphs," or those who have an animal's form.

Melissa) tells him a wolf had been in amongst the sheep, and had been driven off after being stabbed in the neck. Returning home at dawn, Niceros finds the soldier laying in his bed, a doctor examining a wound in the man's neck.

This story contains many elements that would reappear in later stories about werewolves. The first is the transformation occurs at night. The second is the removal of clothing. The third is the idea the werewolf could be identified in human form by wounds suffered while a wolf.

The idea someone could transform into a wolf at will was not limited to Petronius' story. Virgil, in his eighth *eclogue*, mentions the sorcerer Moeris, who turned himself into a wolf with magical herbs. Another author who used similar ideas was Apuleius. In his story *Metamorphosis*, the witch Pamphile uses a magic ointment to transform herself into a bird in order to visit her lover. Lucius, the main character of the story, wants to be able to do the same and rubs some ointment on himself. Unfortunately, he picks the wrong jar and is turned into a donkey.

The Norse sagas are full of similar tales. In the epic *Vǫlsungasaga*, two Vǫlsungs, Sigmund and Sinfjǫtli, find a pair of wolf skins, which when donned transform the wearer into a wolf for 10 days. *Hrólfs Saga Kraka* features the warrior Bjorn (Bear), who was cursed by a witch to be a bear during the day and a man at night. Bjorn's son, Bjarki (Little Bear), appears during one battle as a great bear, slaying many enemies, while seemingly immune to their weapons. Odin, the king of the Norse gods, was said to be able to assume the shape of a beast, bird, dragon, or fish while lying asleep. Loki, the trickster, could change his shape as well, at one point assuming the form of a mare to lure a horse away from a giant. Finally, Freyja was said to have a cloak that allowed her to assume the form of a falcon, permitting her to fly about freely.

The first recorded appearance of the word "werewolf" in English occurs in the Ecclesiastic Ordinances of Cnut, the Danish king of England from 1017 to 1035. The passage states, "in order that the ravening werewulf [sic] should not too widely devastate nor bite so many of the spiritual flock." Here, the word seems to indicate a bandit or outlaw, and seems to be related to the Norse word *vargr*, which was used as a name of such men.

Historical Accounts of Werewolves

Lately he's been overheard in Mayfair
Better stay away from him
He'll rip your lungs out, Jim
I'd like to meet his tailor
— Warren Zevon, *Werewolves of London*

Accounts of humans turning themselves into animals occur the world over. In the late 16th Century, France was seemingly plagued by an incursion of werewolves. Along with the witch-hunting craze sweeping through Western Europe at that time, uncovering and executing werewolves was a major event in many parts of France. In some cases, especially werewolf cases, the court records for the trial were destroyed, due to the immoral nature of the crimes committed.

Gilles Garnier: Garnier was arrested in November of 1573 on the suspicion of being responsible for the attempted murder of a young girl in La Pouppe Meadow. Brought to trial, he confessed to killing at least three children, as well as eating some of their flesh. Convicted of murder and witchcraft, he was burned alive at the stake. Due to the monstrous nature of his crimes, Garnier was denied the customary release of strangulation before being burned.

Peter Stubb – The Werewolf of Cologne: The trial of Peter Stubb (also known as Stube, Stump, or Stumpf) was one of the most famous events of 1589. Stubb was accused of using a magic belt to become a "...greedy devouring wolf, strong and mighty, with eyes great and large, which in the night sparkled like brands of fire; a mouth great and wide, with most sharp and cruel teeth; a huge body and mighty paws." Among the crimes he was accused of were the murders of 13 children and two pregnant women, the murder of his own son, incest, and the theft and consumption of lambs from the local sheepherders.

Captured after being pursued by a pack of dogs outside the town of Bedbur, Stubb proclaimed his innocence. Placed on the rack, Stubb promptly confessed to all charges. When asked where his magic belt was, Stubb said he'd hidden it in the valley where he'd been captured. When a search was unable to turn up the belt, it was stated the belt was obviously the work of the devil, and had been retrieved by its creator as soon as Stubb had abandoned it.

Convicted of his crimes, Stubb's execution was horrific in the extreme. He was fastened to a wheel, and his flesh was pulled from his bones in ten places. A wooden ax then broke his arms and legs. Finally, he was decapitated, and his corpse was burned (along with the bodies of his mistress

and his daughter). Afterwards, his head was set upon a tall pole to which was also fastened a wooden likeness of a wolf and the wheel on which he had been tortured.

The Gandillons: The Gandillons – Antoinette, Perrenette, Pierre, and Pierre’s son Georges – were all accused of being werewolves in early 1598. Perrenette was the first die, killed by an enraged mob after a wolf missing its tail attacked a boy, named Benoit Bidel, and his sister. Antoinette was accused of turning into a wolf, causing hailstorms, attending the witches’ *sabbat* (also known as the Black Mass), and consorting with the devil. Pierre confessed to attending the *sabbat*, as well as running throughout the French countryside in the shape of a wolf, chasing humans and animals until he was too tired to continue. Georges said he used some sort of ointment to assume the form of a wolf, and confessed to killing two goats while in this form.

While in prison, the Gandillons were reported to go about on all fours and to be heavily scratched on the face, hands, and legs. Their inability to turn into wolves was attributed to the fact none of them had any ointment with them. Convicted of the crime of witchcraft, all three were burned at the stake.

Jacques Roluet: A 35-year-old beggar, Roluet was discovered in mid-1598 covered in blood and crouching near the corpse of a 15-year-old boy. Brought into court, he was questioned closely, and confessed to being a thief. He also stated his parents had given him an unknown ointment. Although he did not say the ointment turned him into a wolf, he did admit to killing and eating the child he had been found next to. He also reported his hands and feet had turned into the paws of a wolf. Finally, he professed to doing evil and to attending the *sabbat*. Found guilty of murder, Roluet was initially sentenced to death, but this was changed to a two-year sentence at the St. Germain-des-Prés insane asylum.

Jean Grenier: A small 14-year-old boy, Grenier liked to frighten local girls by boasting he was a werewolf. He claimed to have a wolf skin and magic ointment capable of turning him into a wolf for an hour at dusk every other day. Grenier also claimed to have killed and eaten dogs and to have attacked young girls. His father and a neighbor were also arrested for the crime of witchcraft. Convicted of murder and witchcraft, Grenier was sentenced to death by hanging and then burning.

Interestingly, a higher court reviewed Grenier’s case late in 1603. There it was determined he’d been thrown out of his father’s house and had been wandering the countryside as a beggar. He couldn’t find a job, and was dismissed for negligence from something as simple as tending local flocks. It rapidly became

apparent his father was innocent of any charges, and was released from prison. Eventually it was decided Grenier was of below-average intelligence (the court called him an “imbecile”) and his current mental state was due to his abandonment by his father. His death sentence was changed to life imprisonment in a local monastery. Grenier died in 1610 at the age of 20.

Assorted Theriomorphic Creatures from Around the World

I saw a werewolf drinking a pina coloda
at Trader Vic’s
His hair was perfect
— Warren Zevon, *Werewolves of London*

Adlet: Found in Inuit folklore, the *adlet* are a race of cannibalistic dog-men brought about by the union of an Inuit woman and a large red-furred dog. The woman had ten children, five of whom were sent away, to cross the ocean and become white men. The rest became the *adlet*, fierce and powerful warriors who preyed on the Inuit. They are also known as the *erqigdlit*.

Anjing Ajak: Similar to the werewolf of European legend, the *anjing ajak* is an evil man who transforms into a cannibalistic wolf when night falls.

Boudas: Native to Ethiopia, Morocco and Tanzania, a *boudas* is a sorcerer who can transform himself into a hyena. The transformation lasts from dusk till dawn.

Boxenwulf: A werewolf from Germany, the *boxenwulf* assumes wolf-form by wearing a magic belt. They are known to have a high degree of cunning, and enjoy harassing others.

Ceasg: These Scottish mermaids are similar to *selkies* (see below). They usually appear as a beautiful and well-endowed woman from the waist up, and a salmon from the waist down. Known to be tricksters of the fairy sort, the *ceasg* is normally benevolent, but this isn’t always the case. They can shapeshift into a fully human form, and have been known to seduce young sailors. They will marry men, and the child of a *ceasg* will become a great sailor and sea captain. The *ceasg* is also known as the *Maighdean na tuinne*, or the Maiden of the Wave.

Hengeyokai: The *hengeyokai* are animals with the ability to assume human form. Found in Japan, these creatures tend to live solitary lives away from other *hengeyokai* and other animals. When in human form, the *hengeyokai* may have some small trace of their animal form, such as catlike eyes. Not all *hengeyokai* are animals, by the way; some plants are able to assume human form as well. A sampling of individual *hengeyokai* is as follows:

THE MENAGERIE

Wolves aren’t the only creatures humans are said to turn into. A list of various animal forms from around the world include: bears (North American and Russia), boars (Greece and Turkey), crocodiles (Egypt, Indonesia, and Zambia), dogs (Timor Islands), foxes (China and Japan), hares (southern North America), hyenas (Africa), jackals (Africa), jaguars (Central and South America), leopards (Africa), lions (Africa), sharks (Polynesia), snakes (numerous cultures), and tigers (China, Japan, and Southeast Asia).

HABLO LOBO?

There are a wide variety of names for werewolves to be found throughout Europe. Most are derived from the name Lykaon. A sampling includes: *bisclavret*, *eigi einhamir*, *lob ombre*, *lobizon*, *lubins*, *luceres*, *lupo manero*, *vilkacis* and *vilkatas*.

- ✎ **Badger (*tanuki*):** The real *tanuki* is a relative of the dog and looks a great deal like a badger. A *hengeyokai tanuki* is a badger and a known trickster and troublemaker. *Tanuki* often assume the form of Buddhist priests and use this form to cause trouble and play tricks on people. There are a number of stories about a *tanuki* who took the form of a copper teakettle and used this shape to harass a Buddhist monastery.
- ✎ **Cat (*neko*):** Cat *hengeyokai* tend to be arrogant and contemptuous of people. They usually assume the form of beautiful *geisha* and use this shape to cause a great deal of strife and trouble. There is at least one tale of a vampiric cat who assumed human form to drain the life force of a local lord.
- ✎ **Dog (*inu*):** Dog *hengeyokai* are very large in both their natural and human forms. As with normal dogs, a *hengeyokai* dog is very loyal to its friends and family, even if it's not very bright.
- ✎ **Fox (*kitsune*):** The *kitsune*, or spirit fox, is found in both Chinese and Japanese legends. It is a very devious and arrogant creature, and has brought doom to emperors and samurai alike.
- ✎ **Flower (*kashin*):** Flowers tend to assume the forms of slim, beautiful women. They tend to appear to artists and poets.
- ✎ **Rat (*nezumi*):** Rat *hengeyokai* are sly and stealthy and not to be trusted. They prey on humans, both for their riches and their flesh.
- ✎ **Spiders (*kumo*):** Also known as goblin spiders or earth spiders, these creatures appear as huge spiders with human-like faces. In human form, they tend to be quite beautiful and handsome, but cold. *Kumo* like to eat humans and will seduce victims with their human form in order to trap them.
- ✎ **Trees (*kodama*):** Trees often take the appearance of beautiful young women or handsome young men. In either form, they are strong and graceful. As with flowers, they tend to appear to artists and poets.

This is only a small sampling of *hengeyokai*. Other animals that can shapeshift into human form include carp, cranes, ducks, and monkeys.

Jaguar-Men: Found in the legends of Paraguay and the Amazon basin, Jaguar-men look like normal humans during the day, but at

night use magic rituals to transform into man-eating jaguars.

Leyak: In Bali, a *leyak* is man who steals the entrails of corpses in order to manufacture a potion allowing him to transform into a tiger.

Lobishomen: *Lobishomen* is the name given to werewolves in Portugal. Closely associated with the *bruxa* (a vampire-witch), the *lobishomen* changes shape only on Tuesdays and Fridays. This creature is also known as a *lob omem*.

Stories of the *lobishomen* are also found in Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay, where it is also called the lobisón. There, it is described as a small, hunchbacked, monkey-like being. Its face is yellow, with a bushy beard and black teeth. The *lobishomen* attacks females and becomes intoxicated from the blood it consumes. If caught, the *lobishomen* is crucified on a tree. The *lobishomen's* condition can be prevented and cured if it is cut with steel, but the blood of a *lobishomen* is fatal if touched.

One creates a *lobishomen* through witchcraft or incest. At the time of puberty, the *lobishomen* leaves home and assumes an animal form. It can assume this form on Tuesdays and Fridays.

Loup-garou: A *loup-garou* is the French name for a werewolf. A common creature in many French-Canadian legends and stories, the *loup-garou* is not always a person who transforms into a wolf, but may refer to a person who becomes a cow, horse, or other animal.

In older versions of the Breton dialect of northwestern France, the *loup-garou* is known as the *bisclaveret* or the *bisclavret*. The modern Breton dialect uses *bliez-grav* and *den-bleiz*.

Macan Gadungan: A Javanese weretiger, the *macan gadungan* is said to be a man's soul, active and abroad at night while the man sleeps. A man who is a *macan gadungan* can be detected by having a smooth upper lip, with no depression in the center. Some men can assume tiger form via a magic ritual; this creature is called a *ngelmu gadungan* (magic tiger).

Mambu-Mutu: A form of mermaid said to live in Lake Tanganyika in country of Burundi. Although *mambu-mutu* is a Swahili word meaning "crocodile-man" the creature appears to be half-man and half-fish. It lurks near the shore and preys on people, devouring the brains and drinking the blood.

Naga: *Nagas* (female *Naginis*) are the snake people of Hindu myth. Descended from the gods Kadru and Kasyapa, the *Naga* have human bodies from the waist up, and are serpents from the waist down. They live in the undersea city of Bhagavati or in the depths of the earth in the city of Nagaloka, and are associated with various deities and heroes. *Nagas* can shapeshift and assume human form, and great

heroes have married the extremely beautiful daughters of *Naga* kings.

Qutrub: This is the werewolf of Arabic myth. It is described as a great beast that comes out at night to devour corpses. *Qutrub* is also the name of the male ghul.

Swan-may: Swan-mays, or Swan Maidens, are fairy women who can assume the shapes of swans through the use of feathered cloaks. If a mortal man can steal this cloak of feathers (usually done while the Swan-may is bathing), then he can force the Swan-may into marriage. This marriage will last until the Swan-may can recover her cloak, at which point she will flee back to the fairy realms.

Tales about Swan Maidens are found throughout Europe and the rest of the world. The maidens don't have to assume swan form either. Doves, guinea fowl, partridges, and peahens are just some of the forms assumed. The Swan-may doesn't always flee, and if treated well, she will often fall in love with her husband and remain with him. Treated poorly, however, she will seek to escape as soon as possible.

Taw: The *taw* is found in Burma. It is a man who takes the shape of a beast and only appears at certain times of the month.

Tigre Capiango: This creature is found in Argentina and Brazil. It is a man who can assume the form of a jaguar at will. Normally the *tigre capiango* is harmless, only using its animal shape to frighten friends and passersby, but some outlaws have been known to become a *tigre capiango*, finding great use in the ability to assume an animal's form. Creatures similar to the *tigre capiango* are the *runa-uturungu* and the *yaguareté-abá*, both of which can assume jaguar form.

Vilkacis: This is the name of the Latvian werewolf. In Lithuania it is called *vilkatas* or *vilkolakis*. Both types of werewolf are said to be horrible monsters, although some hoard treasure and occasionally share it.

Vircolac: *Vircolac* is a Romanian name for a wolf-like beast said to be capable of devouring the sun and the moon. Also known as a *procolici* or a *tricolici*, the *vircolac* will periodically assume the form of a dog, pig, or wolf.

Vrykolakas: A *vrykolakas* is a Greek name for the werewolf. It refers to a person who assumes the form of a wolf and preys on the local cattle. Over the years, *vrykolakas* has come to mean a type of vampire, and no longer refers to any sort of shapechanger.

Vulkodlac: This Slavic werewolf is said to rise as a vampire once killed. The vampire can then become a wolf when needed. The name *vulkodlac* means "wolf's hair."

Yenaldooshi: The *yenaldooshi*, or "skinwalker," is found in the myths of the Navajo. A human witch, the *yenaldooshi* can

assume animal form by wearing coyote skins and traveling at night. The *yenaldooshi* is a very malevolent being. It gains its power by murdering a relative (such as a sibling), it goes naked (an affront to Navajo beliefs about modesty), and wears only a mask and a great deal of jewelry. They create sacred Navajo sandpaintings only to defile them, have intercourse with the dead, practice cannibalism, and sprinkle disease-causing powders into the homes of sleeping Navajo. The presence of a *yenaldooshi* can be sensed by the sound of dogs barking, dirt falling from the ceiling on one's *hogan* (Navajo dwelling), or strange sounds at night.

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Write-Ups of Assorted Werecreatures

Henri Sardis: So tell me sire, do they speak of the beast in Paris?

Gregoire De Fronsac: Speak of it? They're already singing songs about it.

Marianne De Morangias: Instead of singing songs, they should be saying prayers.

— Brotherhood of the Wolf

WOLF IN SHEPHERD'S CLOTHING

This character sheet represents the wolf side of the werewolf. For the human side, use any character sheet you desire (such as the Average Individuals on pages 223-224 of the *HERO System Rulebook*), and add the following power:

Shapeshifting: Multiform (assume 132-point wolf form) (26 Active Points); Requires Belt, Ointment Or Wolf-skin And/Or Extended Ritual To Affect Change (-1). Total Cost: 13 points.

Traditional European Werewolf

Ecology: Traditional werewolves such as this can appear at any time of the day or night. They prey upon the local inhabitants, and usually attack and eat young children. If no human prey is available, the werewolf will pursue deer, goats, and lambs, usually selecting the youngest (and tenderest) animals. Once the werewolf's hunger is sated, the creature will return to human form, safe from any enraged villagers or bereaved parents.

One becomes a traditional werewolf by engaging in a magical ritual. Usually, the ritual requires the person to rub an ointment all over the body, although other methods include placing a wolfskin on the body or wearing an enchanted belt. The user then quickly transforms into a wolf. In Europe, it is generally believed the ability to become a wolf is achieved through witchcraft and a werewolf is given its form by agreeing to a pact with the devil.

Aside from salves and wolfpelts, it is said that one can become a werewolf by drinking rainwater out of a wolf's pawprint or by rolling in puddles. There are other ways to assume wolf-form as well, but these are far too numerous to list here.

In wolf form, the werewolf has no special powers, aside from those granted by assuming the shape of the wolf. It can be harmed by normal weapons, and many werewolves are identified in human form by the wounds they have received while a wolf.

In Europe, werewolves are known by such names as *Loup-garou*, *Lycanthrope*, *Skinchanger*, *Vargr*, *Warg*, or *Werewolf*.

Personality/Motivation: When in wolf form, the traditional werewolf is usually dominated by an overpowering desire to kill. The werewolf will seek out and hunt down any available prey, whether it is human or animal, usually devouring its kill on the spot. Once captured by the authorities, many werewolves mention a desire for young or tender flesh, meaning the werewolf usually strikes at young children or animals less than a year old.

Depending on the region of Europe (especially in Poland and eastern Russia), some werewolves are said to be defenders of the people and assume wolf-form to fight evil.

Powers/Tactics: A werewolf attacks by biting. Due to its size and strength, many werewolves try to knock down their prey (using a Move-Through) and then try to bite at the throat. Others may bite at the arms or legs, in an attempt to cripple their prey to prevent any chance of escape. A werewolf may also howl as it approaches, hoping to terrify its target into immobility.

If hard-pressed or wounded, werewolves will usually flee, counting on their great running speed to escape from any possible pursuit. Once the werewolf feels it has eluded its pursuers, it will return to human form, either by removing its pelt, or by applying another ointment. Having returned to normal human form, the werewolf will then return to its normal residence.

Campaign Use: The character sheet presented here is meant to represent the traditional werewolf. It can also be used as a basis for any number of other creatures said to be assumed by man. Simply remove the wolf powers and abilities and replace them with the appropriate powers from the desired animal. Possible animals include bears, boars, dogs, foxes, leopards, sharks, snakes, and tigers. Naturally, the *HERO System Bestiary* is an invaluable aid in creating a new werecreature. In almost all cases, the limitations on the Multiform will suffice for werecreatures the world over, although a few seem to be able to shapeshift only after dark (an additional -1/2 Limitation).

As written, the traditional werewolf doesn't present much of a threat to a modern group of Player Characters, especially to those armed with modern firearms. But unlike modern players (and their characters), medieval man had a much greater fear of wolves. Wolves were silent, nocturnal predators that killed cattle, pigs, and sheep (valuable livestock) and would disappear into the forest if pursued. In those days, wolves also had less of a fear of man, since few farmers or shepherds owned firearms, or any sort of weapon more lethal than a knife or wood ax. Many medieval people believed wolves to be agents of the devil and to associate with witches. Thus, a large, fearless wolf who attacked a person in broad daylight was likely to be a werewolf – which meant it was a creation of witchcraft, an instrument of evil, and possibly Satan himself, a fearsome combination in the medieval mind.

In a *Fantasy Hero* game, a traditional werewolf can be used quite effectively. If the Player Characters aren't equipped with heavy weapons and armor, then finding and defeating such a creature becomes more of a challenge. In a pulp campaign, concentrate play more on tracking and finding the beast, as opposed to actually combating this type of werewolf. In a game set in the modern era, the Player Characters may be totally unarmed or may have access to high-powered weaponry. In the former case, the adventure can be run a great deal of tension and threat to personal safety, while in the latter case, the you better off concentrating on the actual hunt, since the werewolf will almost certainly be no match for the characters once they find it.

DIGITAL HERO #18

Appearance: A traditional werewolf takes the shape of a normal wolf. Usually, the wolf is larger than normal and often has some sort of distinguishing feature marking it as not being a “normal” wolf, but a werewolf instead. This feature may be the lack of a tail, paws that look like hands, distinctively colored fur, or humanoid features in the face.

Traditional European Werewolf



Traditional European Werewolf

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|--------------------------|
| 15 | STR | 5 | 12- | Lift 300 kg; 3d6 HTH [1] |
| 18 | DEX | 24 | 13- | OCV: 6/DCV: 6 |
| 15 | CON | 10 | 12- | |
| 11 | BODY | 2 | 11- | |
| 10 | INT | 0 | 11- | PER Roll: 12- (15-) |
| 10 | EGO | 0 | 11- | ECV: 3 |
| 15 | PRE | 5 | 12- | PRE Attack: 3d6 |
| 8 | COM | -1 | 11- | |
| 6 | PD | 3 | | Total: 6 PD (1 rPD) |
| 4 | ED | 1 | | Total: 4 ED (1 rED) |
| 3 | SPD | 2 | | Phases: 4, 8, 12 |
| 6 | REC | 0 | | |
| 30 | END | 0 | | |
| 27 | STUN | 0 | | |

Total Characteristics Cost: 51

Movement: Running: 8"/16"
 Leaping: 3"/6"
 Swimming: 3"/6"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|---|-----|
| 8 | <i>Bite:</i> HKA 1/2d6 (1d6+1 with STR); Reduced Penetration (-1/4) | 1/2 |
| 7 | <i>Howling:</i> +15 PRE; Only For Fear- Based Presence Attacks (-1), Incantations (must howl; -1/4) | 0 |
| 1 | <i>Thick Hide:</i> Damage Resistance (1 PD/1 ED) | 0 |
| 10 | <i>Strong Runner:</i> Running +2" (8" Total) | 2 |
| 1 | <i>Strong Swimmer:</i> Swimming +1" (3" Total) | 1 |
| 3 | <i>Sharp Senses:</i> +1 PER with all Sense Groups | 0 |
| 5 | <i>Can See In The Dark:</i> Nightvision | 0 |
| 6 | <i>Acute Sense Of Smell:</i> +3 with Smell/ Taste Group | 0 |
| 5 | <i>Keen Sense Of Smell:</i> Tracking for Normal Smell | 0 |
| 6 | <i>Acute Hearing:</i> +3 with Hearing Group | 0 |
| 3 | <i>Sharp Ears:</i> Ultrasonic Perception (Hearing Group) | 0 |

Skills

| | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 2 | AK: Local Area 11- |
| 5 | Concealment 12- |
| 7 | Shadowing 13- |
| 3 | Stealth 13- |
| 2 | Survival (Temperate) 11- |
| 7 | Tracking 13- |

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 81

Total Character Cost: 132

75+ Disadvantages

- 20 Distinctive Features: Very Large Wolf With Humanoid Characteristics (usually missing its tail) (Not Concealable, Causes Fear)
- 10 Hunted: Local Villagers 11- (As Pow, Limited Area)
- 15 Physical Limitation: Very Limited Manipulation (Frequently, Greatly)
- 15 Psychological Limitation: Casual Killer (Very Common, Moderate)

Total Disadvantage Points: 132

Cinematic Werewolf

Ecology: Cinematic werewolves can be found anywhere, from the dark forests of Transylvania to the streets of London. The werewolf is a normal human by day, but transforms into a bloodthirsty monster whenever the moon is full. Its prey might be anything, including cats, dogs, farm animals, local game, and humans. Anyone bitten by a werewolf during one of these rampages runs the risk of becoming a werewolf himself the next full moon.

In some cases, the curse of lycanthropy is hereditary and passed on from generation to generation. In these cases, the curse may be more controllable, and some cinematic werewolves learn to cope with their bestial form. A few even look forward to it.

Personality/Motivation: When in wolf form, the cinematic werewolf is usually driven by a strong desire to kill. It will hunt down and slay anything it can find. Depending on the werewolf in question, it may or may not eat what it kills. Some cinematic werewolves have a clearer memory of their human lives than others, and might use their wolf-form to protect someone (or something) that they care about, or may try to attack an enemy that is otherwise unapproachable. Normally, however, cinematic werewolves are fairly single-minded and aggressive.

Powers/Tactics: The cinematic werewolf attacks with its claws and teeth. Since it is a wolf – of sorts – it will usually try and run down its prey, chasing it until the target is no longer able to run and is too tired to defend itself. Others may lay in wait and spring out to surprise their intended prey. Of course, if the change from human to wolf comes unexpectedly, the werewolf may simply lash out at whoever is nearest, before fleeing to somewhere it feels more comfortable. Since the cinematic werewolf is nearly invulnerable to most normal weaponry, it usually does not flee a confrontation unless faced with fire or silver.

Campaign Use: The cinematic werewolf is probably the most consistent of all fictional supernatural monsters. Ever since 1941, when Universal Pictures released *The Wolfman*, the cinematic werewolf has survived relatively unchanged (unlike the cinematic vampire, which has gained and lost a variety of powers over time). About the only major change has been in the werewolf's appearance, since modern special effects have allowed for more realistic makeup and more graphic transformation sequences. In general, however, all the classic elements have remained: the werewolf can only appear when the moon is full and can only be harmed by silver or fire.

Even with these guidelines firmly in place, the GM has a great deal of leeway when presenting the cinematic werewolf. Not all werewolves transform when the moon is full, some – much like a certain green-skinned behemoth – transform when angry or stressed (an Accidental Change). And once transformed, some werewolves are positively huge, towering over a normal man. Others have nearly human intelligence, or don't lose any of their normal human intelligence at all. You should feel free to customize the cinematic werewolf to fit your game setting – after all, the movies do it all the time.

Appearance: The cinematic werewolf normally takes the shape of a large humanoid wolf. The face and nose are usually flattened, while thick hair grows along the sides of the face and along the jaw. The ears come to a tapering point and thick hair covers the rest of the body and the hands. Normally, the cinematic werewolf does not have a tail. Some of the more recent treatments of the cinematic werewolf have made the creature much larger than a man, standing seven to eight feet tall (or more). The newer, more modern werewolves of this type tends to appear much more wolf-like as well, and in fact can almost be described as a humanoid, bipedal wolf. In most cases, the cinematic werewolf is dark in color, usually a dark brown, black, or gray.

It is commonly believed there are several ways to identify a werewolf in its human form. One identifying feature is that a werewolf's eyebrows meet in the middle, over the nose. A second is the werewolf will have hairs on its palms. A third is the werewolf's fingers are all the same length. It is also commonly believed a werewolf grows its fur on the inside, turning itself inside-out (so to speak) when assuming its wolfman form.

WOLF IN SHEPHERD'S CLOTHING

As with the Traditional Werewolf, this character sheet represents the wolf side of the werewolf. For the human side, use any character sheet you desire (such as the Average Individuals on pages 223-224 of the *HERO System Rulebook*), and add the following power:

Shapeshifting: Multiform (assume 357-point wolf form) (71 Active Points); Extra Time (often takes upwards of a full Turn to change shape; -1 ¼), Reversion (-½) Total Cost: 26 points.

Both the base character and the werewolf should take the Accidental Change Disadvantage. The base character's change (human to wolf) is triggered by the full moon, while the werewolf's (wolf to human) is triggered by sunup. Each of these is an Uncommon Circumstance and Always occurs, for a 20-point Disadvantage.

Cinematic Werewolf

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|-----------------------|
| 30 | STR | 20 | 15- | 1600 kg; 6d6 HTH [3] |
| 21 | DEX | 33 | 13- | OCV: 7/DCV: 7 |
| 23 | CON | 26 | 14- | |
| 13 | BODY | 6 | 12- | |
| 8 | INT | -2 | 11- | PER Roll: 12- (15-) |
| 8 | EGO | -4 | 11- | ECV: 3 |
| 20 | PRE | 10 | 13- | PRE Attack: 4d6 |
| 6 | COM | -2 | 10- | |
| 12 | PD | 6 | | Total: 12 PD (12 rPD) |
| 10 | ED | 5 | | Total: 10 ED (10 rED) |
| 4 | SPD | 9 | | Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12 |
| 12 | REC | 2 | | |
| 46 | END | 0 | | |
| 40 | STUN | 0 | | |

Total Characteristics Cost: 109

Movement: Running: 9"/18"
Leaping: 6"/12"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|--|-----|
| 16 | <i>Bite:</i> HKA 1d6+1 (2½d6 with STR); Reduced Penetration (-¼) | 2 |
| 8 | <i>Claws:</i> HKA ½d6 (1d6+1 with STR); Reduced Penetration -¼) | 1 |
| 7 | <i>Howling:</i> +15 PRE; Only For Fear-Based Presence Attacks (-1), Incantations (must howl; -¼) | 0 |
| 56 | <i>Lycanthropic Contamination:</i> Major Transform 7d6 (human to werewolf; heals back through a variety of rituals), Persistent (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Always On (-½), Linked (to Bite; -¼), Bite Must Do BODY (-½), No Range (-½), All Or Nothing (-½), Limited Target (humans; -½) | 0 |
| 60 | <i>Lycanthropic Invulnerability:</i> Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 75%; Does Not Work Against Silver-Based Attacks (-½) plus Energy Damage Reduction Resistant, 50%; Does Not Work Against Fire-Based Attacks (-½) | 0 |
| 7 | <i>Lycanthropic Invulnerability:</i> Damage Resistance (12 PD/10 ED); Does Not Work Against Fire or Silver-Based Attacks (-½) | 0 |
| 18 | <i>Lycanthropic Regeneration:</i> Healing 3d6 (Regeneration; 3 BODY per Turn), Persistent (+½), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +½); Extra Time (1 Turn; -1 ¼), Self Only (-½), Does Not Heal Damage Caused By Fire Or Silver Weapons (-½) | 0 |
| 6 | <i>Strong Runner:</i> Running +3" (9" Total) | 1 |
| 3 | <i>Sharp Senses:</i> +1 PER with all Sense Groups | 0 |
| 5 | <i>Can See In The Dark:</i> Nightvision | 0 |
| 6 | <i>Acute Sense Of Smell:</i> +3 with Smell/Taste Group | 0 |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| 5 | <i>Keen Sense Of Smell:</i> Tracking for Normal Smell | 0 |
| 6 | <i>Acute Hearing:</i> +3 with Hearing Group | 0 |
| 3 | <i>Sharp Ears:</i> Ultrasonic Perception (Hearing Group) | 0 |

Skills

| | |
|----|--------------------------|
| 15 | +3 Hand-To-Hand |
| 2 | AK: Local Area 11- |
| 3 | Climbing 13- |
| 5 | Concealment 12- |
| 3 | Shadowing 11- |
| 3 | Stealth 13- |
| 2 | Survival (Temperate) 11- |
| 9 | Tracking 13- |

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 248

Total Character Cost: 357

75+ Disadvantages

| | |
|-----|--|
| 10 | Hunted: Assorted Werewolf Hunters 11-, (Less Pow) |
| 15 | Physical Limitation: Repelled By Wolfsbane and Similar Herbs (Infrequently, Fully) |
| 15 | Psychological Limitation: Bestial Nature, Driven More by Instinct than Rational Thought (Common, Strong) |
| 15 | Psychological Limitation: Limited Memory of Human Form (Common, Strong) |
| 40 | Vulnerability: 2x STUN and BODY from Silver-Based Attacks (Common) |
| 187 | Experience |

Total Disadvantage Points: 357



The Bête de Gévaudan (The Beast of Gévaudan)

Ecology: The Beast of Le Gévaudan was a large wolf-like creature that haunted the French countryside from June 1764 to June 1767. It lived in the forests of Gévaudan, where preyed upon men, women, and (especially) children, and killed an estimated 60 people. The creature seemed to be invulnerable, surviving a number of attempts to slay it. Bullets didn't harm it, and the Beast shrugged off knife and pitchfork attacks with no ill effects. Many people reported wounding it, but the creature always returned to kill again, until finally being slain in June of 1767.

Personality/Motivation: It is unknown exactly why the Beast pursued humans. Lions and tigers (and other large cats) can become man-eaters, preying almost exclusively on humans. Wolves, on the other hand, tend to avoid men, although this may be a recent development following the spread of firearms.

Powers/Tactics: Due to its sheer size, strength, and apparent invulnerability, the Beast seemed fearless, attacking even large groups of armed men. It boldly made its way into villages in broad daylight, killing its victims despite any attempt to stop it. The creature's size and reputation terrified some people to such an extent that they were unable to fire upon it, while entire villages were abandoned due to reports of the Beast looking in through the windows of homes.

Many thought the Beast of La Gévaudan to be a werewolf. This accusation seemed to be true, as the creature survived many attempts to kill it, and didn't finally die until a hunter shot it with a *silver* bullet. The Beast was also said to be the result of a mating between a bear and a wolf, while the local priest thought it to be an apocalyptic beast sent by God to punish the wicked.

Campaign Use: What was the Beast of La Gévaudan? No one knows. The corpse was to be brought to Versailles to be presented to the king, but after being displayed in Gévaudan for two weeks it had begun to rot and was buried somewhere out in the countryside. If the Beast was a wolf, it behaved in a manner very unlike modern wolves. Its size is much greater than any wolf, as well, making one wonder if it was such an animal.

One possibility is that the Beast was actually several beasts; a pack of wolves that, for whatever reason, had begun to prey upon humans. Such predations were apparently common in certain parts of France, and fear of wolf packs was great. In addition, recent research into the identity of the Beast has indicated that it

might have been a striped hyena, an animal known to have been kept in a local menagerie.

The Beast of La Gévaudan, with its great size, sharp fangs, and general ferocity, should be enough to give any party of adventurers pause. Being bulletproof (or, at least seeming to be) the Beast can be a danger to even modern, gun-toting characters. The Beast fits right into any number of genres, including *Fantasy Hero*, *Horror Hero*, and 1930s pulp adventure. With a little alteration, the Beast can be used in some types of *Dark Champions* games, as well as *Star Hero* and *Champions* campaigns. The creature as written should be sufficient for any of these genres, as it is very powerful "as is."

Appearance: Said to be as large as a cow, the Beast was described as follows in the *Paris Gazette*: "...much higher than a wolf... and his feet are armed with talons. His hair is reddish, his head large, and the muzzle of it is shaped like that of a greyhound; his ears are small and straight; his breast is wide and gray; his back streaked with black; his large mouth is provided with sharp teeth." The June 6, 1765, issue of the English *St. James Chronicle* stated: "It appears that he is neither Wolf, Tiger, nor Hyena, but probably a Mongrel, generated between the two last, and forming, as it were, a new Species."

Other reports describe an even more frightening creature. They said the Beast walked on two legs, had short red hair, a pig-like snout, short ears and a long tail. Some said it was a large strange-looking wolf as big as a donkey, with hoof-like feet. It is not surprising that many believed the Beast to be a *loup-garou* (the French word for werewolf).

DIGITAL HERO #18

The Bête de Gévaudan (The Beast of Gévaudan)

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|--------------------------|
| 25 | STR | 15 | 14- | Lift 800 kg; 5d6 HTH [2] |
| 18 | DEX | 24 | 13- | OCV: 6/DCV: 4 |
| 21 | CON | 22 | 13- | |
| 15 | BODY | 10 | 12- | |
| 10 | INT | 0 | 11- | PER Roll: 14- |
| 12 | EGO | 4 | 11- | ECV: 4 |
| 25 | PRE | 15 | 14- | PRE Attack: 5d6 |
| 6 | COM | -2 | 10- | |
| 10 | PD | 5 | | Total PD: 10 (8 rPD) |
| 10 | ED | 6 | | Total ED: 10 (8 rED) |
| 4 | SPD | 12 | | Phases: 3, 6, 9, 12 |
| 9 | REC | 0 | | |
| 42 | END | 0 | | |
| 40 | STUN | 1 | | |

Total Characteristics Cost: 112

Movement: Running: 11"/22"
Leaping: 5"/10"
Swimming: 3"/6"

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|--|-----|
| 40 | <i>Fangs:</i> HKA 1d6+1 (2d6 with STR), Continuous (+1) | 4 |
| 8 | <i>Claws:</i> HKA ½d6 (1d6+1 with STR); Reduced Penetration (-¼) | 1 |
| 7 | <i>Howling:</i> +15 PRE; Only For Fear-Based Presence Attacks (-1), Incantations (must howl; -¼) | 0 |
| 40 | <i>Unnatural Vitality:</i> Physical Damage Reduction, Resistant, 75%; Not vs. Silver Weapons (-½) | 0 |
| 20 | <i>Unnatural Vitality:</i> Energy Damage Reduction Resistant, 50%; Not vs. Fire (-½) | 0 |
| 8 | <i>Thick Hide:</i> Damage Resistance (8 PD/8 ED), Invisible To Sight Group (+½); Not vs. Silver or Fire (-½) (8) | 0 |
| 6 | <i>Heavy:</i> Knockback Resistance -3" | 0 |
| 10 | <i>Strong Runner:</i> Running +5" (11" Total) | 2 |
| 1 | <i>Strong Swimmer:</i> Swimming +1" (3" Total) | 1 |
| 9 | <i>Sharp Senses:</i> +3 PER with all Sense Groups | 0 |
| 5 | <i>Can See In The Dark:</i> Nightvision | 0 |
| 5 | <i>Keen Sense Of Smell:</i> Tracking for Normal Smell | 0 |
| 3 | <i>Sharp Ears:</i> Ultrasonic Perception (Hearing Group) | 0 |

Skills

| | |
|----|------------------|
| 15 | +3 Hand-to-Hand |
| 5 | AK: Gévaudan 14- |
| 7 | Concealment 13- |
| 3 | Stealth 13- |
| 7 | Tracking 13- |

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 199

Total Cost: 311

75+ Disadvantages

| | |
|-----|--|
| 10 | Hunted: People of Gévaudan 14- (Less Pow, Kill) |
| 5 | Physical Limitation: Large (3m long, -2 DCV, +2 to PER Rolls to perceive) (Infrequently, Slightly) |
| 15 | Physical Limitation: (Very Limited Manipulation (Frequently, Greatly) |
| 20 | Psychological Limitation: Bloodthirsty Killer (Very Common, Strong) |
| 20 | Reputation: The Beast of Gévaudan, a bloodthirsty monster and possible werewolf, 14- (Extreme) |
| 10 | Vulnerability: 2x BODY from Silver Weapons |
| 156 | Experience Points |

Total Disadvantage Points: 311

The Bête de Gévaudan
(The Beast of Gévaudan)



Selkie

Ecology: The selkie live in the oceans surrounding Orkney and the Shetland Islands. Since they spend most of their time in seal form, they live off of the local fish population.

Occasionally, female selkies will come ashore, shed their seal skins, and dance on the sandy beaches. It is at this time that the female selkie is the most vulnerable, as she must obey anyone who manages to steal her sealskin.

Selkies are also known as Highland Mermen, Roanes, Sea Trows, or Seal Maidens.

Personality/Motivation: In general, female selkies are benevolent, if shy and reclusive, fairies. They tend to avoid humans, and keep to themselves. The male selkies are said to be able to raise storms, and are rumored to do so for revenge against attacks on the local seal populations by humans.

Powers/Tactics: A selkie's only real weapon is its powerful bite. If faced by armed men (or orca, their only major predator in the water) the selkies will flee to their underwater homes. In human form, a female selkie could use normal human weapons if needed.

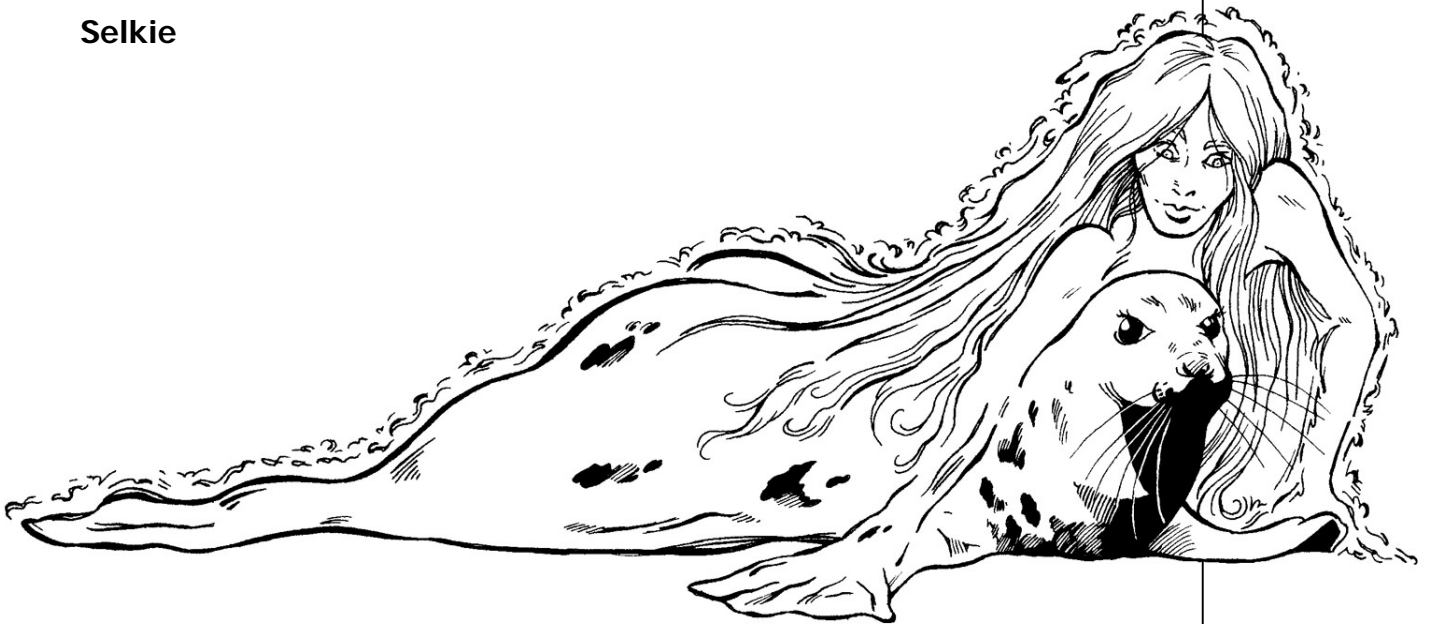
Male selkies are said to be able to summon great storms as well as overturn fishing boats.

Female selkies are thought to be able to foretell the future. A female selkie will make a good wife, provided she never discovers where her husband has hidden her sealskin. Finally, it is believed selkies live in great air-filled caves under the surface of the water.

Campaign Use: The selkie shows that not all supernatural creatures are malignant to humans. In many cases, folklore made them out to be fine wives, although most of the stories about a human married to a selkie ended with the wife recovering her sealskin and returning to the sea. As presented here, the selkie is best used in a *Fantasy Hero* setting, although one could conceivably turn a selkie in to a viable superhero-level character. Just make the seal form larger and stronger, and give the human form precognitive powers and the ability to summon great storms.

Appearance: A female selkie has two forms, that of a normal seal or that of a beautiful human woman. A male selkie can only appear as a seal. When in seal form, the selkie is unremarkable in appearance and has no special markings to distinguish it from any of the local seal population. In human form, a female selkie is far more beautiful than any human woman. She also has slightly webbed fingers and rough palms.

Selkie



Selkie
(Female – Seal Form)

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|----------------------|
| 13 | STR | 3 | 12- | 150 kg; 2½d6 HTH [1] |
| 13 | DEX | 9 | 12- | OCV: 4 / DCV: 4 |
| 15 | CON | 10 | 12- | |
| 10 | BODY | 0 | 11- | |
| 13 | INT | 3 | 12- | PER Roll: 14- |
| 11 | EGO | 2 | 11- | ECV: 4 |
| 10 | PRE | 0 | 11- | PRE Attack: 2d6 |
| 10 | COM | 0 | 11- | |
| 5 | PD | 2 | | Total: 5 PD (1 rPD) |
| 8 | ED | 5 | | Total: 8 ED (2 rED) |
| 2 | SPD | 0 | | Phases: 6, 12 |
| 6 | REC | 0 | | |
| 30 | END | 0 | | |
| 25 | STUN | 0 | | |

Total Characteristics Cost: 34

Movement: Running: 1”/2”
Leaping: 0”/0”
Swimming: 11”/22”

| Cost | Powers | END |
|------|--|-----|
| 8 | <i>Bite:</i> HKA ½d6 (1d6+1 with STR); Reduced Penetration (-¼) | 1 |
| 2 | <i>Thick Skin:</i> Damage Resistance (1 PD/ 2 ED) | 0 |
| 7 | <i>At Home in the Water:</i> +1 SPD; Only In Water (-½) | 0 |
| 9 | <i>At Home in the Water:</i> Swimming +9” (11” Total) | 2 |
| -10 | <i>Virtually Helpless on Land:</i> Running - 5” (1” Total) | 1 |
| 6 | <i>Sharp Senses:</i> +2 PER with all Sense Groups | 0 |
| 2 | <i>Sharp Eyes:</i> +1 PER with Sight Group | 0 |
| 4 | <i>Amphibious:</i> Life Support: Extended Breathing: 1 END per Turn, Safe Environment (High Pressure, Intense Cold) | 0 |
| 5 | <i>Assume Human Form:</i> Multiform (53- point human); Requires Sealskin to Change (-1) | 0 |

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 33

Total Character Cost: 67

75+ Disadvantages

- 15 Hunted: Humans (Mo Pow) 8-
- 15 Hunted: Orca (Mo Pow) 8-
- 5 Physical Limitation: Reduced Leap;
Cannot Leap (Infrequently, Slightly)
- 15 Physical Limitation: Very Limited
Manipulation (Frequently, Greatly)

Total Disadvantage Points: 67

Selkie
(Female – Human Form)

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|--------------------------|
| 10 | STR | 0 | 11- | Lift 100 kg; 2d6 HTH [1] |
| 13 | DEX | 9 | 12- | OCV: 4/DCV: 4 |
| 10 | CON | 0 | 11- | |
| 10 | BODY | 0 | 11- | |
| 13 | INT | 3 | 12- | PER Roll: 14- |
| 11 | EGO | 2 | 11- | ECV: 4 |
| 10 | PRE | 0 | 11- | PRE Attack: 2d6 |
| 30 | COM | 10 | 15- | |
| 2 | PD | 0 | | Total: 2 PD (0 rPD) |
| 2 | ED | 0 | | Total: 2 ED (0 rPD) |
| 2 | SPD | 0 | | Phases: 6, 12 |
| 4 | REC | 0 | | |
| 20 | END | 0 | | |
| 20 | STUN | 0 | | |

Total Characteristics Cost: 24

Movement: Running: 6”/12”
Leaping: 2”/4”
Swimming: 4”/8”

| Cost | Powers | END |
|---------------|--|-----|
| 2 | <i>At Home in the Water:</i> Swimming +2” (4” Total) | 1 |
| 6 | <i>Sharp Senses:</i> +2 PER with all Sense Groups | 0 |
| 2 | <i>Sharp Eyes:</i> +1 PER with Sight Group | 0 |
| Skills | | |
| 2 | AK: Local Area 11- | |
| 2 | KS: Dancing 11- | |
| 2 | KS: Medicine 11- | |
| 2 | KS: Selkie Society 11- | |
| 4 | Language: Whatever Is Local (usually English or Gaelic; Selkie is native) | |
| 3 | Paramedic 12- | |
| 2 | PS: Midwife 11- | |
| 2 | Survival (Marine) 12- | |

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 39

Total Character Cost: 53

0+ Disadvantages

- 15 Distinctive Features: Unearthly Beauty
(Concealable With Difficulty, Causes
Major Reaction [desire])
- 5 Distinctive Features: Slightly Webbed
Fingers (Easily Concealable)
- 15 Physical Limitation: Must Obey Anyone
who Holds Her Sealskin (Infrequently,
Fully)
- 10 Psychological Limitation: Drawn to the
Sea (Common, Moderate)
- 10 Experience

Total Disadvantage Points: 53

DIGITAL HERO #18

Selkie

(Male – Seal Form)

| Val | Char | Cost | Roll | Notes |
|-----|------|------|------|----------------------|
| 30 | STR | 20 | 15- | 1600 kg; 6d6 HTH [3] |
| 14 | DEX | 12 | 12- | OCV: 5/DCV: 5 |
| 18 | CON | 16 | 13- | |
| 17 | BODY | 14 | 12- | |
| 13 | INT | 3 | 12- | PER Roll: 14- |
| 11 | EGO | 2 | 11- | ECV: 4 |
| 15 | PRE | 5 | 12- | PRE Attack: 3d6 |
| 10 | COM | 0 | 11- | |
| 10 | PD | 4 | | Total: 10 PD (2 rPD) |
| 9 | ED | 5 | | Total: 9 ED (2 rED) |
| 3 | SPD | 6 | | Phases: 4, 8, 12 |
| 10 | REC | 0 | | |
| 36 | END | 0 | | |
| 41 | STUN | 0 | | |

Total Characteristics Cost: 87

Movement: Running: 3"/6"
Leaping: 0"/0"
Swimming: 10"/20"

Cost Powers **END**

- 147 *Create Storms:* Telekinesis (30 STR), Area of Effect (9" Radius; +1), Megascale (1" = 1 km; +1/4), Personal Immunity (+1/4), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Affects All Parts Of Target (-1/4), No Range (-1/2), Only Outside (-1/2) **plus High Winds:** EB 6d6, Area of Effect (7" Radius; +1), Double Knockback (+3/4), Megascale (1" = 1 km; +1/4), Personal Immunity (+1/4), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Linked (-1/2), No Range (-1/2), Reduced Penetration (-1/4) **plus Driving Rain:** Hearing Images, -1 to PER Rolls, Sight Images -3 to PER Rolls, Increased Size (8" radius; +3/4), Megascale (1" = 1 km; +1/4), Personal Immunity (+1/4), Reduced Endurance (0 END; +1/2); Linked (-1/2), No Range (-1/2) 0

- 12 *Bite:* HKA 1d6 (2d6 with STR); Reduced Penetration (-1/4) 1
2 *Thick Skin:* Damage Resistance (2 PD/2 ED) 0
10 *Heavy:* Knockback Resistance -5" 0
-6 *Slow on Land:* Running -3" (3" Total) 1
8 *At Home in the Water:* Swimming +8" (10" Total) 2
6 *Sharp Senses:* +2 PER with all Sense Groups 0
4 *Sharp Senses:* +2 PER with Sight Group 0
4 *Amphibious Form:* Life Support: Extended Breathing: 1 END per Turn, Safe Environment (High Pressure, Intense Cold) 0

Total Powers & Skills Cost: 187

Total Character Cost: 274

0+ Disadvantages

- 15 Hunted: Humans (Mo Pow) 8-
15 Hunted: Orca (Mo Pow) 8-
5 Physical Limitation: Large (3m, -2 DCV, +2 to PER Rolls to perceive) (Infrequently, Slightly)
5 Physical Limitation: Reduced Leap; cannot leap (Infrequently, Slightly)
15 Physical Limitation: Very Limited Manipulation (Frequently, Greatly)
15 Psychological Limitation: Protective of Female Selkies and Seals (Common, Strong)
129 Experience Points

Total Disadvantage Points: 274



Medieval Mercantilism

by David Howard

Butcher, Baker, and Candlestick Maker

In the Beginning

In Medieval times, professions were wide and varied, but not as varied as they are today. This article will focus on the 13th Century, which is a very interesting period, in England, indeed.

In the last half of the 13th Century, after a significant period of decline since the Roman times, mercantilism (‡literally “the practice, methods, or spirit of merchants; commercialism”) was on the upswing. Soon the wealth of merchants would empower them to rule over the nobility, rather than the other way around.

The 13th Century was a pivotal point in the shift of power away from feudalism. But, in this early Middle Ages Century, much of the richness and primitiveness of early Medieval culture was still intact – opening up opportunities for more mystery and superstitious ignorance.

Feudal Economics

The term Medieval Mercantilism is used loosely, because Mercantilism proper did not take hold, generally, until the 14th Century. This term conveys, rather, a sense of the rising of trade, and the state and functions of the professions in the 13th Century.

The feudal economic system was what is now called a mixed economy: The Lord decided what was manufactured for his interests, but his subjects may produce more beyond their quota and sell it to others. International trade was existent, but of low volume in the 13th Century. It was not until the 14th Century that Mercantilism, by its proper definition, took hold.

Daily Life

Medieval workers had a dawn to dusk workday. They rose at dawn and ceased work with the last glimmer of light. Work was generally hard, laborious, and exhausting for the apprentice, but for the master craftsman it was generally easier as his experience and apprentices eased the demands of his craft on him.

As with today’s labor economics, the higher a worker’s position in his respective career field, the more administrative a worker became, and the more prosperous. Also, his work became less strenuous as he climbed his career ladder.

Occupations and Trades

There are far more professional occupations to talk about than are presented here, but some of the most interesting professional occupations are concentrated on. These occupations present many interesting possibilities for Medieval roleplaying, and some are time-honored professions or classes in fantasy roleplaying games.

DIGITAL HERO #18

THE APOTHECARY

Mixing potions, concoctions, salves, and libations were all the product and craft of the Alchemist. The Apothecary prepared and sold drugs, generally for use by a physician. An Apothecary was a type of sub-physician who enjoyed a bit of the prestige of a doctor. Apothecaries are the modern-day equivalent of a pharmacist, but with a natural remedy twist.

A Day in the Life

Apothecaries would often visit an herbalist, in large towns where medicinal herbs were a rarity to cull from surrounding terrain. Herbalists would get their herbs either on trips they made to the countryside, or through intermediaries. Most of an apothecary's day was spent mixing medicinal remedies from scratch, for a needy physician. Apothecaries would often send young apprentices as runners to deliver the medicine, and also the apprentices would make rounds to physicians or surgeons (Medieval surgeons), to see if any remedies were needed.

A Note About 13th Century Medicine

By the 13th Century, many medical methods and procedures that are used today by physicians were practiced. Quarantine, cleansing of wounds, and rest and relaxation, were common practices. Sadly, medicinal cures were often ineffective, and deaths by disease were common. In the Middle East, much better medicinal practices were available, but due to factors such as religious discrimination and scientific ignorance, these practices were not adopted by European Medieval physicians. In their book, *Life in a Medieval City*, Joseph and Frances Gies, the authors state about the state of Medieval medicine in France:

In a city the size of Troyes^Ω [France] there are fewer than half a dozen licensed doctors, not counting the numerous midwives, barbers, monks, and outright quacks who practiced medicine or some branch of it. The trained physician is an aristocrat of professionals, enjoying high status and excellent fees. His practice is naturally confined to the better class, as the medical texts and treatises make clear.

Tools of the Trade

Chopping Board, Glassware, Herbs, Jugs, Kettle and Fireplace, Medicinal Packaging, Pot

Income

9p./day (\$118)

Living Conditions

Good; warm, dry housing; fancy clothing.

Lifestyle

Generally Wealthy/Upper Middle Class

Daily Duties

Deliver Remedies, Find Herbs, Mix Medicinal Remedies (Salves, Ointments, Poultices, etc.), Receive/Obtain Physicians' Orders, Trade for Herbs

Roleplaying Roles of the Apothecary Skill

The Apothecary can have many roleplaying roles, in a Medieval Hero and *Fantasy Hero* scenario. Some ideas are listed below:

- PS: Apothecary can be used to mix healing salves and healing potions.
- KS: Apothecary could be used to find ingredients for healing potions, and possibly flesh golem construction – a curative and life-giving ingredient.

Scenario Ideas

- PCs could use KS: Apothecary to find a cure for a magical plague riddling a small village. They have to obtain the ingredients from a distant mountaintop, inhabited by trolls and a powerful witch – who cast the plague, unknown to PCs.
- PCs could use PS: Apothecary to mix a concoction to save the young prince, in a distant ruined keep that has the only herb usable for the cure. Of course the local brigand band wants the prince dead and wants to stop them, since their leader is the king's bastard son.

Helpful Hints

Most Apothecaries were quiet, introverted and knowledgeable men. Some were taught in the bishops' schools and very knowledgeable in Latin. Such an Apothecary could serve as a linguist as well.

^Ω Permanent population of 10,000, 15,000+ in busy seasons.

THE BARD

We need to differentiate terms here; Bard is not the same term as Minstrel or Troubadour. Though many historians are non-specific and indistinct with their usage of terms, Bards are a specific subset of performer; that had a druidical and spiritual role. Minstrels and Troubadours are singers and poets, respectively. Yes, there were some Troubadours who were minstrels *as well* as Troubadours, but by and large the term Troubadour was reserved to a band of knights who wrote romantic, often adulterous, poetry.

The Bard himself was a repository of Celtic mythology and Celtic culture. One of the last vestiges of the Druid faith, bards kept the myths, morality and religious beliefs of the druids around – through song, poetry and story – for a few centuries after the druids ceased to exist, and long after. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* defines a bard as:

A poet, especially one who writes impassioned, lyrical, or epic verse.

Bards were originally Celtic composers of eulogy and satire; the word came to mean more generally a tribal poet-singer gifted in composing and reciting verses on heroes and their deeds.

The *Hutchinson Encyclopedia* says the bard is:

Celtic minstrel who, in addition to composing songs, usually at a court, often held important political posts. Originating in the pre-Christian era, bards were persecuted in Wales during the 13th Century on political grounds.

At the time of druidical declines, the Bard took on a different function – as a collector of the stories of the *current* culture. The Bard also became the social conscience, and was an ethical prick to the immoral and oppressive actions of certain domineering lords – making some bards unpopular with the nobility. In Norse culture, bards were known as “scops.”

A Day in the Life

A bard would travel from town to town; sometimes singing his tunes or reciting his verse, loudly, as a way to advertise his goods. Children and interested adults would gather around.

Tools of the Trade

Blank Vellum Scrolls, Cross, Harp, Leather-Bound Books, Lute, Mistletoe, Scrolls, Poetry, Scrolls, Songs

Bard Income

£1/day (\$2750) or less if in service to a Lord (lorded), 2p. or more (\$24) if unlorded.

Bard Living Conditions

If lorded – plush
If unlorded – tent or Inn

Bard Lifestyle

If lorded – rich
If unlorded – lower middle class

Daily Duties

Camp Outdoors, Perform (Recite Poetry), Perform (Sing), Persuade Nobility, Seduce Townsfolk, Travel

For more information about bardic performance skills, read the minstrel below.

Roleplaying Roles of the Bard Skill

You may want to create a 5 point, intelligence-based, *Bardic Lore* skill. This skill would be like a familiarity with almost every knowledge skill (say 6 or less roll). For this skill a bard would get tidbits of information, on about almost every subject: sometimes through old songs or ancient poetry.

Some ideas for the use of a bard skill are listed below:

- The Bardic Lore skill, can be used to identify the traitor in the baron’s house through bardic rhymes, from recent bard visitors to the barony – or at least narrow the suspect pool down.
- The Bardic Lore skill can, through ballads, identify the lost love of an undead knight, and cause the knight to stop his attack through singing a favorite song of the love, for a time period due to the knight’s confusion and anguish.

Scenario Ideas

- While in Canterbury, the party bard sees a signet ring of a long-dead devil-worshipping baron – long thought to be lost – on the finger of a local bishop. On further investigation the party finds out the bishop is actually a demon-worshipping sorcerer incognito, who is plotting to corrupt the worship of the local populace, and thereby recruit followers into his fold.
- While in a local elven tree-city, the party bard hears tales of a long-lost harp of great magical and good powers. Just then, an orc horde storms the city, making the recovery of the harp essential to saving the elven kingdom.

Helpful Hints

Bard knowledge is not just of ancient times, but also current events through popular ballads, rhymes and tunes.

Bards are people, too, with personalities – some were raucous and talkative; some were quiet and thoughtful. Not all bards were “rogues,” drunkards, and devil-may-care swashbucklers. Some were very studious; in fact *most* were very studious and scholarly – but not always.

DIGITAL HERO #18

THE MINSTREL

Minstrels were lyric poets and musicians who traveled from village to village, often in performing groups, or troupes as they were called. Minstrels were the lifeblood of entertainment in Medieval Europe. In England minstrels were very religious in tone, for the most part – possible because of the strong and pervasive influence of monks and the Church. One 13th Century poet, Henri d'Andeli, compared the relationship between the liberal arts, of which one was music, in his poem of comparison of the educational arts – *The Battle of the Arts* thusly:

Civil Law rode gorgeously
And Canon Law rode haughtily
Ahead of all the other arts.

In the Middle East, the Sufis or minstrels of Islam, focused on the mystical experience of Islam. Sufis didn't travel throughout the region as much as their counterparts in Europe, and have a distinctive high-pitched style to their music. Perhaps the most famous of the Sufis was Rumi, born in 1207. Rumi succeeded his father as a professor in religious sciences in 1231. No sufi is more famous than Rumi:

Happy the one who has become like us;
who has become all surrender and
contentment;
Who has become the pledge of love and
madness;
who has become a jewel in the sea of
purity.

In Asia, the poet Li Ch'ing-chao was the closest famous contemporary poet (1081-1141). She, like her Middle East counterparts, did not travel around. She was born into a literary family, and became an antiquarian, book collector, and calligrapher. She wrote six original volumes of lyrics, of which only about 50 lyrics remain.

A Day in the Life

Minstrel's lives were so varied, it is hard to pin down one example of a day in the life of a Minstrel. But, some were professors like Rumi, some were businesswomen like Li Ch'ing-chao, and some were wandering entertainers who maybe have accompanied jugglers, acrobats, or other showmen.

Tools of the Trade

Same as bard, plus: Ink, Inkwell, and Paper.

Minstrel Income

1p/day (\$12/day).

Minstrel Living Conditions

Poor to good, many lived in tents or in show wagons; some were taken on by lords as entertainers.

Minstrel Lifestyle

Poor to good: Some had threadbare clothes (uncommon), some had rich clothing accorded to a noble's minstrel.

Daily Duties

As Bard.

Roleplaying Roles for the Perform Skill

The GM may create a 3-point Presence-based skill called Perform. This skill has specializations such as acrobatics, musician, poet, divine music, and juggling. Characters will get one free specialization, plus an additional specialization for 1 point each. A character may roll to make his living (PRE/5+9). Perform is an interaction skill. Another related skill like Acrobatics would be Complementary.

- Characters may use the Perform Skill to win food for themselves when down on their luck.
- Characters may buy a Complementary Skill, such as KS: Ballads, to increase the effectiveness of their Perform Skill rolls.

Scenario Ideas

- A party minstrel travels into town, and is surrounded by townspeople crying for him to help them. It seems an enormous wolf has cornered a young woman in a tall tree, and the villagers are afraid to fight it. They are under the idea that music may soothe the wolf and free the woman. Whether this works or not is up to the GM.
- A traveling entertaining troupe comes to town, and the mayor's ten-year old daughter goes missing; so has the troupe's strongman. Little does the party know, the strongman is actually the mayor's long lost son, and the minstrel has magically charmed them both – for ransom.

THE HERBALIST

Herbalists were what we might call homeopathic medical doctors. It was believed that many herbs had medicinal applications. Some of the beliefs of medieval serfs and nobility were mere superstition, but some were based on medical science. Herbalists believed that some herbs had magical powers of a symbolic nature. For instance, borage (bright blue hairy star-shaped flowers), which bloom most of the summer, were associated with courage; basil was associated with love and hate; and black horehound (a European mint family plant) was associated with curing colds. None of these relationships have been verified by science.

The most famous medieval herbalist and apothecary in literature, is probably Brother Cadfael, of PBS fame. His adept knowledge of herbs allowed him to save lives, solve mysteries, and catch criminals.

A Day in the Life

Herbalists in the country or a village would generally tend their own plants. This would require them to garden. Herbalists in the city or town will usually have to acquire herbs either through the work of their apprentices, or by having a farm outside the town limits.

Tools of the Trade

Same as Apothecary, plus Gardening Tools.

Herbalist Income

5p/day (\$60/day).

Herbalist Living Conditions

Generally good in towns or cities. Generally modest in villages or countryside.

Herbalist Lifestyle

As with countryside, village, town, or city.

Daily Duties

Advise Apothecary or Physician, Cut Herbs, Gather Herbs, Package Herbs, Provide Superstitious Cures, Sell Herbs

Roleplaying Roles for the Herbalist Skills

- A player with PS: Herbalist could be pivotal in mixing a concoction with a magical herb, which would save a party member.
- A PC with KS: Herbalist could identify a rare herb in the wilderness, and identify the likely location to find it.

Scenario Ideas

- A PC with KS: Herbalist, is asked to investigate the poisoning of the baron. The baron recently had a feast, in which he drank wine copiously. When investigating the lord's wine mug, the PC finds a rim of white foam around the edges. After sniffing the wine mug, the PC smells the musky odor of mandrake. Who could have poisoned the baron?
 - Granny Morr is a famous herbalist who moves about the hills of Mazar, looking for a special herb called alanthea. This magical herb gives great strength to the consumer. PCs may want to obtain some of the herb for a potion. Little do the PCs know, a band of hobgoblins has the same idea.

THE MAN-AT-ARMS

The man-at-arms is a general term used for any bearer of arms who serves a liege lord or liege knight. In the 13th Century, there were main four types of men-at-arms: infantrymen, crossbowmen, bowmen, and cavalry. Each of these specializations came about, over the years, with the development of military weaponry.

Infantrymen worked in all settings and environments. Sometimes infantrymen were further specialized in swordsmen, spearmen, and macemen; there were other specializations to different weapons, i.e. pikemen. Infantrymen were the bottom of the barrel and a dime a dozen, except for maybe guardsmen at castles. Specialized infantrymen were sometimes champions for noblemen, or noble guards.

Bowmen were the next up on the ladder from infantrymen, probably equal to specialized infantrymen in social status. Bows in the 13th Century were not great in power, and thus bowmen enjoyed a lower status than the 14th Century *longbowmen*.

Crossbowmen usually worked in castles, since the reload time on a crossbow was so high that it put the crossbowman in a disadvantageous position. Crossbowmen had some prestige in these settings, as the crossbow was so powerful, it could disable armored warriors very quickly. A variety of crossbows were available, and while in gaming terms were differentiate it into heavy and light crossbows, a player could conceivably make any size crossbow they wanted with any damage class; remember there were the humongous arbalests. Many historians differentiate the crossbows into a “arm-pull” (light) crossbow, in which only arm power is required to draw and load the particular crossbow; and the “leg-pull” (heavy) crossbow, in which a person would have to pin the crossbow to the ground with their legs and draw with his arms.

Calvarymen were not knights, but a step down the ladder from knights, and the highest social order below a knight in the warrior hierarchy. Calvarymen were not very effective, except as they were supplemented by crossbowmen or bowmen. Many a story is told of the heavily armored cavalryman pulled off his horse by infantrymen, because he had no bow-fire to thin the enemy out beforehand.

Tools of the Trade (Armor)

Infantrymen – Boiled leather or studded leather. Specialized infantrymen often had chainmail, scalemail, or ringmail armor.

Bowmen – Sometimes leather armor, sometimes just thick leather breeches and tunic

Crossbowmen – Brigandine or thick leather armor

Calvary – Usually from brigandine to chainmail

Man-At-Arms Income

2½d./day (\$30/day) average in castles, more in countryside.

Infantrymen – *5½d./day* (\$66/day).

Archers – *3½d./day* (\$42/day)

Crossbowmen – *4½d./day* (\$54/day)

Calvaryman – *18d./day* (\$216/day)

Man-At-Arms Living Conditions

Usually fair to excellent, often in castles.

Man-At-Arms Lifestyle

As living conditions.

Daily Duties

Arrest (under command of a petty knight or other superior), Duel, Enforce Rules/Laws, Fight, Patrol, Practice, Solve Crime (City Watch)

Roleplaying Roles for the Man-At-Arms Skills

- A PC with the PS: Man-At-Arms could identify a fake Man-At-Arms out of a crowd, due to improper equipment or improper colors.
- A character with KS: Warfare, could identify an ambush spot that bandits would likely choose to attack the party.

Scenario Ideas

- A group of men-at-arms is rumored to be plotting an overthrow of the barony, but no one knows who. Party members must infiltrate the baron’s guard as warriors, and identify the plotters – but first they must pass a dueling test. One skill level in any weapon would qualify any player.
- A group of goblins with specialized weapon skills is attacking a keep on the outskirts of the duchy. Players must plan how they will overcome a force of 100 orcs. For positioning: Archers in the rear, Calvary in the front, Infantrymen following up the Calvarymen. See how it works.

THE SCRIBE

For it is impossible for the Latins to reach what is necessary in matters divine and human, except through the knowledge of other languages...
— *A Plea for the Study of Languages*,
Roger Bacon

Scribes were, by and large, educated in the diocesan schools – which are the schools of the bishops. They learned Latin, sometimes Greek if they were studying biblical texts, and many other of the liberal arts: grammar, rhetoric, logic, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music. So most scribes educated in the bishop’s schools would have a base knowledge of these disciplines.

From this education, which was given mostly to those of the upper middle classes or higher social classes, the scribe would then go onto some specific discipline – such as bookkeeping. He would then grow in this discipline as an apprentice, very rarely moving onto other disciplines. Needless to say, the ability to read was a rare gift in Medieval times, and going to the bishop’s school may be considered, retrospectively, the equivalent of a master’s degree for those times.

Occasionally, with the advent of universities, former students might teach in these universities the same material they had learned as students.

A Day in the Life

A scribe is probably the most similar profession to 20th Century office workers of any profession. A scribe would probably live in “digs” provided by his employer. Scribes were employed by bishops, lords, and high rank nobles, universities, and some were self-employed.

A scribe would go to his office in the morning, and begin his work on his prime job function; whether bookkeeping, copying (copyist), writing wills, or writing other documents. A scribe may work in conjunction with a Barrister (lawyer) if he is producing legal documents. A senior scribe would correct the errors of his employees or subordinates, and edit their work – making them rewrite whatever they had made errors on. For low paying work, private scribes may just scratch out a word that his subordinate had written incorrectly and rewrite it on the same sheet of paper. For a work of quality, written for a wealthy man, noble, or clergy, the subordinate scribe would have to rewrite the entire page.

A Word About Parchment and Other Documents of Other Compositions

In the 13th Century there were, generally, three types of material to write upon: vellum (dried sheepskin, calfskin, or kidskin), papyrus (plant paper), and paper. Paper did not find its heyday until the invention of the printing press in the 15th Century.

Parchment and Medieval Book-Making Websites

www.getty.edu/art/exhibitions/making/
www.ceu.hu/medstud/manual/MMMM/parchment.html

Tools of the Trade

Bookkeeping books, Inkwell, Parchment, Quill Pen, Vellum Scrolls, Writing Desk

Scribe Income

5d./day (\$60/day)

Scribe Living Conditions

Lower Middle Class (Fair)

Scribe Lifestyle

Fair, with some amenities

Daily Duties

Bookkeeping, Copying, Goods and Money, Inventory, Manage Housing (Professors), Teach Classes (Professors), Writing Legal Documents, Writing Wills

Roleplaying Roles for the Scribe Skill

- A character with PS: Scribe could read a note that other players wouldn’t be able to, due to professional slang.

- A character with KS: Texts could complement a Forgery Skill to identify a fake order of execution that was thought to be from the duke.

Scenario Ideas

- *The Case of the Poisoned Squid*: “Squid” was a slang term sometime used for ink in Medieval days. In this case the squid on a royal dispatch is actually poison, that a character with PS: Scribe could identify as being unusual ink. Give the poison a time delay, so the party will have to trace the poisoning back to the baron’s library, and the poisoned letter.

- *The Case of the Antic Obituarian*: A scribe who keeps lists of the dead, for priests to perform Mass for and to record the dead in the Church graveyard, is actually recording people killed by a local thieves band of teenage boys. The party scribe could identify the inaccurate records, due to hurried scribing of the Obituarian in question.

THE LORD

But what is this office of the duly ordained soldier? To defend the Church, to assail infidelity, to venerate the priesthood, to protect the poor from injuries, to pacify the province, to pour out their blood for their brothers.

— *The Function of Knighthood*,
John of Salisbury.

The Lord of the Manor was described in *Digital Hero #14*. This reviews and expounds upon that.

Lords of the manor were either nobles or clergy. If merely nobles, they were religious laymen who owed military service to a higher lord, or to the king himself.

Whether noble or clergy, the lord's role in the 13th Century was mainly political. He spent long periods away from the village and his estate, especially as politics became more complex in the late 13th Century and after. Basically the management of the manorial estate was left to the Steward, whom the lord checked up on periodically. The Bailiff and Reeve were, respectively, second and third in command to the steward, third and fourth in command to the lord.

The saying "Lord of the Manor" is a generalization; landowners were both nobles, and bishops or abbots. Often lords of the manor were petty knights, but sometimes an earl or count. As to clergy, the honorific "lord" was often loosely used.

Lords of the manor were also skilled knights in the 13th Century, for the most part. In early centuries in England, the term "cniht" in the Anglo-Saxon language was used, and it meant, literally, "mounted warrior."

A Day in the Life

A lord would often be away, either at the king's court, at town, or at his liege lord's holdings. Knights served and retained their status at their liege lord's pleasure, and with a scratch of his pen, a baron would take away a knight's holdings and title. Hence the title and place of a knight in the noble hierarchy was based on merit, not heredity. Only with the development the "knight baronet" in the 18th Century, did the knight have a hereditary title. Even to the present day, a knight does not pass his title on to his descendents, but a knight baronet does.

With so much riding on his relationship with his liege lord, and the general aboriginal state of law, many knights did lose their lands and title, by merely displeasing their liege lord. For these reasons, many a knight was away at his liege lord's court quite often, keeping, and sometimes making, peace.

At this time, heraldry and colors were sometimes confusing, since there were no strict rules about which patterns a knight make take for his "colors and devices."

Tools of the Trade

Bow, Knight's Armor, Lance, Signet Ring, Sword, Warhorse

Lord Income

See Appendix C

Lord Living Conditions

Upper Middle Class to Lower Upper Class

Lord Lifestyle

Rich (comparatively)

Daily Duties

Audit Book Keeping, Fight Off National Invaders, Hold Manorial Feast (Annually), Oversee Manor Legal Court, Oversee Underlings, Politic with Superior, Train in Arms and Armor, Travel

Roleplaying Ideas for the Lord Skills

- A PC can use the PS: Lord skill to make a disguise of a rival lord more effective (complementary skill).
- A character can use the KS: Royalty skill to identify which daughter of a local baron is missing, that the baron does not want his liege lord to know has married an enemy country's prince.

Scenario Ideas

- A PC lord could try to build a town in the wilderness where bandits, brigands and other ne'er-do-wells reside.
- A PC lord (baron) could try to climb the royal ranks in a country, trying to wrest power from a corrupt king. This would involve plenty of Politics, Conversation, Seduction, and other Presence-based skills in a roleplaying and skill-based only scenario. Many knowledge skills could also be helpful as the player tries to build his "skills bank."

THE CLERIC

Whoever, therefore, as a monk, hastens to attain the height of perfection, let him confine himself with the walls of his cloister, let him love spiritual quiet, let him have a horror of running about in the world, as he would of immersing himself in a pool of blood.

— *The Monastic Ideal*,
St. Peter Damiani

The predominant religion of the time was, of course, the Catholic faith. Though there were times of peace between Muslims and Catholics, one must realize that the fifth pillar of Islam was “Wage War Against the Infidels.” Though not all Muslims proscribed to this dictum – many do.

For the most part, except for a few heretical branches, the Catholic Church was the religious kingdom in England. In the Catholic Church, there were generally, three different branches of clergy. For the purpose of this article, I will use the term “clergy” to mean men or women viewed with authority in the Church, since this seems to fit better with a fantasy schema.

First, branch number one is the diocesan clergy who reported, generally, directly to a bishop. These diocesan clergy are your typical parish Priest of Father Flanagan[‡] fame. These priests did not share a community with other religious men, like in a monastery, but mostly lived on their own amongst their flock, and had their own parish houses.

Second were the monastic orders. These were generally the Benedictine religious, like Brother Cadfael’s community in *Brother Cadfael’s Mysteries* on PBS, mentioned earlier. This series has the absolutely best Medieval props, culture and settings of any Medieval movies or television show. Brother Cadfael lived in a Monastery, which many fantasy writers seem to go ga-ga over.

Third were the mendicant orders, or the orders of traveling friars. Hence we have Friar Tuck of *Robin Hood* fame. If you noticed, Friar Tuck had no parish home, was not adverse to hanging around Robin Hood and his band when he could have easily left, and was generally a traveling man. Mendicants, or friars, live generally in Friaries, which are houses set up for communities. The existing mendicant orders of the 13th Century were the Carmelites, Franciscans, and Dominicans. The Carmelites were a generally contemplative order that arrived in the 11th Century, long before the Franciscans or Dominicans were even founded. Friar Tuck was a Franciscan.

Each of these orders had different ministries to the English. Parish priests did most of the marrying, baptizing, burials, and other sacraments. Friars traveled around doing those things listed directly above, and also preaching and trying to convert people. Monastics lived in monasteries and prayed for people, studied the Bible, and copied and preserved ancient texts. An excellent book called *The Name of the Rose* tells a story about what extent Benedictines may have gone to, to censure and hide books.

A Day in the Life

Most women followed the pattern of men in their same religious order. Most religious rose early, some at 4 a.m. According to *Daily Life in Medieval Europe* by Jeffrey Singman, and many other sources, the list following was the schedule of monastics, and still is generally followed today:

Part of Day § Clerical Duties

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Darkness (2 or 3 am) | Nocturn (Matins) and Lauds* Winter: sleep, private masses, tasks. |
| Daylight (4:30am/ 7:30am) | Washing of face and hands Prime* Silent working period |
| Morning (9am) | Terce* Morning Mass Chapter meeting Non-silent working period |
| Midday | Sext* High Mass Summer: dinner Summer: silent working period Winter: non-silent working period |
| Afternoon (2:30pm/ 1:30pm) | None* Summer: drink Summer: non-silent working period Winter: dinner Winter: silent working period |
| Evening (6pm/ 4:15pm) | Vespers* Summer: supper Summer: silent contemplative period Winter: light meal |
| Night (8pm/ 6:15pm) | Compline* Bed |

* Prayer times with prayerbook

§ The time of day (in summer/winter)

Friars and diocesan priests followed a less regimented schedule, but most were up early praying or saying Mass nonetheless. It must be said, not all clergy are priests, some are non-priest (religious lay brothers), and some are nuns (religious lay sisters).

‡ The movies Bing Crosby starred in, in the 1940s and 1950s.

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Tools of the Trade

Altar, Baptismal Font, Cassock, Chalice, Chausible, Holy Water Sprinkler, Lectionary, Office of the Readings, Patten, Vestments

Priest Income

7½£/day (\$20,000)

Priest Living Conditions

Middle Middle Class

Priest Lifestyle

Good

Daily Duties

Administer Parish Funds, Attend University Classes (Uncommonly), Care-take Parish Buildings, Hear Confessions, Perform Burial Rituals, Say Daily Mass

Roleplaying Roles for the Priest Skill

- A party priest, with PS: Priest, could identify the ritual performed by a fake priest as being in error – thus revealing the fake priest as being an imposter.
- A party priest with KS: Priest, could identify the ritual needed to stop the summoning of the Demon Lord Orbraxus, Prince of the Inferno.

Scenario Ideas for Priests

- A priest in a local village parish is actually an infamous general, who has been missing for five years. This would have gone unnoticed, if the party's priest had not visited the village parish and noticed something vaguely familiar about this parish priest. After attending services with this priest, the party priest notices the village priest uses the wrong words at the ceremony. The race is on to discover who the fake priest is before the fake priest finds out he is being investigated and escapes.
- An elderly monk in a local Benedictine Monastery is said to be missing. Upon examination the party detective finds that he was seen during the **none** prayers, but then no one can remember him being present after. Little did the monks know, noon is the time when a witches's curse was finally lifted from a wizard, and he fled the monastery (via invisibility) he had hidden in from the powerful witch for decades. If the party checks the Monastery library's secret archives, which they first have to discover, they may find a record of this "Curse of None" in a dusty ancient tome – hundreds of years old.

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- **Scops**
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- **Chinese Poets**
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- **Li Ch'ing-chao**
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MEDIEVAL PROFESSIONS

www1.enloe.wake.k12.nc.us/enloe/CandC/showme/careers.html
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MEDIEVAL MONEY VALUATOR

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Appendices

**APPENDIX A. 13TH CENTURY
OCCUPATIONS (PLUS FANTASY
ADDITIONS)**

Actor, Alchemist, Animal Handler, Apothecary, Architect, Archer, Aristocrat, Armorer, Artisan, Artist, Astrologer, Baker, Banker, Barbarian, Barber, Bard, Barkeep, Barmaid, Barrister (Lawyer), Beekeeper, Beer Seller, Beggar, Blacksmith, Boatman, Bookbinder, Bookseller, Brewer, Bricklayer, Brothelkeeper, Bucklemaker, Builder, Butcher, Caravan-Master, Carpenter, Cartographer, Chandler, Charioteer, Chatelaine, Chef, Chieftain, Chirurgeon, Clergy, Clerk, Clockmaker, Clothworker, Commander, Concubine, Cook, Cooper, Copyist, Courtesan, Courtier, Cowherd, Crossbowman, Cutler, Daimyo, Dairymaid, Diplomat, Distiller, Diver, Diviner, Dyer, Engineer, Engineer (Siege), Engraver, Emperor, Eunuch, Explorer, Farmer, Fighter, Fisherman, Fishmonger, Footman, Furrier, Galley Slave, Gardener, Geisha, Glovemaker, Groom, Guildmaster, Harnessmaker, Hatmaker, Hay merchant, Healer, Hearthwitch, Herald, Herbalist, Herder, Hermit, Highwayman, Hunter, Illuminator, Innkeeper, Interpreter, Inventor, Jailer, Jester, Jeweler, Jongleur, Judge, King, Knight, Laborer, Lady, Lady in Waiting, Leatherworker, Locksmith, Lord, Lord Mayor, Maidservant, Majordomo, Man-At-Arms, Mason, Masseur, Mercer, Merchant, Messenger, Midwife, Miller, Miner, Minstrel, Moneylender, Monk, Mortician, Mourner, Navigator, Necromancer, Noble, Nun, Nurse, Old-clothes seller, Page, Painter, Paladin, Pariah, Pastry cook, Peddler, Peasant, Perfumer, Philosopher, Physician, Pigkeeper, Pilgrim, Plasterer, Playwright, Politician, Potter, Priest, Priestess, Prince, Princess, Professor, Pursemaker, Queen, Ranger, Ratcatcher, Ronin, Roofer, Ropemaker, Royal Adviser, Rugmaker, Ruler, Sailor, Samurai, Scabbard maker, Sculptor, Saddler, Scavenger, Scholar, Scrivener, Servant, Shaman, Shepherd, Ship's captain, Shipwright, Shoemaker, Silversmith, Slave, Slaver, Smith, Soldier, Sorcerer, Spice Merchant, Spy, Squire, Stablehand, Storyteller, Steward, Street Urchin, Surveyor, Swordsman, Sycophant, Tailor, Tanner, Tavernkeeper, Tax collector, Teamster, Thatcher, Thief, Tinkerer, Torturer, Town Crier, Trapper, Village chief, Vintner, Viking, Warlock, Warrior, Waterman, Weaver, Wetnurse, Wine seller, Witch, Wizard, Woodcarver, Woodcutter, Wood seller

APPENDIX B. MONETARY VALUES

These are the values, adjusted for inflation and exchange rates for the year 2003, of common currency in Medieval England. Values are approximate only and adjusted for both the *mineral* value of the coin, and the *monetary* value as well. England is used, since it had the most stable currency of the period.

| <u>British Currency</u> | <u>Precious Metal Content</u> | <u>Total Weight</u> | <u>Modern Value</u> |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Pound (£ = 20 s.) | 450g | 450g | \$2750 |
| Shilling (s. = 12 d.) | 9.7g | 10g | \$144 |
| Penny (d. = 2 1/2d.) | 1.3g | 1.4g | \$12 |
| Halfpenny (1/2d. = 2 f.) | .65g | .7g | \$6 |
| Farthing | .32g | .32g | \$3 |

The Pound was not commonly traded, and was usually only used as a “trade coin” for merchants. The Penny was the most commonly traded currency. The Halfpenny and Farthing were created in 1280.

**APPENDIX C. AVERAGE WAGES AND
INCOME**

| <u>Noble</u> | <u>Average Daily</u> | <u>Average Annual</u> |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Duke | 12 £ (\$33,000) | 4500 £ (\$12,000,000) |
| Earl | 4 £ (\$6,000) | 1500 £ (\$3,000,000) |
| Baron | 10 s. (\$1,200) | 150 £ (\$412,000) |
| Knight | 2 s. (\$240) | 20 £ (\$55,000) |
| Petty Knight | 1 s. (\$120) | 10 £ (\$27,750) |
| <u>Freeman</u> | | |
| Royal Official | 12 £ (\$300) | 47 £ 2 s. (\$94,200) |
| Tradesman, Educated | 8 1/2 d. (\$102) | 11 £ 19 s. 1 d. (\$26,690) |
| Priest | 6 1/2 d. (\$78) | 7 £ 10 s. (\$20,625) |
| Tradesman, Common | 3 1/2 d. (\$42) | 4 £ 10 s. (\$9,400) |
| Man-At-Arms | 2 1/2 d. (\$30) | 3 £ 6 s. (\$9,400) |
| <u>Commoner</u> | | |
| Field Hand or Laborer | 1 1/2 d. (\$18) | 2 £ (\$11,304) |
| Servant, Woman, or Child | 1/2d. 1 f. (\$9) | 1 £ (\$5,652) |

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These salaries are averaged and rounded off, in many cases. In the case of non-nobles the amounts are more exact, due to the effect these small discrepancies would have on a non-noble's daily life. There was a wide discrepancy in academic journals and academic literature, so values were averaged.

Note: These salaries did not take into account the total wealth of a given individual. In his book *Life in a Medieval Village*, Frances Gies says the average villager owned many livestock, which would contribute to wealth of the Medieval individual or family. Oxen, chickens, pigs, cows and other livestock were kept in trust by the lord, to each villager. A "tallage," which is a tax in money and goods, was paid annually to the lord of the manor. Villagers would have all the money and goods left over and while meat was uncommon; eggs, pigfat, and some meat was seen on the average villagers food table.

APPENDIX B. PURCHASING POWER

The list in the next column is an example of the purchasing power of the average penny. It gives a good contrast to today's income. While it may be said that the average Englishman had little purchasing power in some cases, keep in mind that many pigs, cows, and chickens were kept in trust or owned by each Englishman, and only in towns or cities were these goods purchased. Also keep in mind that townspeople made much more income than villagers, as more of them were freemen and educated.

ψ = Includes upkeep. The annual amounts continue for 13 years.

β = Clothing of this period was thick, and of great quality, compared to today's threadbare goods.

Φ = Field shoes were very thick-soled and made of heavy leather.

+ = Commonly food was cooked in pigfat, oils were a luxury.

9 = No, this price is not a mistake.



| <u>Item</u> | <u>Cost</u> | <u>Modern</u> |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|--------------------|
| <u>Perishable Good</u> | | |
| Ale (1 lb) | ½d. | \$6 |
| Bread, Loaf | 1f. | \$3 |
| Chicken | 1d. | \$12 |
| Chicken, Capon, Fat | 1½d. | \$18 |
| Cinnamon (1 lb) | ½d. | \$6 |
| Eggs (dozen) | ½d. | \$6 |
| Ginger (1 lb) | 1£ 1d. | 9 \$2,762 |
| Hare | 3d. | \$36 |
| Oil, Cooking (1 gal) + | 2d. | \$24 |
| Oil, Olive (1 gal) | 4d. | \$48 |
| Pastry, Wafer | 1d. | \$12 |
| Pepper | 1d. | \$12 |
| Rabbit | 1d. 1f. | \$15 |
| Salt (2 lbs) | ½d. | \$6 |
| Vinegar (2 gal) | 1d. | \$12 |
| <u>Weapons/Armor</u> | | |
| Bascinet (Open-Face Helm) | 13s. 4d. | \$1,920 |
| Bascinet Lining | 3s. 4d. | \$480 |
| Duke's Armor | 103£ | \$283,250 |
| Knight's Armor | 16£ 6s 8d. | \$44,960 |
| Mail Hauberk | 100s. | \$14,400 |
| Sword | 2s. | \$5,500 |
| Sword, Peasant's | 6d. | \$72 |
| <u>Armor Services</u> | | |
| Armor Cleaning/Overhaul | 1s. 4d. | \$192 |
| Cleaning, Rusty Corsets | 5d. | \$60 |
| <u>Clothing β</u> | | |
| Boots, Gentry | 6d. | \$72 |
| Furs, Added to Garment | 3£10s. | \$9,690 |
| Garment, Woolen, Peasant | 3s. | \$432 |
| Hat, Gentry | 1s. | \$144 |
| Purse, Gentry | 1½d. | \$18 |
| Shoes, Gentry | 4 d. | \$48 |
| Shoes, Peasant Φ | 6 d. | \$72 |
| Tunic, Serf | 4 d. | \$48 |
| <u>Horses</u> | | |
| Draught Horse | 16s. | \$2,304 |
| Knight's Horse | 5£ | \$13,600 |
| Riding Horse | 5£ | \$13,600 |
| Riding Horse, Quality | 10£ | \$27,500 |
| War Horse | 60£ | \$165,000 |
| <u>Buildings</u> | | |
| Barn, Large, Tiled | 83£ | \$228,250 |
| Castle ψ | 450£/yr | \$1,237,500/ yr |
| Cottage (1 Bay, 2 stories) | 2£ | \$5,500 |
| Craftsman's House | 20s./yr | \$2,880/yr |
| Craftsman's House, 5 room | 12£ 10s. | \$34,440 |
| Goldsmith's House | 136£ | \$374,000 |
| Merchant's House | 2£ 10s/yr | \$6,940 |
| Row House, Town | 3£ | \$8,250 |
| Tower, Curtain Wall | 333£ | \$915,750 |
| <u>Miscellaneous Purchases</u> | | |
| Barge | 10£ | \$27,500 |
| Cart, Iron Bound | 4s. | \$576 |
| Chariot | 8£ | \$22,000 |
| Chariot, Royal | 400£ | \$1,100,000 |
| Ferry, per Horseman | 1d. | \$12 |
| Guide, 1 Night | 1d. | \$12 |

EDITOR'S NOTE

This article is not an official part of the *Terran Empire* setting.

The Terran Diplomatic Security Force

by Bob Greenwade

For much of its existence, the Terran Diplomatic Corps usually used the Senatorial Guard, the Imperial Army, the Imperial Security Police, or the Terran Security Service for its policing and security needs. Emperor Kemal the first Emperor recognize the need for a single force protecting the Terran Empire's diplomatic missions, and so created the Terran Diplomatic Security Force (TDSF) in 2581.

The manifest of the TDSF is simple. Its agents act as a security force for embassies and consulates outside Terran space and Imperial garrisons within the Empire's borders, and as bodyguards for its ambassadors, consuls, planetary governors, and other senior diplomats and their families. As a part of that manifest, the TDSF's agents are also charged with investigating any crime taking place within those embassies, consulates, and garrisons, and where diplomats or their families are crime victims. (In the latter case, they may have to run joint investigations with local authorities, but the case is considered their responsibility.)

While it doesn't exactly operate with the proverbial "blank check," neither does the TDSF hurt for funds, personnel, or equipment. Ambassadors and consuls to the other major powers tend to be personal appointees of the Imperial Throne, and so have some importance to the Empress — if one should be assassinated, it would reflect rather poorly on her. Thus, TDSF agents are second only to the Empress' personal bodyguards in their ability and responsibility to protect their charges.

As of 2640, the head of the TDSF is Marshal Clement Pierce. He's known for being a not particularly intelligent man, making him the butt of frequent jokes. However, he's perceptive enough to realize this shortcoming, and to surround himself with honest people who know what they're talking about. He has a good "people sense," and can talk just about anyone into doing just about anything by appealing to what's really important to them. (He also has a good enough sense of humor to join in the joking.)

Pierce died of an aortic aneurism in 2647, to be replaced by former ISP deputy Yuka Nakagawa. A much more intelligent but less perceptive (and less well-humored) individual than Pierce, she runs the agency with an iron fist, willing to forgive failure in the face of overwhelming or unexpected odds but not much else. She is nonetheless an effective leader, serving until Emperor Sigusmund purges his government in 2684.

The Marshal of the TDSF answers to the Minister of Interstellar Affairs, who also carries the honorary title of TDSF Grand Marshal. (Both Clement Pierce and Yuka Nakagawa work well with their boss, Lord Deng Zhu.) The Ministers of Intelligence and Security have some influence over the agency's operation, however.

TDSF Agents

Though the TDSF is a special elite force, it doesn't have any basic training programs for its own people. Instead, it draws its personnel from military and law enforcement, train them in the agency's own methods and policies along with anything else they may lack, and let each squad of agents work out its own kinks.

TDSF agents are generally drawn from the Senatorial Guard, the ISP, the TSS, or any branch of the military (though most Army are from either Imperial Guard or Special Forces, and most Navy are former Security personnel). A very small percentage come directly into the TDSF from civilian life; most of these have either a history as successful bounty hunters or mercenaries, or are IPF licensed adepts.

Regardless of their origins, TDSF agents are expected to set aside any petty rivalries they may have practiced at other agencies. It's vitally important that they work together as a team, so even if a former ISP officer and a former TSS agent are teamed together, they must forget about their old professional rivalry, or at most keep it on an unmistakably friendly level. Any violations may be punished by discharge, imprisonment, or even execution (depending on the results of the offense and who's in charge of things — Nakagawa is much harsher than Pierce).

The TDSF wears a duty uniform similar to the Army's (see *Terran Empire*, page 66), but with a dark green beret. The same dark grey color is also used in the TDSF dress uniform, which is otherwise modeled after the Navy's (with a black cravat).

TDSF field agents start with the Package Deal of their previous service (see *Terran Empire*, pages 106-123), stripping away any Perks (especially Membership), Disadvantages, or other elements tying them directly to that agency (that is, any elements the character would lose upon leaving the service). The Fringe Benefits and Disadvantages in the TDSF Field Agent Package Deal are *in place of*, not in addition to, the same elements from the Package Deal of the agent's agency of origin.

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Because they are elite agents, TDSF agents should be built using the guidelines for Powerful Heroes (see *HERO System 5th Edition*, page 15), with 100 base points and up to 100 points in Disadvantages, with no more than 25 points in any one type of Disadvantage.

| TDSF (FIELD AGENT) PACKAGE DEAL | |
|--|--------------|
| Ability | Cost |
| Disease Immunity Treatment (Spacer's Toolkit, page 27) | 3 |
| Skills from previous service (minimum) | 20 |
| Language of potential host culture (basic conversation) | 3 |
| Martial Arts (player's choice; probably Commando Training) | 10 |
| PS: Security Operative 11- | 2 |
| WF: Small Arms, Human Advanced Small Arms | 4 |
| Fringe Benefit: Interstellar Police Powers | 8 |
| Fringe Benefit: Membership (TDSF Specialist) | 1 |
| Fringe Benefit: Security Clearance | 3 |
| Disadvantages | Value |
| Distinctive Features: Uniform (Easily Concealed; Noticed And Recognizable) | -5 |
| Social Limitation: Subject To Orders (Very Frequently, Major) | -20 |
| Total Cost Of Package: 29 | |

Only Imperial subjects may work for the TDSF. It has had few Mon'dabi, Catavalan, or Perseid agents in its history; those few were all born in Terran space and are a part of the culture of the Empire. There certainly are no Thorgons, Ackálians, or Varanyi in the ranks, and only one Xenovore has ever served. Humans (of various stock) make up about two-thirds of the personnel, with Fex making up the largest minority; Elpadens, Tarmin, Toractans, and most other Imperial species are also represented (including those described in *Alien Wars*).

Equipment

Most of the TDSF's equipment is taken from military stockpiles, often as intentional surplus specifically earmarked for TDSF use.

FIELD AGENT STANDARD ISSUE

As of 2640, all TDSF field agents carry the following equipment as standard issue.

- Mark VII Laser Rifle (*Terran Empire*, page 138)
- MIP-162 Ion Pistol (*Terran Empire*, pages 142-143)
- Medium Battle Armor (*Terran Empire*, page 145)
- Battle Security Helmet (see accompanying text box)
- Security Helmet (see accompanying text box)
- MPC-12 Military Pocket Computer (*Terran Empire*, page 149)
- ESP Static Generator (*Terran Empire*, page 129)
- Personal Sensor Unit (*Terran Empire*, page 151)
- Bio-Scanner (*Spacer's Toolkit*, page 20)
- Cybernetics Detector (*Spacer's Toolkit*, page 20)
- Personal Healing Ampule (*Spacer's Toolkit*, page 22)

Naturally, if the GM is setting the campaign at a time between 2581 and 2639, the equipment should be adjusted to reflect the available technology.

Field agents may carry one additional handheld weapon, subject to command approval (both the highest-ranking PC and the GM must approve).

While the Medium Battle Armor is standard issue, its use is reserved for offensive actions such as rescue operations, cleanups after military action, battles against rebels and insurgents, and similar situations. Everyday duty requires only the duty uniform and the rest of the listed equipment. In uncertain circumstances the ranking field agent usually makes the decision.

**EXTENDED
LIMITATION:
ACTIVATION
ROLL**

The *Activation Roll* Limitation, as it exists currently, only goes to a minimum activation roll of 8-. Because a typical helmet only covers (at most) Hit Locations 3-5, an extension of the Activation Roll Table seems appropriate.

On the current table, every -3 to the Activation Roll produces a doubling of the Limitation value. Thus, the bonus for the basic Limitation would be as follows:

| Roll | Bonus |
|--------|-------|
| 7- | -2½ |
| 6- | -3 |
| 5- | -4 |
| 4- | -5 |
| 3 only | -6 |

TDSF SECURITY HELMETS

Though most battle armor in the Terran Empire setting requires the use of a separate helmet, neither *Terran Empire* nor *Spacer's Toolkit* gives much information on protective helmets during the 25th through 27th centuries.

The TDSF Security Helmet and Battle Security Helmet are two examples of such equipment. They are made from fairly common components, so the Terran military and various others sometimes use them — particularly the Battle Security Helmet, since it's designed to go with Medium Battle Armor.

The two types of helmet have two significant differences: the battle security helmet is tougher, and lacks the sensory equipment found in the regular model. The latter difference is as practical as the former, since battle armor provides those functions.

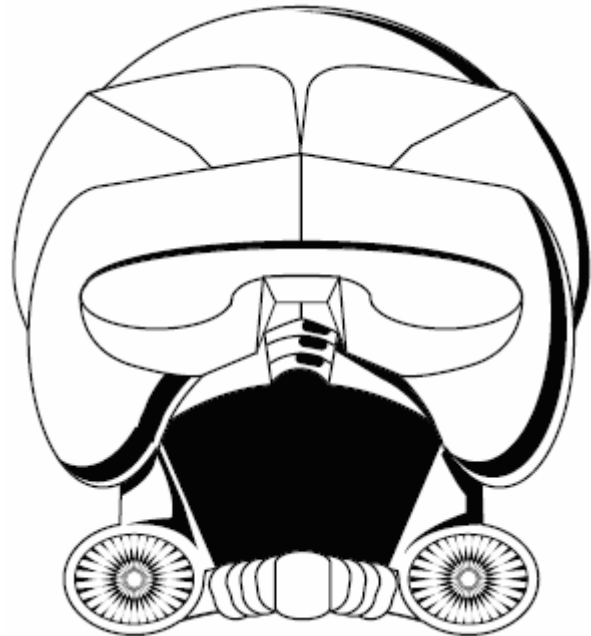
Cost Security Helmet

- 5 *Protective Helmet*: Armor (10 PD/10 ED); OIF (-½), Activation Roll 5- (Hit Locations 3-5; -4), Real Armor (-¼)
- 10 *Psi-Shield*: Mental Defense (20 points + base points from EGO); OIF (-½), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (easily replenished with a new power cell; 20 Minutes; -¼), Real Armor (-¼)
- 6 *Communications System*: HRRP (Radio Group); OIF (-½), Affected As Sight And Hearing Group As Well As Radio Group (-½)
- 10 *Closed Radio Link*: Mind Link, any group of up to eight willing targets; OIF (-½), Only With Others Who Have Mind Link (-1), Affected As Radio And Hearing Groups, Not Mental Group (-½)
- 3 *Sight Augmentation Systems*: Infrared Perception (Sight Group); OIF (-½)
- 3 *Sight Augmentation Systems*: Nightvision; OIF (-½)
- 3 *Sight Augmentation Systems*: Ultraviolet Perception (Sight Group); OIF (-½)
- 6 *Sight Augmentation Systems*: +6 versus Range Modifier for Sight Group; OIF (-½)
- 5 *Sensory Protection*: Sight Group Flash Defense (8 points); OIF (-½)
- 5 *Sensory Protection*: Hearing Group Flash Defense (8 points); OIF (-½)

Total Cost: 56 points.

Cost Battle Security Helmet

- 8 *Protective Helmet*: Armor (15 PD/15 ED); OIF (-½), Activation Roll 5- (Hit Locations 3-5; -4), Real Armor (-¼)
 - 10 *Psi-Shield*: Mental Defense (20 points + base points from EG`O); OIF (-½), 1 Continuing Fuel Charge (easily replenished with a new power cell; 20 Minutes; -¼), Real Armor (-¼)
- Total Cost: 18 points.**



DUTY EQUIPMENT

Some field agents with certain specialties must naturally carry equipment appropriate to that specialty. The accompanying text box lists some of the most common. The GM may devise additional packages for other duty specialties

EXAMPLE DUTY EQUIPMENT

Aquatic

- ☑ Gill Pack (*Spacer's Toolkit*, page 25)
- ☑ Impeller Pack (*Terran Empire*, page 153)

Medic

- ☑ MA-7 Field Medkit (*Terran Empire*, page 152)
- ☑ Medical Scanner (*Spacer's Toolkit*, page 20)
- ☑ Tissue Repair Nanobots (*Spacer's Toolkit*, page 27)
- ☑ Hibernation Bunk (*Terran Empire*, page 152)

Reconnaissance

- ☑ Electronic Binoculars (*Terran Empire*, page 150)
- ☑ Holographic Camera (*Terran Empire*, page 151)
- ☑ Nanospies (*Spacer's Toolkit*, page 27)
- ☑ Stealth Suit (*Terran Empire*, page 153)

Technician

- ☑ Engineer's Toolbox (*Spacer's Toolkit*, page 36)
- ☑ Defensive Nanobots (*Spacer's Toolkit*, page 26)

DISCRETIONARY EQUIPMENT

The Sergeant of any agent team may request the use of additional equipment, stored at the TDSF unit of any Terran embassy or consulate. These may be used at his own discretion, or require the approval of his commander; this depends mostly on the commanding officer (usually, the further the mission is from a source of replacements, the more tightly the CO controls the discretionary equipment).

Some of the available equipment, depending on the available technology, is listed in the accompanying text box. All of the items shown can be found in *Terran Empire* or *Spacer's Toolkit*. The number of each item at any given TDSF facility can vary widely, and will depend on the number of field agents stationed there; at particular small and/or remote stations, many items may not be present at all.

The GM may add equipment from the *Spacer's Toolkit Online* at his discretion.

Generally, TDSF agents may carry no more than 75 points worth of equipment, including both duty equipment and discretionary equipment, subject to the GM's approval. For any equipment above that, the character (or another character working on his behalf) must make a *Bureaucratics* Skill roll at -1 for every 10 points (or any fraction thereof) above 75. This roll must be made for *each* piece of equipment, with cumulative penalties. The GM may allow certain Skills, such as Persuasion, to act as complementary Skills — though the character should be very careful when attempting Bribery or Seduction, as these can easily backfire. The GM should also apply any other Modifiers based on how likely it is that the character will actually need the equipment.

EXTRA EQUIPMENT ACQUISITION EXAMPLE

Specialist Erik Muller, a TDSF medic assigned to a consulate in the Conjoined Civilizations Republic, wants to requisition a wearable translator, a microheater, and a holographic camera as part of his normal equipment. He places them into that order of priority, and makes his request to the GM.

Since he already has 76 points worth of duty equipment as a medic, Specialist Muller has to roll for approval. He has both *Bureaucratics* and *Persuasion* at 12-.

First, the translator. An ATRI 11 Wearable Translator (see *Terran Empire*, page 150) would cost 13 points. This would put him a total of 14 points over the normal 75 point limit, so his *Bureaucratics* Roll is at -2. He explains to the GM that he wants the translator so he can communicate with the locals in an emergency situation; the GM decides that sounds reasonable, so applies no penalty. Muller rolls 11 on *Persuasion* as a Complementary Skill, so this gives him a +1, for a final roll of 11-. He rolls a 9, and is granted the Translator.

Next is the microheater (*Spacer's Toolkit*, page 25).

This adds only one point to his equipment total of 89 points, putting him 15 points over for a -2 penalty. His explanation is that he wants to be able to keep patients warm, especially in cold-climate areas and chilly planets; the GM doesn't really expect such a situation to come up, so he applies another -2 penalty. Muller rolls 8 on Persuasion, giving him +2, for a final roll of 10-. He rolls a 13, so no microheater.

Finally, he tries for the holographic camera (*Terran Empire*, page 151). This, too, costs only one point, so his penalty for equipment cost is -2. His explanation to the GM is that the camera would be handy for photographic injuries and other evidence in the event of an attack; the GM agrees enough to apply a +1 modifier. Muller rolls 15 on Persuasion, giving him no bonus for the Complementary Skill and leaving his final roll at 11-. He rolls a 7, so the logic of his argument outweighs his lack of expression and he gets the camera.

TDSF DISCRETIONARY EQUIPMENT

Weapons

- Mark II-T Laser Pistol
- M90P Squad Plasma Rifle
- MI-66 Ion Rifle
- GR-01 Gamma Rifle Mk I
- Suppression Grenade Launcher
- EMP Rifle
- Magnetic Bola Gun
- Hand Flamer
- Weapon Attachments
- Energy Booster
- Type 7 Targeting Computer
- Mark IV Rangefinder
- Firearm-Mounted Flashlight

Defenses

- Heavy Battle Armor
- Covert Battle Armor
- Anti-Laser Foam
- Type 3 Force Field Belt

Communication/Sensor Equipment

- Orbital Communicator
- Translator (Hand-Held)
- Electronic Binoculars
- Holographic Camera
- Datamine Data Extractor
- Nanotech
- Defensive Nanobots
- Nanospies

Robots

- TMD-ES Eagle Drone
- TMD-FP Pilot Drone
- TMD-RS Reconnaissance/Surveillance Drone
- TMD-XT Riot Drone

Other Equipment

- Anti-Glare Goggles
- Antigrav Lifter
- Flight Pack
- Gliding Wings
- Impeller Pack
- Gill Pack
- Microheater
- Stealth Suit
- EVA Suit (with Wristlight, Communication System, and Jumpboots)
- Survival Tent

CYBERNETICS, BIOWARE, AND OTHER BODY MODIFICATIONS

A TDSF agent may have nearly any cybernetic, bioware, nanotech, or other type of personal enhancement found in *Terran Empire* (page 131-132) or *Spacer's Toolkit* (pages 26-27 and 33-35), subject to the GM's approval. However, the character must generally pay the monetary cost for the enhancement himself — while the TDSF does pay full cost for the required Disease Immunity Treatment and for simple replacement body parts, as a rule it does not fund artificial enhancements for its agents.

There are exceptions, however, in the case of cybernetic and nanotech systems. If a PC agent wants to request that the agency fund a cybernetic enhancement, he must already have lost the natural body part *and* either have served at least five years with the TDSF, or have lost the body part during his TDSF tenure. For a nanotech treatment, he simply must have served for at least five years.

The character, or someone working on his behalf, must make a Bureaucratics roll at -1 for every 5 Active Points in the desired cybernetic system (or systems, if more than one is being requested at the same time), -1 for every 10 points in cybernetic systems already funded by the agency (if any), and +1 for every year the agent has served above five years or since losing the natural body part whose cybernetic replacement is to be enhanced.

Whether the funding request succeeds or fails, the character may not submit another for at least two years.

OTHER EQUIPMENT

Under certain circumstances, a Sergeant or officer may request additional equipment for use at a mission, beyond what's normally allotted. This is not done lightly, since arrival of the equipment can take anywhere from three to five weeks — and that's just for shipping from its origin point at the nearest Navy Fleet Headquarters. There's also the time needed for the request to reach Earth via the HRN, and time for any paperwork and approval to come through. A request from Mon'dabi or Velarian space may take as long as three or four months to arrive.

Still, most Terran diplomatic missions have at least two or three special items beyond the norm at their TDSF facility. These usually consist of specialized vehicles, weapons, or sensory equipment for dealing with likely situations at or near the post.

Nearly any piece of equipment from *Terran Empire* or *Spacer's Toolkit* (or, for that matter, the *Spacer's Toolkit Online*) may be available. The TDSF does *not* allow its agents to use drugs with side effects — *especially* Rocksteady

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(*Spacer's Toolkit*, page 23) — until 2681, under the rule of Emperor Sigismund. Other than that, or any other restrictions for a specific piece of equipment, approval is subject to the GM's discretion.

Starships

The TDSF does not, as a rule, have its own starships. Instead, the TDC uses surplus ships purchased from the military, and the TDSF has access to these. *Peregrine*-class frigates (*Terran Empire*, pages 177-179) and *Hermes*-class couriers (*Spacer's Toolkit*, pages 81-82) are common for single units, while *Normandy*-class troop transports (*Spacer's Toolkit*, pages 77-78) are used for large groups. Under some circumstances the TDSF may also use *Dart*-class special operations ship (*Spacer's Toolkit*, pages 86-87), *Bantu*-class scout ships (*Spacer's Toolkit*, page 86 [sidebar]), or various other vessels.

Occasionally the TDSF may purchase and modify a civilian ship (of nearly any model) for use in a covert mission. Because of the agency's manifest, however, this is rare and usually limited to rescue operations. After the mission has concluded, these ships are normally either resold or destroyed, depending on the nature and extent of any modifications.

Contingents

A field unit consists of, at the very minimum, a commander, an executive officer, a medic, a technician, and a transport operator. (If no transport operator is available, the position may be filled by a TMD-FP Pilot Drone; however, this is the only position for which this type of substitution is allowed.) Once those positions are filled, additional functions may include aquatic operations, nocturnal operations, psi, quartermaster, and/or reconnaissance. Other specialties may be available as well, though they tend to be unusual and generally custom-assigned for a specific duty station's situation. Sometimes one or more functions may be duplicated, particularly medic and psi; however, a single unit may not consist of more than nine individuals.

The TDSF uses the same ranking system as the Army, Marines, and TSS (see *Terran Empire*, page 64). In any squad of field agents, the commander has a rank of Sergeant, and the executive officer is a Corporal; all others are Specialists.

Higher-ranking officers may command larger teams, often made up of more than two to seven squads, though ranks above Captain generally do not go into the field.

The collection of teams at a particular diplomatic mission, usually commanded by a Captain or Major, is called a *detail*. A general

region of space is commanded by a Lieutenant Colonel or Colonel, and its details collectively known as a *service*. Generals and the Marshal remain at TDSF Headquarters on Earth, in Nice.

Campaign Use

There are many ways to use the TDSF in a *Terran Empire* campaign. The most obvious, of course, is to make the PCs TDSF agents stationed in one of the other Galactic powers. This can be most interesting in Mon'dabi or Velarian space, where situations with the neighbors are rather unstable, though Perseid or Se'ecra space can be interesting as well. Better yet, a team could be *really* challenged by attaching them to the Imperial ambassadors to the Ackálians, Thorgons, or Varanyi! (A *really* mean GM could attach a small group of PC agents to the teenage daughter of the Imperial ambassador to the Thorgon Hegemony....)

TDSF agents as PCs could also be stationed to a garrison on an Imperial world. Even on a relatively friendly world such as Fexao or Osiris this can be interesting enough, but on a world with less stable elements, such as Soolasha or Europa Nova, they can face ongoing and/or very serious conflict.

No matter the duty station, adventure ideas shouldn't be hard to come by. A look at the activities of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security (a part of the US Department of State) or its equivalent in other countries should give plenty of hints. The specific mission of the TDSF is slightly different from that of the BDS, but they are close enough for these purposes.

In an established campaign, the PCs may have to deal with the TDSF at any Imperial diplomatic mission. They may need emergency access to an Imperial diplomat, or have discovered that the diplomat is an impostor, and have to deal with the TDSF agents assigned to protect him. If the PCs are law enforcement officials (particularly with the ISP, TIS, or TSS), they may have to compete with the TDSF for jurisdiction in a criminal investigation — especially if they suspect one of the NPC agents. If the PCs are a part of the rebellion, they probably will fight against TDSF squads quite often.

If the PCs don't generally get into situations that bring them into contact with the TDSF, perhaps the agency could be brought to them. For example, what if they're wrongly accused of plotting to assassinate an Imperial diplomat? This would certainly bring a couple dozen agents to wherever they happen to be. The PCs could then be faced with the prospect of finding the real would-be assassins, while keeping one step ahead of a TDSF squad (though they may have to escape from custody first).

ONLINE RESOURCES

Spacer's Toolkit
Online:

[www.herogames.com/
StarHero/
SpacersToolkit/
thetoolkit.htm](http://www.herogames.com/StarHero/SpacersToolkit/thetoolkit.htm)

Bureau of Diplomatic
Security:

www.state.gov/m/ds/



AUTHOR'S NOTE

I wrote this article several years ago for *Troll*, a gaming magazine that folded so quickly they never had time to publish it. It was written “generically,” without rules for any rules system, so it doesn't contain any *HERO System*-specific information. But hopefully we'll have the chance to cover this subject in greater detail, including *HERO* rules and write-ups, in the future.

Out of the British Isles by Steven L. Long

Monsters and Creatures from Irish and Scottish Myth and Legend

Most fantasy games have what is known as a “generic Western European” feel, with castles, knights, witches, fire-breathing dragons, and other things familiar to most gamers. However, relatively few games or campaigns explore the outer edges of the medieval setting or include characters and monsters from related, but distinct, cultures such as Celtic, Norse, Russian, Slavic, or Baltic. These cultures offer many things which can add depth and excitement to fantasy roleplaying games.

The most obvious thing which these cultures can add to games are new monsters and creatures for the player characters to encounter and, perhaps, defeat or learn from. This article describes a few of the “monsters” that can be found in the lore of one of these cultures – mythic Ireland and Scotland (and in some cases, the rest of the British Isles).

The Seelie and Unseelie Courts

In general terms, faerie-folk can be organized into two broad groups, known as the Seelie and Unseelie Courts.

The *Seelie Court* is composed of faeries which are usually considered to be “good” or well-disposed towards men – or at least have no ill intent toward them. Given the mercurial nature of many faeries, “well-disposed” is something of a relative term, since even a Seelie faerie may play tricks or pranks (but those pranks will not be malicious or harmful, provided the prankster has been treated with dignity). There are a few Seelie faeries who are openly friendly and helpful.

The leaders of the Seelie Court are the Daoine Sidhe, the high faeries who were once the old gods (the Tuatha de Danann). Now they are diminished in stature and power, but to men's eyes they have not lost much. They are tall, graceful, slender, and possessed of incredible unearthly beauty. Mortals who see them often fall hopelessly in love, though there are few instances of mortal-faerie unions.

The Daoine Sidhe have great magical powers. They can travel between the Land of Faerie and the mortal world, grant wishes, and cast extremely powerful spells and curses. Many of them are also great warriors and riders, able to fight the most skilled human swordsmen with ease. However, they are not as physically strong as men, and will sometimes “recruit” humans as allies in their wars against other faeries or to lend their strength in sporting contests.

The opposite of the Seelie Court is the *Unseelie Court*, which is composed of all the malicious, evil, and wicked faeries. As a group it sometimes appears as a large, dark cloud riding the winds and casting fell shadows upon the lands of men. The Unseelie Court hates mortals, and its members are always trying to trick, harm, enslave, kill, and even eat them. The Unseelie are to be avoided at all costs, or kept at bay with charms and magic if not. Unlike the Seelie Court, the Unseelie Court does not really have any leaders; its members are too chaotic and powerful to be ruled.

An especially terrifying part of the Unseelie Court is the Sluagh – the Host of the Restless Dead, the ghosts of those who have died unshriven or by violence. You can see them in the sky at night fighting ghostly battles, and in the morning their blood stains the rocks in the form of blood-red flowers called *fuil na sluagh*. Although some of the Sluagh want to redeem themselves for their sins in life, and thus win entrance to Heaven, most are malicious and spiteful. They use poisoned arrows and darts to kill cats, dogs, cattle, sheep, and even men, and they love to frighten travelers. Traditional charms offer some protection against the Sluagh, but magic works even better.

Necromancers in fantasy campaigns could easily summon or recruit the Sluagh as allies or servants, but they dislike such service intensely and will turn on the spellcaster as soon as they can. On the other hand, perhaps a repentant Sluagh will appeal to the PCs for help redeeming himself, or to escape the bonds some necromancer has placed upon it. Successful PCs would be “rewarded” by having a “contact” in the Underworld for use in a future adventure which takes them to Death's Realm.

Traditional Charms against Faeries

With so many members of the Unseelie Court trooping through the world seeking to harm mortals, it's not surprising that men would learn ways to protect themselves. The most common form of protection is a host of traditional charms, substances, and practices that most faeries cannot abide and will flee from. These include: iron (especially horseshoes), salt, turned clothes (wearing or giving them clothes turned inside out), bells (especially church bells), the Bible, bread, crucifixes and crosses (especially if made of iron), four-leaf clovers, prayers and hymns, churchyard mold, red threads or ribbons, daisy chains, stones with holes bored in them (used to protect horses from faeries), and St. John's wort.

In fantasy games where magic is abundant, specific spells may be devised for protection against faeries, and may use some of these items as material components. Player characters may even be sent on a quest to recover rare herbs or items needed for a powerful protective charm; during this quest they would have to overcome Unseelie faeries who want to prevent them from gaining access to such potent magic.

Types of Faeries

For discussion purposes, each court can be conveniently grouped by where they are usually found or on the basis of common habits. For example, some faeries are found in forests, while others prefer mountains; some like to attack travelers on the roads; and there are many different types of water-faeries. This article groups faeries into seven different groups.

FOREST AND PLANT FAERIES

Faeries are, fundamentally, creatures of nature; few of them like cities or buildings or have regular contact with humans. Forests, which are often dark, mysterious, and dangerous in fantasy campaigns, are a perfect haunt for some of them. Some faeries even associate themselves with one particular type of plant or tree and act as its guardian.

In a fantasy setting, forest and plant faeries can be used in many different ways. In games featuring druidic cultures, these faeries may ally themselves with druids, bards, and similar folk to protect forested areas from human encroachment. A more malevolently-inclined druid might even use Unseelie forest faeries as bodyguards or “ecoterrorists.” Imagine the surprise that a group of player characters would feel when they finally track a dark druid to his forest lair – only to find that a Lesidhe has misdirected them and led them into a trap!

Few forest faeries are members of the Seelie Court, for they guard their forests and plants jealously and will harm anyone who approaches or damages them. An excellent example is the Ghillie Dhu, a Scottish faerie with black-hair, green skin, and long arms. They wear clothes made of moss and leaves, and are guardians of woods and thickets (particularly birch trees). Most Ghillie Dhu are malicious. If they catch someone in their woods, they transform him into a spirit and enslave him. With this sort of “army,” they make excellent guardians for dark druids and witches. However, a few Ghillie Dhu are benevolent, and often comfort lost travelers (especially children) and lead them where they need to go, though they rarely speak.

Other evil forest faeries are the Lesidhe, a general forest guardian spirit who can disguise itself to look like leaves and plants and uses its ability to mimic birds and animals to confuse anyone who violates its domain; and the Lunantisidhe, the guardian of blackthorn bushes.

An unusual forest faerie is the Korred, from Cornwall. Korreds look like short men with hairy bodies, spindly legs, thin, bird-like arms, and cloven feet. Their heads are far too big for their bodies, with long, pointed noses and spiky hair and beards. They guard dolmens and standing stones. Anyone they cannot scare away with their hideous features or terrifying loud voices, they attack with their great strength. Unlike most faeries, Korred have no fear of cold iron; in fact, they are said to eat metal! Metal weapons have almost no effect on them. Magic and other traditional charms also seem to be less effective against them than against other faeries.

HOUSEHOLD AND FARM FAERIES

Despite most faeries' preference for keeping to themselves or their own kind, there are a few types who *do* prefer the company of men, in one form or another. These are often known as household faeries, though some of them actually help with farm work (threshing and herding, for example) rather than housework.

Most household faeries have a few characteristics in common. One is that they don't want to be thanked or given presents. Some household faeries will accept specific types of gifts (for example, a bowl of milk), and may even expect them. However, any other type of present (particularly clothing) or expression of thanks will drive the faerie away forever.

Second, like people, household faeries usually want to be treated kindly and with respect. However, their definition of these terms may differ from a human's – heaping difficult chores on a helpful household faerie is not something it usually considers abusive. Some faeries have their own specific definitions of unkind treatment; for example, a brownie will take offense if its homeowner brings home a cat, while other faeries could care less if there's a cat around.

Since most fantasy characters aren't exactly the home-bound sort, GMs are likely to use household faeries as specific encounters during a journey. For example, suppose that a party of adventurers is traveling into the mountains on a quest. On the way a bad storm comes up, so they seek shelter in a lonely widower farmer's house. While they are there, they drive the farmer's brownie away by offering it a gift. The farmer is distraught, since without the brownie's help he cannot keep house and run his farm, too. The abashed party has to go find the brownie and persuade it to return before they can proceed with their quest.

The Brownie, also known by many other names, is one of the most common household faeries. A Brownie resembles a man about three feet tall wearing ragged clothes (usually brown, but sometimes red or green) and a felt cap. Like its clothes, its skin is usually brownish in color, as are its thick hair and beard; its ears are pointed. Brownies prefer a warm home run by someone who is humble, gracious, generous, and kind – and who doesn't own a cat! All a Brownie wants in return for its help with the chores is a bowl of cream or milk and a good bannock (bread-cake). If offered anything else, such as new clothes, it will leave and never return. He can also be "laid" (made to leave) by the usual means such as iron, salt, or turned clothes. A few Brownies are nocturnal, for they sunlight will sicken and kill them; they will only live in houses with a rooster, whose crowing warns them of dawn's approach.

A good example of a herd-guarding faerie is the Gruagach. If you see an ugly little woman out in the fields near your livestock, you might be looking at a Gruagach. These solitary faeries have lots of hair, wear green or gold-colored gowns, and carry shepherd's staffs. There are also male Gruagachs who resemble handsome young men dressed in red and green. Gruagachs of either gender always seem to be cold and wet and sometimes stop by houses and ask to sit by the fire to warm themselves and dry out. If let in and treated kindly, they will guard livestock, do chores around the farm, and protect households in general. If refused, they may play evil pranks and steal animals and even children (but if you ask nicely, they usually give stolen children back).

Not all household and farm fairies are benevolent, though. For example, the Alp-Luachra, or Joint-Eater, sits, invisible, next to people who are eating and sucks all the quintessence from their food (so they get no benefit from it; the victim will starve to death if this continues, even if he eats three meals a day). An Alp-Luachra can be driven away if its victim eats a lot of salt beef without drinking anything. Or there's Awd Goggie, who lives in orchards and attacks anyone who tries to gather fruit before it is ripe. The mischievous, shapechanging Buachailleen torment animals (especially sheep) and shepherds; Gruagachs are their enemies.

MOUNTAIN AND WILDERNESS FAERIES

While some faeries prefer forests, others like the mountains, gorges, valleys, wastes, and other wild places of the British Isles. A few even haunt the ruins of old human towers and castles. Like the fighting faeries (see below), these faeries are often useful as direct challenges to player characters – they tend to be wicked and ferocious. They all possess enormous strength.

However, they are also usually solitary, so pitting them against a group of adventurers in a face-to-face confrontation may not present much of a challenge for the player characters. Instead, mountain and wilderness faeries will need to take advantage of their knowledge of the terrain and any special powers they have to make sure that they can take adventurers on. If possible, they may even avoid a direct confrontation entirely, contenting themselves with playing tricks and pranks on the PCs. Some of these may even be lethal, such as guiding the group towards a marsh, making noise while the PCs are under a ledge where an avalanche could occur, or scaring off their pack animals.

Only one Seelie faerie, the Urisk, belongs in this category. Urisks are friendly, but extremely ugly, faeries whose appearance (they look like hairy half-men, half-goats) dooms them to a solitary life around lonely pools and moors. They enjoy human company and are willing to do favors and chores for the least kindness or companionship, but because of their ugliness they have difficulty making friends with men. Usually they just frighten anyone they approach – in fact, they are so ugly they have sometimes literally frightened people to death!

Most wilderness faeries are firmly in the Unseelie Court. They include several different monstrous hags. The Athach lives in lonely lochans and gorges; it captures and eats men. The Black Annis has a blue-black face, long white teeth, iron claws, and a very loud voice. They live in caves, coming out only to steal sheep to eat. They also like to devour children, and will even reach inside houses to steal them, unless the houses are protected by iron or salt. Cailleach Bheur is a gigantic blue-faced hag who guards all animals, and also wells and streams (whose flow she can staunch or release). In winter her powers are even stronger – she can blight the growth of plants and create snow. She wears tattered clothes of black or blue-white. She carries a staff made of holly with a carrion crow's head on top; its touch kills any man instantly.

Redcaps (known as Fir Larrigs in Ireland) are probably related to ogres. They live in old towers and castles in the mountains. They have long teeth, long clawed fingers, and large fiery-red eyes. They wear iron boots, and caps which they dye by dipping them in the blood of their victims (hence their name). They use weapons (usually axes, pikestaffs, swords, or clubs) to slay humans for their flesh; their great strength makes it difficult for men to fight them. However, for all their ferocity, they will flee from the sign of the cross or readings of Scripture.

Spriggans are short, extremely ugly and foul-tempered faeries who often serve as guards for the more powerful faeries of the Unseelie Court. Like Redcaps, they usually live in ruined towers, castles, or barrows, and often guard treasure. Spriggans have the power to grow to giant size if they choose; because of this, a few folk claim they are actually the ghosts of giants (in fantasy games, they may be considered undead, and thus subject to the powers of priests and necromancers). Their activities include stealing children and leaving ugly changelings in their place, blighting crops, creating whirlwinds, robbing and stealing (they are very greedy), and frightening and tormenting people.

All of these faeries make good opponents for player characters due to their strength and powers. For example, the PCs may be asked to hunt down a Black Annis or band of Spriggans before they eat a child that she/they just stole.

ROAD FAERIES

There are a few types of Unseelie faeries who enjoy waylaying travelers, usually at night. They play tricks on them (at best) or attack them to obtain money or food, or just for fun (at worst). Some of the most dangerous of these “road faeries” simply like to misdirect people, but in a fantasy setting, that can be perilous. Who knows what dangerous terrain, not to mention other monsters or wild beasts, may be lurking at the side of the road?

Road faeries make excellent random encounters for adventurers who do a lot of traveling, but dealing with them is difficult for many adventurers. Few road faeries will stand up and fight, and many possess the ability to create powerful illusions. A party of adventurers which does not have magic powerful enough to keep these faeries at bay or drive them away should simply ignore any lights or other odd events they see or encounter while they are traveling, and just keep riding straight forward, relying only on their own torches and lanterns to light their path.

The most dangerous road faerie is the Duergar. Duergars look something like black-haired, dark-skinned, two-foot-tall dwarves; they wear clothes made of animal skins or moss. They are very strong. They have powers of illusion, which they use to play tricks on travelers by confusing landmarks, removing signs, or making dangerous areas (cliffsides, bogs, and the like) look safe to walk on. Because they dislike sunlight, they are active only at night and will vanish at dawn.

Another common “road haunt” is the Barguest, also called the Black Dog. Barguests are large black dogs with sharp teeth and claws and large, fiery eyes; sometimes they also have horns. They may kill travelers, but often all they do is put in an appearance, for seeing one is regarded as bad luck and a portent of coming death.

WATER AND SEA FAERIES

Water and sea faeries are extremely common. Although water is a source of life, and important for commerce, it can also be very dangerous. One of the most dangerous things about it is some of the faeries who live in it. They drown unwary travelers and children, wreck ships, raise storms, and scare fish away. Thwarting them is difficult, since they can retreat into the water if threatened – and if you pursue them, you are in their element, where they have all the advantages. However, this could be the seed of an extended campaign adventure for an imaginative gamemaster. A party of adventurers, equipped with powerful magic that allows them to live and breathe underwater, could beard the evil water faeries in their lairs and drive them away so that humans will be safe from them. In order to succeed, they might even have to seek the aid of more benevolent water faeries.

Unseelie water faeries are so common they are known by their own name – *Fuath*. One of the best-known of the *Fuath* is the Aughiskey (Each Uisge in Scotland), or water-horse. They live in lakes, lochs, and pools (but not running water). On land they look like sleek, beautiful horses, but anybody who climbs on one to ride it will find himself stuck to it, unable to jump off, while it carries him into the water and devours everything but his liver. But if you can put a bridle and saddle on an Aughiskey, it becomes tame and the finest horse one could wish for – as long as you don’t bring it within sight of water. If it sees water, it will throw its rider, gallop into the water, and vanish. The Kelpie (called *Uisge* in Scotland and *Noggle* in the Shetlands) is a similar *Fuath*. Imagine the surprise of a PC who buys a nice new horse, only to have it throw him and disappear into the first lake he sees!

The Bean-Fionna are a broad class of water-faeries. They live beneath the surface of lakes, rivers, and streams, and drag children and unwary adults into the water to drown. They dislike iron, however, and will avoid those wearing or carrying iron items, such as daggers. Most Bean-Fionna resemble beautiful women dressed in flowing white gowns, but some regions or bodies of water have their own types. Examples include Lancashire’s Jenny Greenteeth, who has green skin and fangs and haunts stagnant pools at the edges of rivers; and Peg Powler, who lives in the River Tees in Ireland. (There are also some benevolent Bean Fionna; the Lady of the Lake from Arthurian legend may be one such faerie.) Bean Fionna make a good surprise encounter for parties of adventurers who like to rest or camp near water.

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The most famous of the Fuath is the Bean Sidhe, or banshee (called Cointeach, “one who keens,” in Scotland). She has long, stringy hair, often covered with a hood; usually wears a gown or shroud of white, green, or black; and usually appears wet and ghostly, as if just dredged from the bottom of a lake. She can be heard wailing before someone dies. By itself the wail is terrifying, but if a Bean Sidhe is seen while wailing, the sound kills the viewer. Sometimes one is seen washing the shroud of the person whose death she foretells. If several Bean Sidhes gather together, it means that an especially important or holy person is about to die.

The Llamhigyn Y Dwr, or Water-Leaper, looks like a gigantic frog with wings and a tail instead of frog’s legs. It uses its wings to move across the water in great leaps, hence its name. It breaks fishing lines, scares fish, devours sheep and men which fall into the water, and emits terrifying shrieks. Traditional charms do not protect against a Water Leaper, but it can be slain with weapons.

Even more terrifying in appearance than the Llamhigyn Y Dwr is the Nuckelavee. Nuckelavees look something like centaurs, but the man’s upper body rises from the center of the horse’s back and the horse’s head has one large red eye. Its skin is flayed off, exposing its red, raw flesh. It may have fins instead of hooves. Sometimes it has shapechanging powers, but any shape it takes will be horrific and emit a foul stench – just like its normal form. They have the power to blight crops and destroy livestock, and they will tear apart any man they find. They live in the sea, which they leave from time to time to sow terror and do evil deeds. Despite being sea-faeries, they cannot tolerate fresh water, so you can escape them by crossing a stream.

There are several other fearsome sea-faeries. The Blue Men of the Minch are blue-skinned fiends which haunt the Scottish seas and wreck ships by tipping them over with their enormous strength or causing storms. However, they love to talk, and can be held at bay by a ship’s captain who is a good rhymers and clever with words. They live underwater in caves, and are ruled by a powerful chieftain. Then there are the Murdhuacha, or Merrows – Irish merfolk. The mermaids, who are usually friendly to humans, are gorgeous, and often fall in love with handsome mortal men; but the mermen have green hair and teeth, pig’s eyes, long red noses, and flipper-like arms, and hate handsome mortal men. All of the mermen, and some mermaids, are wicked, and try to wreck ships and lure men to their doom with siren songs. To save yourself from evil Murdhuacha, plug your ears (to keep from hearing their songs), use magic against them, or slay them with iron weapons.

Fortunately, there are a few Seelie water faeries, too. For example, the Fin Folk, who look like beautiful diminutive humans, live underneath the lochs of Scotland in marvelous faerie kingdoms which are encased in glass. There they grow fabulous gardens. Although they prefer to avoid men, sometimes favored humans are taken below the waves to visit their underwater realm and receive gifts from their gardens. This might be a good starting scene for the underwater adventure mentioned above; the Fin Folk, plagued by the attacks of the Fuath, bring the PCs to their kingdom and ask for their help.

The Roane, known as Selkies in the Orkneys and Shetland, are seal-faeries who live in the sea. They wear seal-skins to assume the shape of a seal; if a Roane’s seal-skin is taken away, it cannot change shape and thus can be trapped on land. They are usually neutral towards mortals, but will take vengeance on men who harm seals by causing storms and wrecking boats. In more fantastic fantasy campaigns, Roanes might make a good player character race, but they cannot spend much time far from water.

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FIGHTING FAERIES

Most mythic Irish and Scottish creatures are not the sort that the characters can engage in outright combat, or that they would have any hope of defeating if a fight occurred. The faeries in this category, who are all Unseelie, are not like that. These are big, horrible, ugly monsters that like to fight and ravage and destroy. They make excellent “stand up” opponents for characters who are looking for a good round or five of melee combat. However, don’t forget that they may still have strange magical powers, too; there are more ways for them to win battles than swordplay.

One of the most fearsome faeries is the Fachan. It has one leg (it moves by leaping), one enormous eye, and one large, strong, clawed arm and hand emerging from the center of its chest. Its hair is short and very stiff. Some Fachans’ bodies are covered with feathers, others wear rough animal skins. Fachans use weapons, such as morningstars or spiked maces; some can cast “venomous spells” on their weapons to make them even more deadly. The only way to defeat them is to slay them; iron, salt, and other charms have no effect on them.

There are two races of giants who ruled Ireland before the Tuatha de Danaan arrived. The first is the Firbolgs (or Fir Vulag) – huge, terrifyingly ugly brutes. A few remain in Ireland, led by their king, Eochaid, and sometimes they prey on men. The other is the Fomorians, who left Ireland entirely to live in the sea. However, they have no trouble breathing air, and frequently come ashore to loot, pillage, raid, and kill. They are grotesque, with enormous bodies that look like they have been assembled from a random collection of human and animal parts (though they always have arms and legs of some sort). They wield enormous weapons and are dangerous opponents in combat. Both races hold great hatred for the Tuatha de Danaan (now the Daoine Sidhe); player characters in a fantasy game might be called on to aid the Daoine Sidhe against the brute strength of the Firbolgs and Fomorians.

Another gigantic faerie is Jack-In-Irons, a horrid monster who wears clanking chains and the heads of its victims. It ambushes travelers on the roads, kills them, and eats them. It wields giant weapons, often clubs, and can be affected by normal weapons. A Jack-In-Irons would make a good random encounter for one or two characters.

MISCELLANEOUS FAERIES

Faeries are strange and mysterious creatures which don’t always categorize well. Here are three few that don’t fit into the groups described above.

Leprechauns are probably the best known type of Seelie faerie. They are small men who wear costly green clothing and green tri-corner hats. They are solitary, and work by themselves at such trades as shoemaking. When not working, they spend their time playing tricks on humans, but they are often friendly if approached with respect. As any schoolchild knows, if you capture a Leprechaun, he must lead you to his hidden pot of gold, and sometimes grant you three wishes to boot. But beware, for Leprechauns are wily, and will use their quick wits and faerie powers to trick you out of the money and vanish. For example, if they can fool you into making a fourth wish before sundown, you lose whatever you wished for with the first three – and the gold they gave you to boot!

Although they are usually solitary, Leprechauns sometimes gather with others of their kind to drink, dance, play music, go foxhunting, and revel. Mortals caught up in these parties may dance themselves to death under the spell of their unearthly faerie music. Leprechauns also enjoy playing riddle-games and word-games with men, and may richly reward a clever competitor. A leprechaun festival should be a challenging encounter for any party of adventurers, since brute force and human magic are of no help; only the characters’ brains will get them out of *this* predicament before they dance to death.

Pixies are also well-known (by many different names). They are tiny faeries who sometimes have wings like those of insects; they are often courtiers and servants for the Seelie Court. Their heads are too large for their bodies, with pointed ears, arched eyebrows, and sharp noses. They wear caps made of the tops of toadstools or foxgloves. They like to play tricks on people and “pixy-lead” them off their chosen path. Like their cousins the leprechauns, they love to sing, play music, and dance; anyone who joins a pixy revel is likely to vanish from the world of men, reappearing decades or centuries later without having aged a day. Traditional charms offer protection against pixies, especially iron; the mere touch of iron can kill a pixy.

Phookas are malevolent faeries with the bodies of men and the heads of horses or goats (or sometimes vice-versa). They can also change shape; their favorite shapes are horses, eagles, and bats. They work in groups to destroy crops, harm or steal children, lead travelers astray, and kill herd animals. They lay claim to any crop not cut by Halloween; to harvest after that day is to invite their wrath. They especially love potatoes, which they dig up at night and eat. Phookas are affected by traditional charms and magic.