

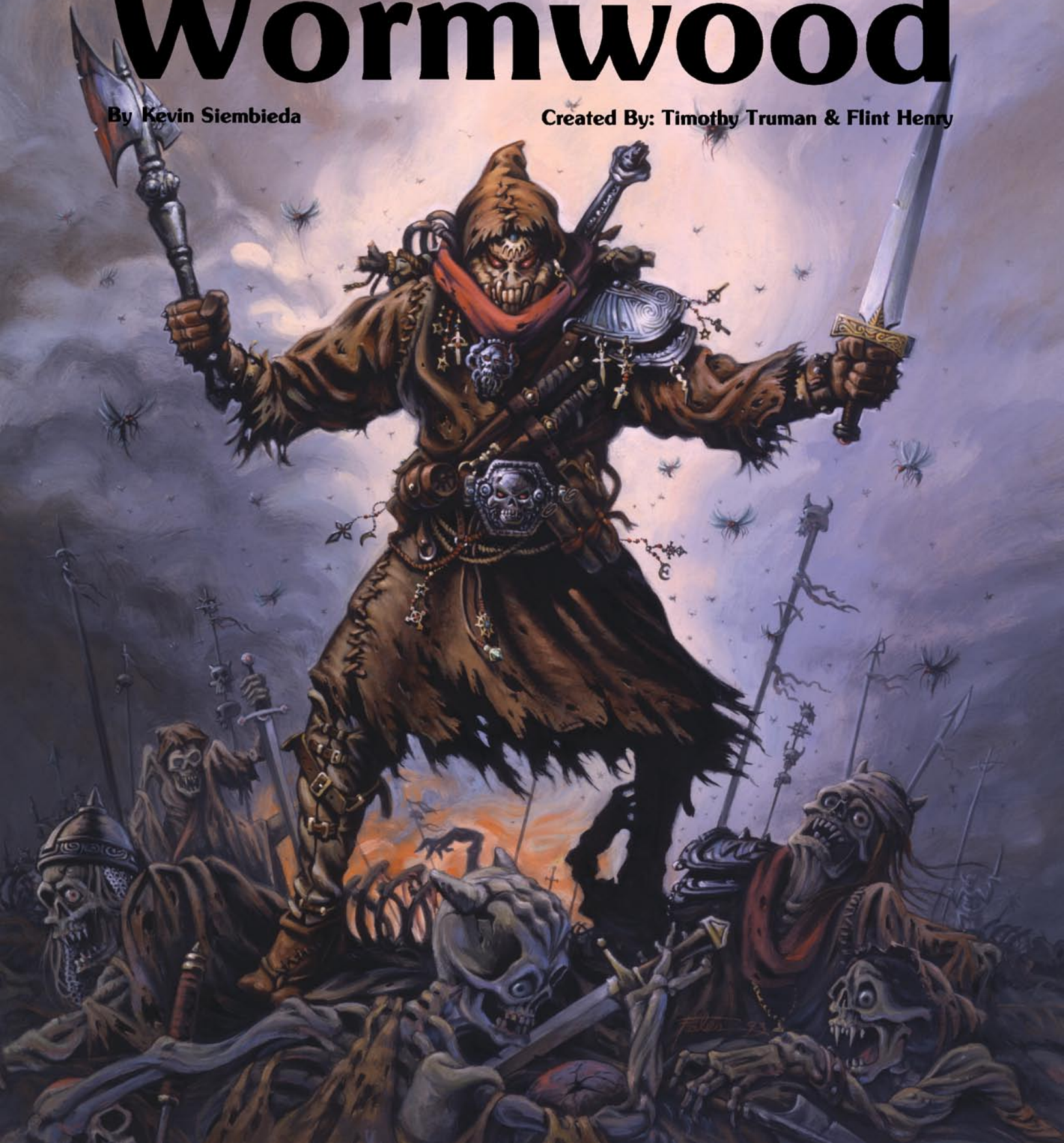
Palladium Books® Presents:

Rifts® Dimension Book One:

Wormwood™

By Kevin Siembieda

Created By: Timothy Truman & Flint Henry



Warning!

Violence and the Supernatural

This book may be inappropriate for young readers.

The fictional world of **Wormwood** is violent and presents demonic monsters, magic, and characters referred to as The Forces of Darkness. Other dimensional beings, often referred to as “demons,” torment, stalk, and prey on humans.

The fictional Champions of Light represent the forces of good who battle the Forces of Darkness to restore peace and freedom to their monster ridden world. It is a classic story of good versus evil.

Wormwood is a work of fiction! The “demons” are purely fictional monsters. The monsters, magic, powers and places are not real. None of us at Palladium Books condone or encourage the occult, the practice of magic, the use of drugs, or violence. There are also characters, terms and connotations that some people may view as having religious significance. These fictional characters, organizations and elements are NOT meant to represent any “real life” religion or organization.

Some parents may find the violence, supernatural elements and religious overtones inappropriate for young readers/players. We suggest parental discretion.



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Rifts® Dimension Book One

Wormwood™

Created By: **Timothy Truman**
Flint Henry

Written By: **Kevin Siembieda**

Additional Concepts & Ideas: **Timothy Truman**
Flint Henry

Senior Editor: **Alex Marciniszyn**

Editors: **Thomas Bartold**
James A. Osten

Cover Painting: **Kevin Fales**

Interior Art: **Flint Henry**
Roger Peterson
Kevin Siembieda
Timothy Truman

Art Direction & Keylining: **Kevin Siembieda**

Typography: **Maryann Siembieda**

Comic Strip Credits

Timothy Truman — story, co-concept, co-designs, pencils, inks, letters
and **Flint Henry** — pencils, co-concept, main designs, co-plot
with **Roger Petersen** — pencils, inks
Thank to **Christine Permenter** — studio assistance, tones.

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The Wonders & Horrors of Wormwood

Wormwood is a planet in another dimension where men and monsters struggle for supremacy — and in some cases, struggle just to survive. It is also a place of nightmares and suffering.

Wormwood is the first of several “Dimension Books.” Each book will be designed with three things in mind (besides hours of fun).

First, **Wormwood** is a supplement to the **Rifts RPG!** As such, **Wormwood** and future dimension books offer an entire new world of adventure and exploration. A place beyond the stars. A land that is not reached by spaceship, but by traveling through a dimensional rift. On Rifts Earth, there are practitioners of magic and many different supernatural beings who can open such wondrous portals. There are also rifts that appear randomly at ley line nexus points. Those who happen to be present have

the opportunity to explore strange new worlds. Simply step through the shimmering field of energy and you stand on the soil of an alien planet. **Wormwood** is just one of countless worlds that await bold explorers. Of course, surviving long enough to find a way back home may be more difficult than one anticipates.

Second, **Wormwood** and future dimension books are designed to be *stand-alone* environments. The basic **Rifts RPG** rule book is needed to play, and some of the other world books and supplements may be fun and useful, but **Wormwood** is a world setting that can be played completely apart from **Rifts**. It is a unique environment with its own history, conflicts, heroes and villains. A **Rifts** character need never set foot on the planet.

Third, it is an *all-purpose* supplement meant to expand the possibilities of **Rifts** and role-playing excitement! O.C.C.s, heroes, villains, weapons, and magic from **Wormwood** can be brought into **Rifts** and from **Rifts** to **Wormwood**. Elements and aspects of the two (or more) planets can be combined in just about any way desired by the game master and players. **Wormwood** is a very different place than Rifts Earth and yet, disturbingly similar. In fact, it may represent the very future of the Earth, depending on the shift of power and the might of monstrous invaders. Alternately, Rifts Earth may mean salvation for the people of **Wormwood** or only escalate the nightmare.

The possibilities for **Rifts/Wormwood** and of role-playing games in general are limited only by the power of your imagination. Let that imagination soar and a Megaverse of adventure awaits you.

Where did **Wormwood** Come From?

The ideas behind **Wormwood** came from the fertile imaginations of comic book creators Timothy Truman and Flint Henry. I’ve had the pleasure of knowing Tim for a number of years. One day last summer, he called and asked if I’d be interested in a world concept for a role-playing game. We talked a while and my creative juices began to flow. “Tim,” I asked, “would you mind if **Wormwood** was connected with my **Rifts** series.” “Why not,” he replied, “I’d think it would fit in perfectly.”

I had been planning to launch a series of “dimension” books for **Rifts** since its inception, but I wanted these books/worlds to be something special. Furthermore, I had been busy with a lot of other projects, including getting **Rifts miniatures** off the ground. Tim and Flint’s ideas sounded like a great way to start the Rifts dimension books. When I got the **Wormwood** samples I was floored. Great stuff! Sort of high fantasy meet nightmares from hell, with a touch of science fiction. I loved it. Details were worked out and contracts were signed.

Tim and Flint submitted sketches, illustrations, wrote and illustrated the 20 page comic strip and provided additional ideas. Roger Peterson, who is bright new talent, assisted on the strip and penciled a number of the monsters and characters (I had the pleasure of inking them). Then it was my turn. I took the drawings and ideas and extrapolated on them. I fleshed out existing concepts and added ideas of my own. I weaved them into the **Rifts/Palladium Megaverse** while at the same time keeping the flavor of Tim and Flint’s original vision. I love working with other creators, especially artists. I love being given a wild, new idea and told to run with it. Truman, Henry, and Siembieda’s **Wormwood** is the end result.

Wormwood is a grim and gritty world where the champions of good and forces of evil wage a terrible battle. It is a place

where evil seems to dominate, but the human spirit remains unbroken and the forces of good are mounting to free themselves from the shackles of tyranny. But there's more! A subtle undercurrent of inner turmoil, betrayal, weakness, strength, courage and triumph woven into the characters, background data and subplots. Yep, its the stuff of epic adventure! We just hope you enjoy this world as much as we did creating it.

The Publisher's Soap Box

I'd like to step away from Wormwood for a minute and ask the question:

"If your friends jumped off a cliff, would you jump off too?"

I suspect that every kid in America has heard his parents ask this facetious question, or something like it. The obvious answer is no. But, believe it or not, sometimes that answer seems to be yes!

As I prepare this book for publication, the television news is abuzz with the stories of several foolish teens reenacting a scene from a movie, with deadly consequences. The movie, **The Program**, is a fictional film about teenagers, football and jocks. In the movie, some of the athletes lay down on the yellow line in the middle of a busy street to prove how cool they can remain under pressure. The scene is played for laughs.


I would have thought that every movie-goer above the age of nine would realize that movies are make believe. That this ridiculous stunt was *carefully staged* for the film. Yet, a bunch of foolish teenagers (17 to 19 years old) in two different cities reenacted this stunt. A 19 year old is dead. As of this writing, two 17 year olds are critically injured. What were they thinking?! Didn't it occur to them that if you lay down in a busy street, you **WILL** probably get run over!? How incredibly stupid! How incredibly tragic!!

Of course, the tragedy continues in the form of paranoia and censorship. Concerned parents and politicians reexamine whether television and films are too violent and/or too powerful an influence on America's youths. There are currently three different acts of legislation before Congress demanding that the government enforce censorship or some degree of "regulation" over the film and television industries. The incident with the teenagers laying in the street has only fueled the flames of the censorship controversy.

This is why Palladium places warnings in its books and, from time to time, reminds readers that this is all fiction. The creatures, demons, powers, magic, places and people are all make believe. Some people simply get carried away with the excitement of a situation and don't stop to think. Add some alcohol to the mix and you have people being more foolish than usual. All I want to say is, stop and think about what you're doing. Fun is fun. Don't let it degenerate into something stupid or hurtful. And remember, all the magic and fantastic elements that appears in **Rifts**, **Wormwood** and Palladium's other role-playing games are NOT real. It's the stuff of dreams. Imaginings brought to fictional life on paper through pictures and words. Have fun and stay smart.

Kevin Siembieda
Author & Publisher, Palladium Books Inc.





MANY ARE THE BOOKS, SCRIPTURES, AND SCROLLS OF OUR WAR-WRACKED WORLD. EACH ONE CLAIMS TO PROFESS THE **TRUE** LORE OF OUR PEOPLE.

THESE TEXTS-- WHETHER **HOLY** OR **UNHOLY**-- AGREE ON ONLY **ONE** THING...

...THAT ONCE, IN SOME LONG-LOST TIME, A SOUND LIKE A TRUMPET SPLIT THE AIR AND A GREAT STAR FELL, BURNING WITH LAMP-LIKE FIRE!

FROM THE ASHES OF COLLISION A NEW WORLD FORMED-- A WORLD CALLED **WORMWOOD!**

OVER THE AGES, MANY CITIES HAVE SPRUNG FROM THE PUTRID DUST AND FESTERING GOZE OF THIS PLANET.

ALL EVENTUALLY FALL-- GROUND INTO CINDERS BY THE BURNING ENGINES OF OUR ETERNAL **WAR!**

THEN, LIKE FRESH SCABS OVER HALF-HEALED SCARS, NEW CITIES APPEAR.

THE PEOPLE IN **SOME** CITIES ALIGN THEMSELVES WITH THE **LIGHT**.

IN **OTHER** CITIES, THE DENIZENS FOLLOW-- OR ARE FORCE-MARCHED DOWN-THE PATHS OF THE **DARK**.

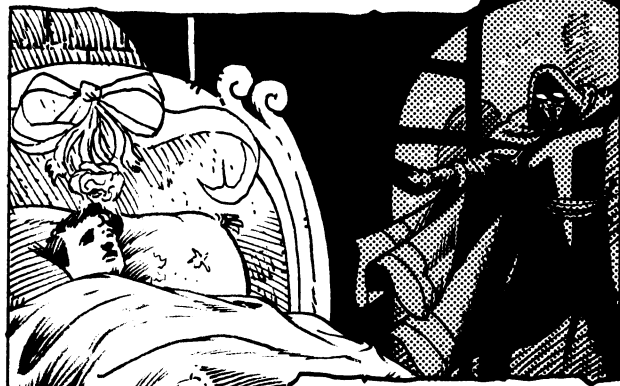
I AM LAZARETH VESPER. I WALK IN THE SHADOWS **BETWEEN**.

BOOK 1: GENESIS-OMEGA

I AM A **FREELANCER**... AN INDEPENDANT EXORCIST AND INQUISITOR.

YET **SOMETIMES** I MAKE EXCEPTIONS.

THE CHILD IS SO **YOUNG**.



I USUALLY EXPECT TO GET PAID FOR MY WORK--IN SOME WAY.

HE **SUFFERS** SO.



THE **DARK** HAS REACHED OUT FOR HIM... CLAIMED HIM! SOON, THE LAD'S **POSSESSION** WILL BE COMPLETED!

IT'S WITHIN MY **POWER** TO HEAL HIM...

...SO THAT HE CAN MAKE HIS **OWN CHOICES!**



YOU! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!

BY THE **LIGHT!** A **FREELANCER!** AWAY FROM HIM, **TRAITOR!**

MY WORK IS FINISHED. THEIR SON IS **WHOLE** AGAIN.

HIS PARENTS' **BIGOTRY** IS OF LITTLE CONCERN TO ME...

THERE'S MUCH WORK LEFT TO DO THIS NIGHT. FEW OF THESE POOR WRETCHES CAN MEET MY USUAL FEE FOR MY SERVICES. THOSE WHO CAN PAY WITH A BOWL OF BUG-INFESTED GRUEL... A CUP OF TAINTED WATER... A LOAF OF MOULDY BREAD.

THEY PAY-- AND CURSE ME FOR A HEARTLESS MERCENARY!

ACCEPTING SUCH TOKENS IS THE ONLY WAY A FREELANCER-- ONE UNALIGNED WITH THE ACCEPTED HOLY ORDERS -- CAN SURVIVE!

THEY WILL NEVER UNDERSTAND THE REASON WHY I BROKE MY TIES WITH THE HOLY ORDERS. THEY'LL NEVER KNOW WHY I DO WHAT I DO.

I CAN'T AFFORD TO LET THEIR SCORN KEEP ME FROM HELPING THEM.

EVEN NOW, THE SOUL-RAIDING HORDE WHIPS THEIR WINGED SKELTER BATS FROM THEIR LAIRS...

7/19/11

... SEEKING MEAT FOR
THEIR MASTER IN
THE OUTER VILLAGES!

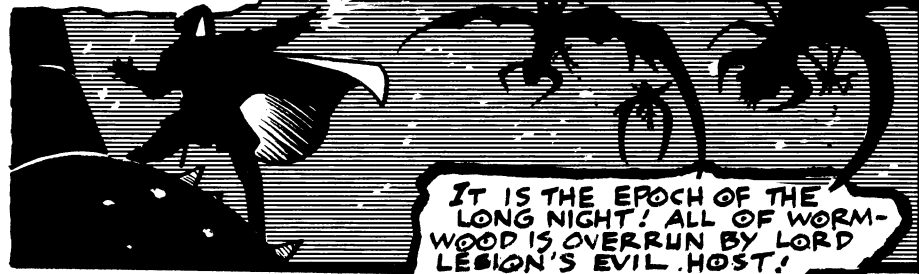
PRAY CHILDREN! PRAY THAT
THE LIGHT MIGHT PRESERVE
US IN OUR TRIBULATION!



YES!
SOULS!
SOULS AND
MEAT FOR
LORD
LESION!

**THE
HOST!**
RUN!

RUN? THERE IS NO PLACE TO RUN!



IT IS THE EPOCH OF THE LONG NIGHT! ALL OF WORMWOOD IS OVERRUN BY LORD LESION'S EVIL HOST!

PERHAPS... IF I CAN THROW A MENTAL BLAST... AN ANTI-DEMON SPELL...

... BUT NO!



I EXPENDED TOO MUCH ENERGY WHEN I CAST THE DEMONS OUT OF THE CHILD!

I CAN DO NOTHING NOW BUT WATCH...



...WATCH AS THE UNHOLY RAIDERS CARRY THOSE SCREAMING, DOOMED SOULS TO THE SOUL VATS OF LESION'S EVER-ADVANCING FORTRESS...

...THE CRAWLING TOWER!

WITHIN THE LIVING WALLS OF THAT FOUL EDIFICE, THE MASTER OF THE EVIL HOST COMMANDS AND RE-SUPPLIES HIS FAITHFUL, MINDLESS HORDE!

THE LUCKY AMONG THEM WILL BE SACRIFICED ON BLOODY ALTARS, WITH THEIR FLESH DIVIDED TO FEED LESION AND HIS DEMONS!

THE LESS FORTUNATE WILL HAVE THEIR SPIRITUAL ESSENCE SUCKED AWAY INTO SOUL BATTERIES THAT WILL, IN TURN, POWER LESION'S FOUL WAR MACHINES!

OTHERS WILL BE DUMPED INTO THE SOUL VATS, TO EMERGE AS NEW WARRIORS FOR THE DARK'S DEMON HOST!

THEIR SOULS POSSESSED-- THEIR BODIES TRANSFORMED-- THEY WILL BE DRIVEN FORTH TO DO BATTLE WITH THE ARMIES OF LIGHT!



FOR DECADES, THE KNIGHTS OF LIGHT HAVE FIGHTED BRAVELY IN THE NAMES OF THE VARIOUS HOLY ORDERS THAT SPONSOR THEM. BUT NOW, THEIR RANKS DWINDLE -- JUST AS LESION'S LEGIONS GROW!

MORALE IS LOW. AFTER HAVING WORKED FOR SO LONG IN UNITY, THE ELITE ORDER OF TEMPLARS HAS RESUMED ITS SILLY RIVALRY WITH THE KNIGHTS HOSPITALER.

WITH THE TWO MAIN ORDERS IN SUCH DISHARMONY, THE LESSER ORDERS FALL APART.



A VEIL OF BITTER DESPAIR HANGS OVER THE ARMY. THE ONLY THING KEEPING THEM TOGETHER IS THE NEED TO DEFEND THE CATHEDRALS, CHURCHES, CASTLES AND SHRINES WHICH GUARD THE REMAINING CITIES.



THESE CRUMBLING CITADELS ARE THE LAST STRONGHOLDS OF MAN.

FROM SUCH FORTRESSES, THE PRIESTS AND PRINCES DIRECT AND BLESS THEIR BELEAGUERED KNIGHTS.



ALL KNOW THAT THE FINAL BATTLE WILL SOON BE FOUGHT!



THUS, ALL ACROSS
OUR POOR PLANET...



... THE BATTLE
RAGES ON!



LT. CHAR!
CUT YOUR WAY
TO THEIR SOLIL
CELL! IT'S
OUR ONLY
CHANCE!

I'LL TRY
MY CAPTAIN!

MIGHTY IS
THE ARM
OF THE LORD

SHE IS CALLED CHAR-- PRIDE OF THE LOW-BORN PEASANT KNIGHTS!

SHE HAS LEARNED THE ARTS OF BATTLE IN THE CAMPS OF THE MORE ARISTOCRATIC ORDERS.

CHAR TAKES HER ORDERS VERY SERIOUSLY. NOTHING WILL SWAY HER DETERMINATION TO REACH THE DEMONS' MOBILE POWER UNIT!



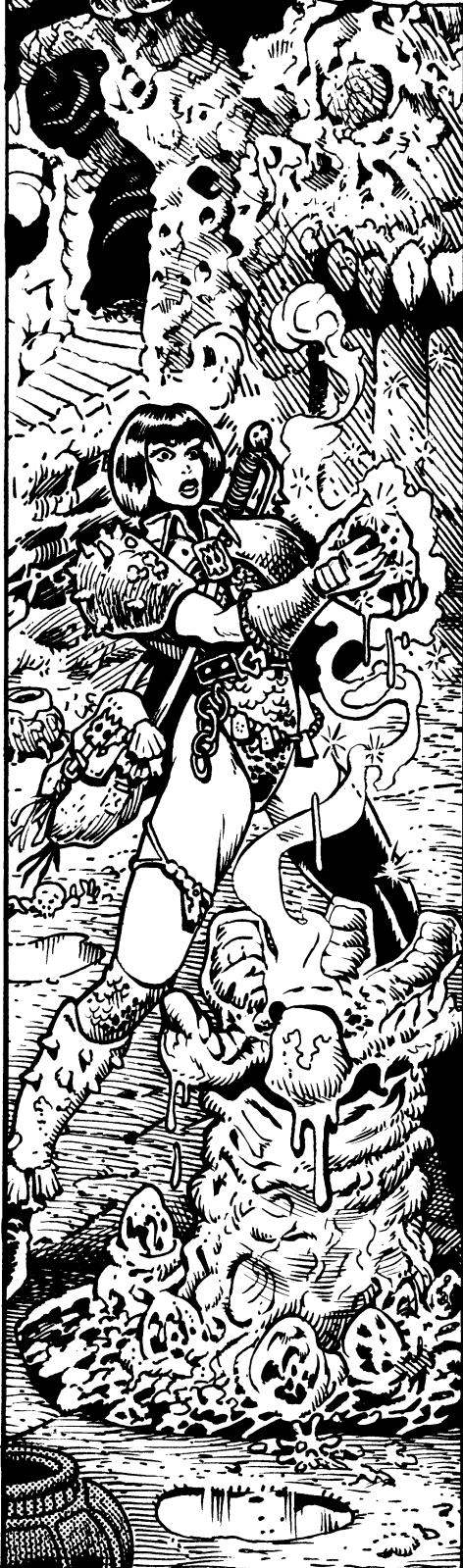
THE BEAST GUARDSMEN WILL TRY THEIR BEST TO DEFEND THEIR PRECIOUS SOUL CELL!

HOWEVER, IF ANY KNIGHT CAN PIERCE THEIR UNHOLY DEFENSES...

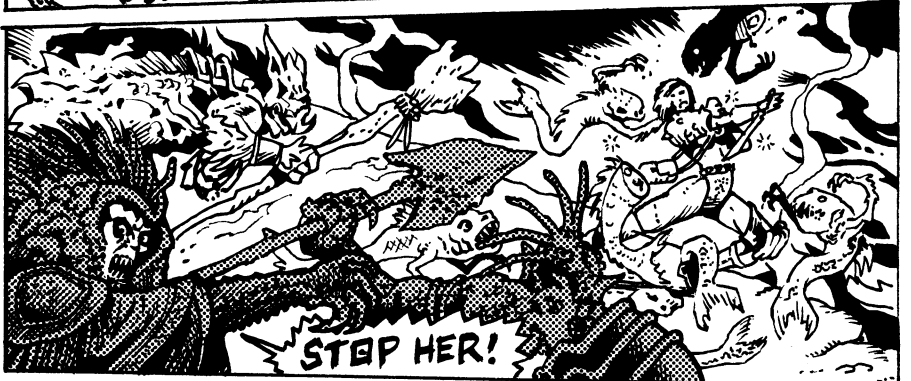
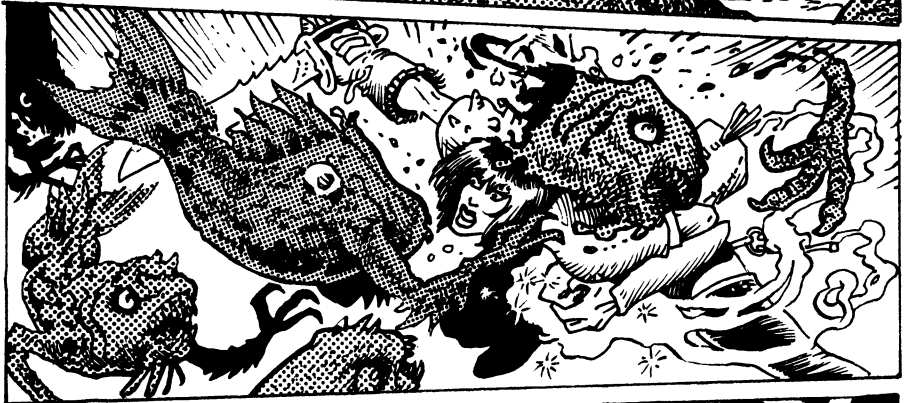
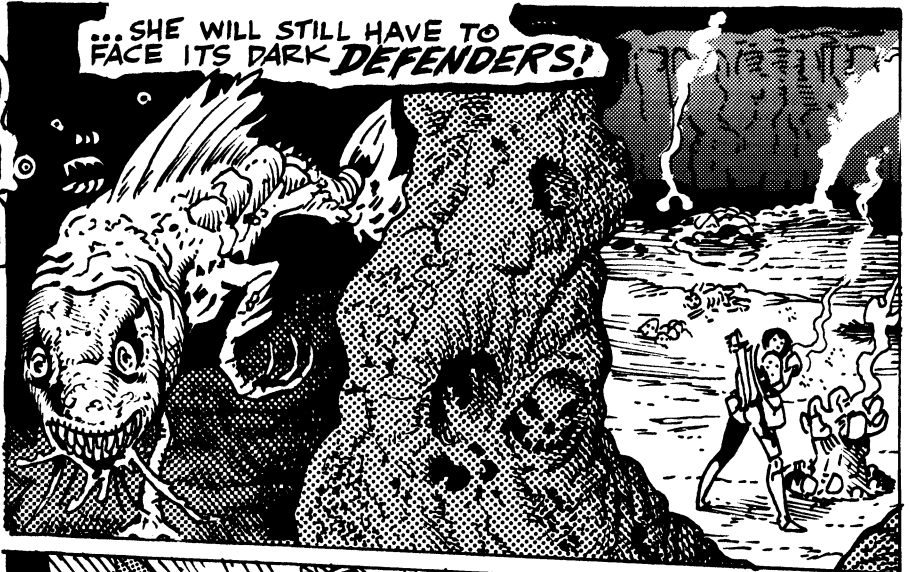


NOW, SHE CAN OUT-FIGHT ALMOST ANY OF THE WELL-HEELED TEMPLARS OR HOSPITALLERS!

BUT EVEN IF THE WARRIOR LIVES, AND SUCCEEDS IN HER DESPERATE ATTEMPT TO BREACH THE DEPTHS OF THE **SOUL CELL**...

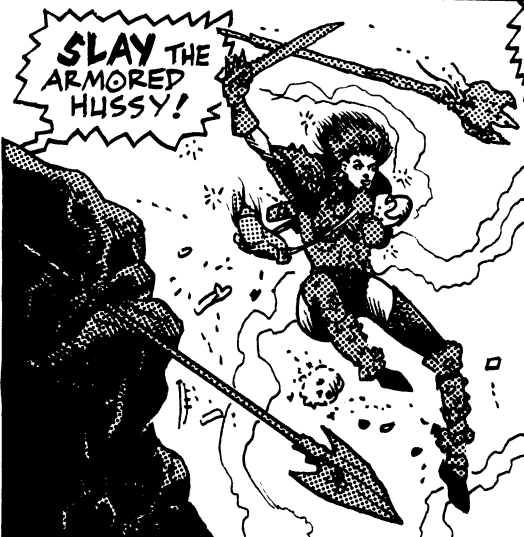


...SHE WILL STILL HAVE TO FACE ITS DARK **DEFENDERS!**



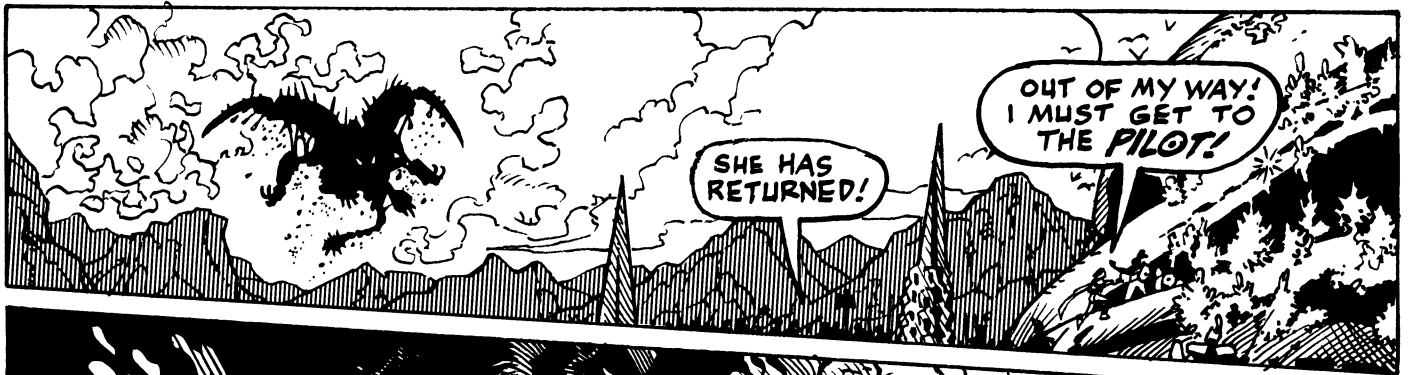
STOP HER!

SLAY THE ARMORED HUSSY!



ESCAPED! THE MASTER WILL HAVE OUR HEADS FOR THIS!





SHE HAS RETURNED!

OUT OF MY WAY!
I MUST GET TO
THE PILOT!



... AND MAY THE DOOMED,
DEPARTED SOULS WITHIN
IT REJOICE THAT THEY
AGAIN SERVE THE
LIGHT!

PILOT!
I HAVE IT!

GOOD!
PLACE THE
NEW SOUL
BATTERY IN
THE ENERGY
CHAMBER ...!

LIGHT BE
PRAISED!
THEY'VE
DONE IT!
THE TEMPLE
AWAKENS!

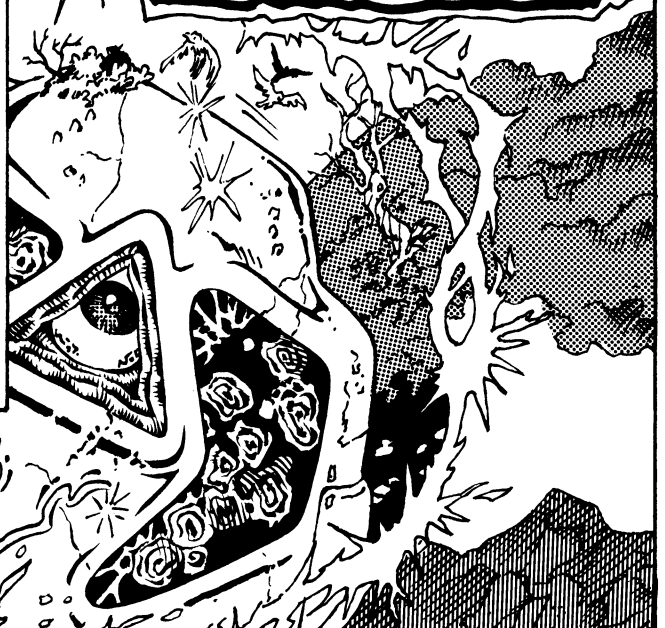
BUT LOOK!
THE DEMON
TRANSPORT
HAS RELEASED
ITS SHOCK
PARASITES!

WH-WHAT'S HAPPENING, PILOT?!

THE INEVITABLE, WOMAN!

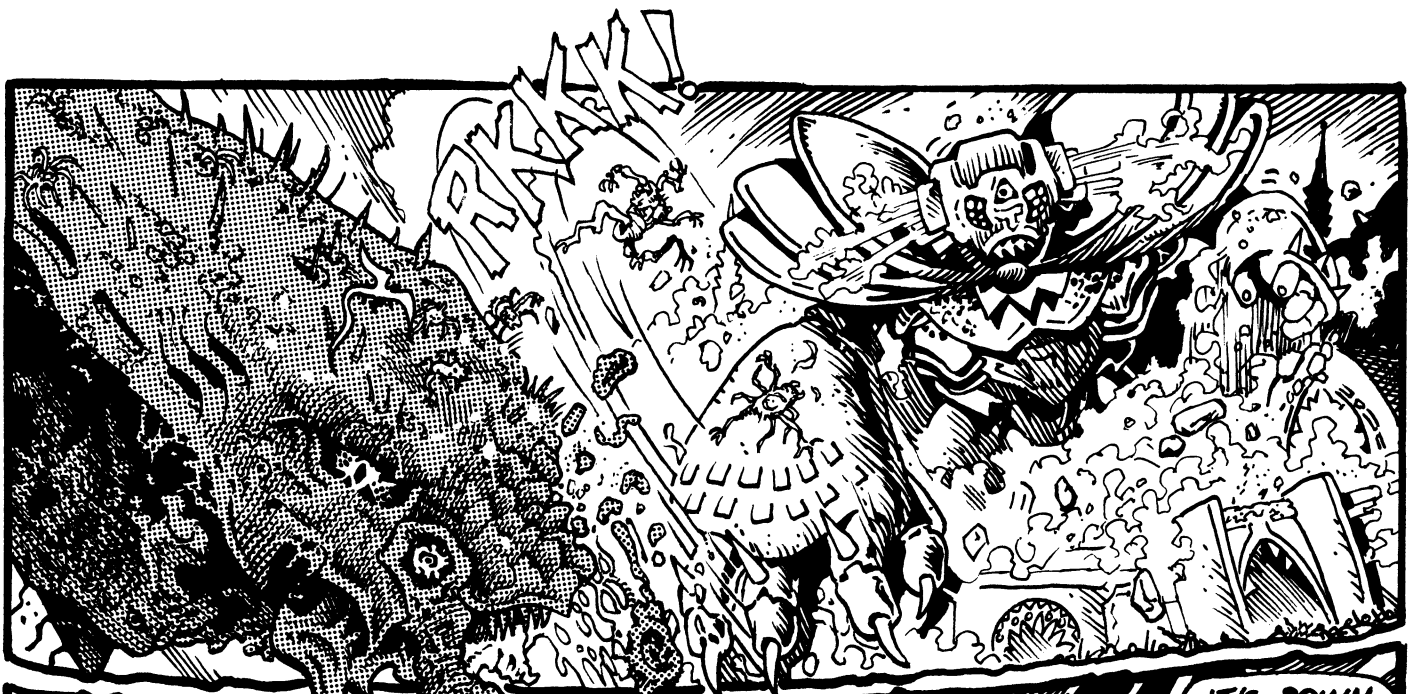
AT LONG LAST, IT IS TIME FOR MY CHARGE AND ME TO JOIN THIS UNHOLY WAR!

"AGES AGO, SENTINEL TEMPLES LIKE THIS WERE POSTED TO KEEP WATCH OVER THE CASTLES AND CATHEDRALS OF THE LIGHT-- WAITING EVER SINCE FOR THE DAY WE WOULD BE CALLED FORTH!



"THAT DAY IS NOW!"

"THE BATTLE SAINT RISES!"



IT'S DOWN,
PILOT! YOU
DID IT!

NOT I, CHAR!
'TIS THE SAINT
WHO HAS
BESTED
THE BEAST!



NOW, WE SEND
IT BACK TO THE
HADES THAT
SPAWNED IT!

DIE!
DIE, SERVANT
OF THE
DARK!



LIGHT BE
PRAISED! THE
CREATURE
IS DESTROYED!

LOOK SHARP,
LADS! DEMON
FLANKER'S
COMING IN!



WHAT'S THIS?!
A LONE WARRIOR,
FIGHTING THROUGH
THE HEART OF THE
DEMON
HOST?!



IT'S HIM!
THE TRAITOR!



FLY! REGROUP!

WHO ARE YOU, STRANGER,
THAT THE DEMONS FLEE
AT YOUR SIGHT?!

UNMASK!

I AM CALLED--

THE CONFESSOR!



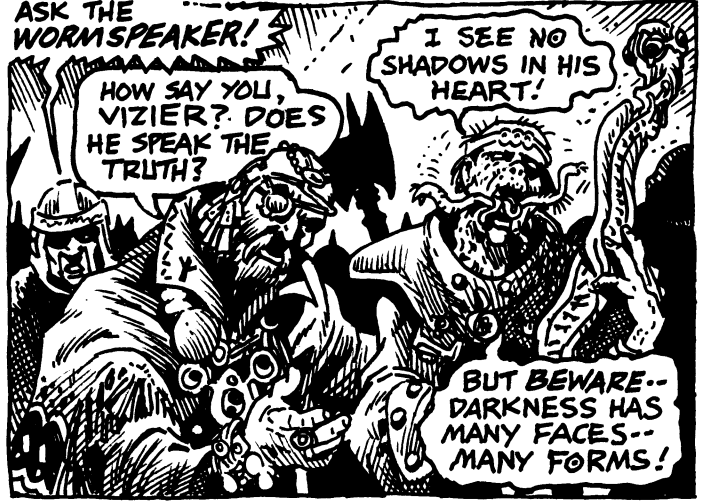
CONFESSOR?!
WHY- YOU'RE THE
TURNCOAT!

MERCENARY!
TRAITOR! YOU
EXPECT US TO BELIEVE
YOU FIGHT WITH US
NOW?



IT MATTERS
NOT TO ME
WHAT YOU
BELIEVE!

THE LIGHT
KNOWS MY
HEART. ANY
WHO DOUBT
ME CAN DO
SO AT THE
POINT OF
MY
BLADE!



ASK THE
WORMSPEAKER!

HOW SAY YOU,
VIZIER? DOES
HE SPEAK THE
TRUTH?

I SEE NO
SHADOWS IN HIS
HEART!

BUT BEWARE--
DARKNESS HAS
MANY FACES--
MANY FORMS!



WHY DON'T YA'LL
JUST CUT THE BOY
SOME SLACK AND LET
HIM STRUT HIS STUFF?

IF HE'S A-LYIN', WE CAN
ALWAYS CHOP'IM DOWN
WHERE HE STANDS!

RIGHT NOW, WE
GOT SOMETHIN'
ELSE TO WORRY
'BOUT!

BLAM!

SPAK!

SUDDENLY, THE
GROUND HEAVES
AND SPLITS, AS
A NEW, HALF-
EXPECTED HORROR
SPITS ITSELF
FORTH TO MEET
THE HEROES OF
LIGHT AND LIFE!

LOOKS LIKE
COFFEE BREAK
IS OVER, GANG!
WATCH YER
BUTTS!

BY THE
SAINTS!

LESION HAS
OPENED A D-PORT--
RIGHT BENEATH
OUR VERY
FEET!



"... SALOME!"

THIS ISN'T
LESION'S WORK,
WOMAN!

'TIS HIS
LOATHSOME
LAP-DOG
WHO IS CONJURING
THESE DEMONS
THROUGH
THE GATE...!

YES.. SALOME, QUEEN
OF DEMONS!

FROM HER OTHER-
DIMENSIONAL LAIR,
SHE GATHERS NEW
HORRORS TO SEND
FORTH AT LESION'S
REQUEST!

HOWEVER, SHE IS NOT THE
ONLY CREATURE TO
POSSESS THE POWER
TO OPEN THE VEIL
BETWEEN THE PLANES!



VESPER!
YOU CASTLELESS
MEDDLER!



YOU SEEK MY
CONTROL GEM,
FREELANCER?

YOU SHALL
NOT TAKE
IT!

I DON'T WISH
TO HARM YOU,
SALOME...

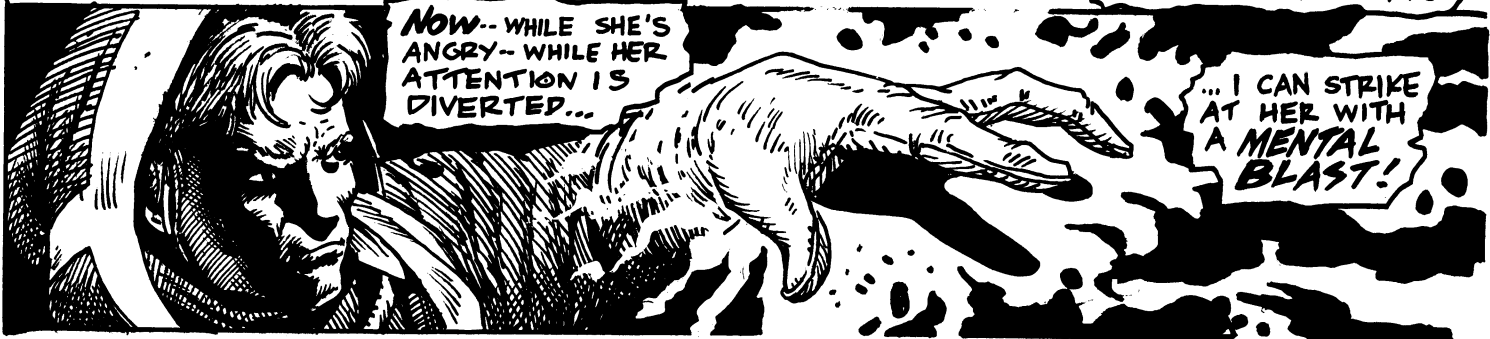
HOWEVER, DO NOT
UNDERESTIMATE MY
POWER-- OR MY
INTENTIONS.

I CANNOT
ALLOW THOSE
KNIGHTS TO DIE!



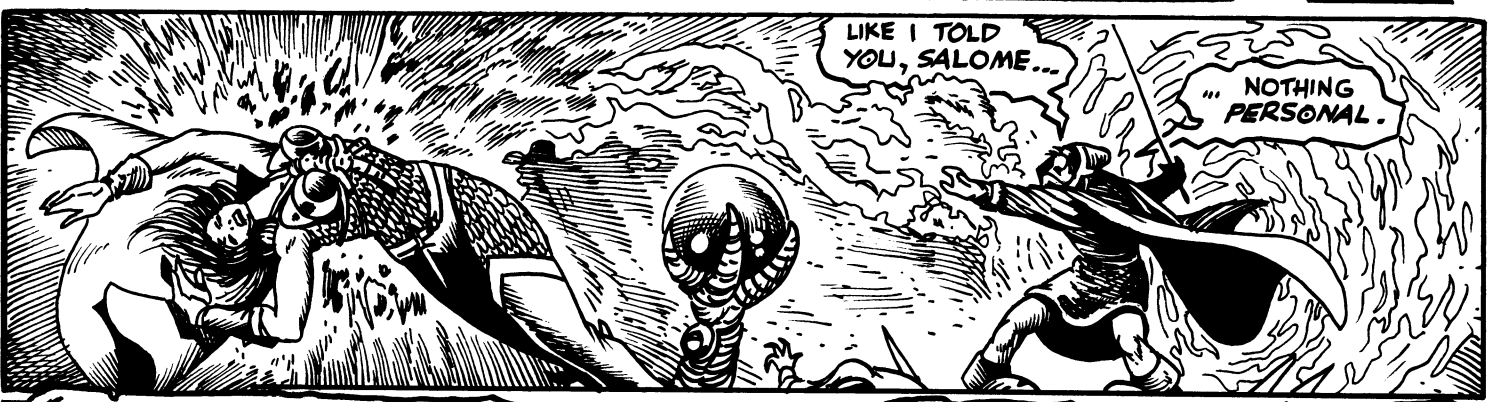
DESTROY HIM! WE CAN'T LET HIM STOP US!

A FUTILE ATTEMPT-- AND SHE KNOWS IT! HER GOBLIN ASSASSINS ARE NO MATCH FOR A FREELANCER!



NOW-- WHILE SHE'S ANGRY-- WHILE HER ATTENTION IS DIVERTED...

... I CAN STRIKE AT HER WITH A MENTAL BLAST!



LIKE I TOLD YOU, SALOME...

... NOTHING PERSONAL.



THE DARK MISTRESS IS DOWN. THE PRIZE IS MINE! I TAKE IT AND FLEE THROUGH MY DIMENSIONAL PORTAL...



... BACK TO WORMWOOD!

WITHOUT THE PSYCHIC DIRECTION OF SALOME'S CONTROL GEM, THE BEASTS THAT THE WITCH QUEEN CALLED FORTH WILL MELT BACK INTO THEIR OWN DIMENSIONS.



THE KNIGHTS OF LIGHT ARE SAFE AGAIN-- FOR NOW!



THEY WILL DOUBTLESS WONDER AT THE MYSTERY OF THEIR SALVATION...



... BUT THEY'LL NEVER GUESS WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE!

ON MY WORLD, THE WAR WILL RAGE EVER ON...



Erin Tarn's Wormwood, a Distant World

Condensed excerpts from her soon to be released book of the same title — Circa December, 103 PA

It was the spring of 101 PA when my companions and I made the terrible decision to rift to our next destination. The plan was to open a dimensional portal at a ley line nexus and, in the blink of an eye, travel a thousand miles south where the Vampire Kingdoms were said to be located. I have always warned others about the hazards of dimensional travel, but we were tired and baking in 100 degree heat. At the time, the idea of skipping over a thousand miles of vampire infested desert and prairies sounded like a wonderful idea. Never did I imagine that we would be swept up in an incredible trans-dimensional odyssey.

The Mexican ley line walker opened the gleaming portal and beckoned us to enter. I have seen rifts many times in my life, but I am always struck by their quiet power and incredible beauty. Everything is bathed in blue light. White lines of crackling energy, like miniature lightning bolts, race around every person and object in the area. Despite what one might think, the little energy crackles, as I call them, don't hurt at all. In fact, they tickle a little and cause your hair to float on a wave of static electricity. Then comes the wind. Not enough to mow you over, just enough to blow your hair and make you notice that it whipped-up out of nowhere. An instant later there is a blinding flash of light followed by the low rumble of thunder. When your eyes clear there is a glistening field of white and blue light. This particular rift stood a mere 30 feet high (I have seen some a mile high). Maybe it's because I'm a woman, but I have always thought the rifts looked like a womb. A metaphor I always thought appropriate since life steps through it into a new world.

Our ley line mage motioned us to step forward as the narrow beam of glittering light blossomed to reveal a bright, sunny sky and rolling hills. Hands held together we entered the breach. I thought I heard our mage shout for us to wait, but it was too late. Now, as I understand the process of rifting, it should have been like stepping through the doorway of a house. You just step from one reality into another — no strange sensations, no swirling color or a sense of falling through space. Lucky me, I experienced the latter. It was later explained to me that we had experienced an anomaly. Some kind of disruption in the space-time continuum caused the rift to phase at the moment we entered it. Instead of stepping through to southern Mexico, we were torn from Earth and sent to a world in another galaxy or perhaps another veil of reality entirely. We would later learn that the planet we were on is called Wormwood and while we Earth folk may not know about them, the residents have visited Earth many times.

An Alien World

I found Wormwood to be both magnificent and horrific. Believe it or not, the planet is alive. Not like our own Earth with its life-filled forests and waters, but a living creature! The most

popular theory is that Wormwood is an artificial planet created via some unbelievable marvel of bio-genetic engineering on a cosmic scale. Now that I am back home on Earth and have learned about the bio-mechanical invaders known as the Mechanoids, I find myself wondering if there might be a connection. I doubt we will ever know.

The world itself is unlike anything on Earth. Night lasts thirteen hours and daylight twelve, so the feel of time is similar to our own Earth. As dusk approaches, two orange moons appear in the dusty pink and orange evening skies of Wormwood. During the day, the sky is yellow with hints of blue. The landscape offers a myriad of pastel pink and tan colors. The surface dust and grit is just dirt collected like dust on a bookshelf. The temperature at most locations is a pleasant 80 degrees. The ground is hard, smooth and barren of vegetation. Instead of trees, there are stone-like pillars that rise out of the earth. There is the occasional shrub, moss, and vine, but these are the results of seeds being carried here from other dimensions.

Even the buildings are grown from the Living Planet. They have the texture and warmth of the hide of a rhino-buffalo. I could not help thinking of the things I had read about the Millennium Trees. Giant living trees that function as a living habitat with pods and cavities where people can live, but they are nothing like this. Skyscrapers reaching for the sky or huge domed arenas with doors, windows, stairways and indoor waterworks. In many cases, the very furnishings of the rooms are molded from the floors and walls of the living buildings. Fountains and sculptures are also pulled from the planet like taffy and molded into the various shapes desired. This artwork and furniture are the handiwork of priests or shamen known as wormspeakers. Both can mold and shape the planet's surface through their prayers and magic.

We learned much about Wormwood from a group of adventurers. Our initial shock was that they spoke perfect American! It would seem they have adopted the language from Earth before the Coming of the Rifts. This would make our journey much easier.

We were fortunate to encounter this group, because the rift put us in the demon wastelands. Had we continued our north-bound trek, we would have been captured by the Forces of Darkness who dominate that part of the world. I shudder to imagine what our fate may have been. Thankfully, we saw only glimpses of the evil that plagues this land — it was enough.

Our guides were generous and kind. They included a woman wormspeaker, a young priest of light, a knight of the Hospital and four freelance warriors. They were making their way back to the Kingdom of Light. They had been part of a military expedition in the North, but had gotten separated from the rest of their troops and feared that the others may have perished in

battle. The priest carried in his head some valuable, strategic information and their rag-tag group marched southwest toward the stronghold of the humans. We were welcomed and encouraged to join them for our own safety.

They explained that generations ago, a shifter (much like those we have on Earth) found a dark dimension and let in a horrible creature known as the Host. With time, this fiend found a way to bring others of his kind into the world. Together they summoned armies of monsters from other dimensions and captured many of the human cities. The creature, who calls himself the Unholy, has since conquered hundreds of cities and towns and has established an extensive empire.

These monsters, whom the people of Wormwood call the Forces of Darkness, are worthy of the title. They shared with us tales of atrocities, massacres, blood sacrifices and torment that chilled one to the bone. Some stories told of thousands of human slaves chained to a life draining creature called the life force battery. This reminded me of the stories we had heard regarding the Vampire Kingdoms. How the undead treated humans like cattle, drawing on their life's blood. In this case, the creature fed and stored mystic energy. Energy that the monsters could summon and use to work their terrible magic. I think none of us slept well that star filled night, even under the watchful eyes of native protectors.

The Wormspeaker

The next afternoon, we paused in a valley surrounded by hills. In the distance a number of tree-like pillars broke the cloudless, blueish yellow sky. The wormspeaker summoned for us a meal of living worms and grubs that magically appeared out of the ground. Our new friends seemed to think them quite delicious. As I placed one of the squirming insects in my mouth, I remember thinking how amazed I was at what hunger can make a person do. I could not bring myself to eat the worms, but I'm glad to report that the grubs were surprisingly satisfying. These insects would be the our main food for the next six months. I never did get used to eating them, whether they were cooked, stewed or eaten fresh out of the ground. I came to prefer the vegetable tasting fibers collected from food caves.

Regrettably, I found the wormspeaker to be a disturbing character. Her mouth was filled with worm-like symbiotic organisms, which seemed a gruesome contrast to her strong, beautiful features. These worms give the sage special powers. For example, one enabled her to understand and speak every language and another to cast magic bolts of energy. Underneath her tattered robes, her body was encircled by several python-sized worms that served as mega-damage body armor. Whenever she spoke or ate, the worms inside the mouth wiggled around her tongue and stuck out past her lips. I tried to be courteous but I had difficulty looking at her or any wormspeaker when they spoke. I believe I mastered a technique in which I appeared to be looking in their direction while actually looking away. At least I hope I mastered this technique. I would hate to have offended this intelligent and kind woman or her fellow shamen.

The Crawling Tower

As we rested in that valley, I thought I had imagined one of the distant pillars change its position. A few minutes later I was certain. My observation alarmed our native guides. "Crawling



Tower!" exclaimed the knight. I don't know why those two words caused the hairs at the back of my neck to stand on end. I imagine it must have been the fear in our companion's eyes. The priest began praying as two of the freelancers scurried to the hilltop for a better look. In response to the priest's prayer, the ground beneath my feet began to swell. A moment later, a pair of small sandy colored domes grew out of the ground and we were ushered inside. Just as I was about to enter, the two freelancers knocked me to the ground and covered me with their bodies. An ominous shadow passed its gloom over us and disappeared. I looked up in time to catch a glimpse of a huge serpentine monster with a trio of riders chattering among themselves in a language I could not identify. Above the winged creatures were three similar dark shapes much higher in the sky.

We were fortunate they did not see us. Once inside the snug shelters, our protectors explained that the buildings on Wormwood are an appendage of the Living Planet. The dreaded Unholy and his minions have found ways to mutate and control aspects of Wormwood. The most terrifying is the crawling tower. These towers are ugly demon dwellings with claw-like appendages and leering, mouth-shaped openings. But unlike the many towers of other cities we would see, these buildings can move! This means an entire demon city could advance with its armies, providing transportation, food, shelter and all the resources a city can provide.

We would soon learn that everything on Wormwood, including its indigenous human populace, are mega-damage structures, which meant these encroaching towers were walking fortresses. I shouldn't say walking, because they do not sprout legs and detach from the ground. The crawling towers advance like a slow rolling ocean wave. The tower I had noticed was home for a small army of about a thousand demon warriors. The serpent riders or "sky riders," as they are called, were scouts sweeping the area for signs of the enemy. We were lucky that the one low flying unit of this reconnaissance squad didn't see us. Once inside the dome-shaped hut, we were virtually invisible to high fliers. We were even more fortunate that the crawling tower was moving east and not toward us.

Ghost Towns & Ruins

In countless isolated places dotting the face of Wormwood, battles rage. Each battle is a chapter in a larger saga of conquests, evil and survival. The more religious humans call this the time of Tribulation — the last great battle between good and evil. I

don't know if I agree, but I can understand their sense of being part of an apocalyptic climax.

Everywhere we went we saw signs of battle, preparations for war, or desolation. As we traversed the great flat, dusty expanse of Wormwood, we would come across battlegrounds soaked in blood and the debris of war. Frequently, we would pause for the priest and wormspeaker to bury the dead. Even this simple act, like so much on Wormwood, is very different. The hard hide of the Living Planet cannot be dug into with shovels or picks. The priest or wormspeaker must say a little prayer and open up a hole in which the bodies can be deposited. Then the hole seals itself shut like oozing wax. When it is completely closed, one cannot tell that the grave was ever there. It made me and Sir Thorpe somber. "I wonder," he asked, "how many of the bones of the dead we walk upon." I wondered too.

Even more eerie were the empty cities. Ghost towns of living buildings, but nobody to occupy them. These were the ruins of once thriving communities. What made the cities so spooky was that they were in perfect condition. Whatever damage they may have sustained in battle had been automatically restored by the Living Planet. Unknown to the planet was that the people were gone. The lucky inhabitants, we were told, had fled to the south where humans still ruled. But most were probably stolen from their homes and enslaved in the demon cities to the north.

The ghost towns were dangerous because they now served as havens for bandits, mercenaries, monsters and scavenging parasites. Stragglers from the demon armies also used these places to hide or rest. Most cities and many towns had food caves which also attracted wanderers and criminals. As if to punctuate this point, we suddenly found ourselves under attack.



An Encounter with the Forces of Darkness

We had entered a small town familiar to the wormspeaker to collect some vegetable fibers from a food cave. The knight and a freelancer advanced forward to investigate, only to encounter the enemy. Out of the cave crawled a pair of slobbering monsters called "Leaper" parasites. Two demonic humanoids rode on their backs like on a horse. One suddenly leaped 90 feet and snatched the freelancer in its giant mandible. Before I could scream, Sir Thorpe was engaged in combat at my side with a giant insect. A half dozen hopping, hog-sized monsters identified as "Tick" parasites had leaped down from the walls of the neighboring building. With the wave of his hand and whispered prayer from the priest, the ticks scurried away but our troubles were only starting. A dozen hulking soldiers from the army of darkness stood before us. All were monsters of one kind or another. The freelancer hung like a limp rag doll from the leaper's jaws. The knight of the Hospital was injured but had managed to rejoin our ranks. My friend and protector, Sir Thorpe, stepped in front of me, weapons drawn.

Suddenly a man dressed in blue and silver, appeared directly in front of us. He faced the enemy and flippantly said something like, "Mealtime's over boys. Let these people pass." One of the monsters growled the stranger's name. "Lazarus Vespers." His appearance actually seemed to please them and we all geared ourselves for a fight. Then the largest of the monsters pointed and squealed. I couldn't help myself and turned to look in the direction of the pointed finger. My heart dropped. There on one of the spires above and behind us stood another demon. He held a wicked looking battle axe in his right hand, a sword in the other. His eyes seemed to glow red and I could hear the rustles of his hooded cloak in the light breeze; that's how quiet things had suddenly gotten. Their leader I thought. We're surrounded! But this was not the case.

The monsters began to gasp the name of the frightening visage before us. Like a choir, their voices sang his name over and over again, "The Confessor." The brutes lowered their weapons and scuttled back into the cave and shadows from which they had emerged. The creature they called the Confessor jumped from his pedestal and came toward us. Sir Thorpe's muscles rippled with tension. Our priest also seemed frightened and readied himself for battle. However, the wormspeaker smiled, the worms in her mouth peeking out through her parted lips, and approached the creature. The knight rushed over to the fallen freelancer while the others greeted the one called Lazarus.

The axe wielding demon sheathed his weapons and clutched his face, removing the demonic-looking mask that concealed his handsome, human face. I first thought that his face was as hard as the mask he had worn. His eyes and manner were equally stern. I heard myself say thank you. He turned to me and his hardness seemed to melt into awkward embarrassment. "Your welcome." He muttered, "It's not safe here, we must leave."

Lazarus Vespers, by contrast, had warm eyes and a friendly manner. It was quickly apparent that he and the one called the Confessor were uncomfortable companions. Neither seemed particularly comfortable with the other. It seems the two had joined forces to protect a tiny village from the crawling tower we had seen. After the danger had passed, a wormspeaker at the village told them about "dimensional travelers from the world called Earth," and that we needed their assistance more than they. After a private discussion between themselves, Lazarus explained that he had to leave but that the Confessor would escort us into the Kingdom of Light.

Over the next five weeks we continued to travel on foot in a southwest direction. We would have several more brief skirmishes with the denizens of the evil empire, as well as an encounter with D-bee bandits and several nomadic tribes/bands. We also passed through several peasant communities. The people of these communities were dirty and tired. Their clothes were tattered, not from poverty, but from battle and a life of hard labor. Their eyes seemed dull and lifeless. Other than a few rare exceptions, these weary people seemed to have lost all hope. For whatever reasons, they chose to hang onto their homeland, but even I could tell they had no chance for survival when the crawling towers and demon armies would finally come to claim them.

We did encounter armed troops of high spirited freelancers, fighters and knights gathering to create new offenses and reclaim some of the ghost towns. We saw one wilderness town rejoice

when a legion of freelancers announced that they would protect their town from evil. For their sake, I prayed that this was not false bravado. Under the advisement of our escorts we did not linger among any of these people and made our camps under the stars. According to the Confessor and our knight, the towns were more likely targets of attack than our tiny group. Furthermore, there were concerns that the Forces of Darkness may have infiltrated their ranks with spies, assassins and metamorphed monsters. It was safer to avoid them and take our chances outdoors.



Key locations in and around the Kingdom of Light

We entered the domain of human occupation from the north-east. At first we passed one fortified town or legion of knights and freelancers after another. These ranged in size from 2000 to 10,000 people and were located about 20 to 50 miles (32 to 80 km) apart. We were eyed by many of the warriors, but none stopped us. Many recognized the Confessor and gave him his space. I did, on many occasions, hear some of the men curse his name or spit on the ground as we passed. I felt sorry for the man who I knew to be an honorable and courageous fighter. Priest Andrew had explained to us about the apok and that the Confessor was once one of the minions of darkness. I wondered what guilt and memories loomed behind the sparkling, brooding eyes of our bold apok. I found it difficult to picture this man, who risked his life for us many times, in the company of demons. As testament to his new life as an enemy to evil, he seemed to take the insults in his stride and acted as if he didn't see or hear a single remark.

Battle Star

I would say that the atmosphere of war and oppression began to fade as we approached a city called Battle Star. It is a fortified city filled with soldiers; among them the Knights of the Order of the Temple and the Knights of the Order of the Hospital. A large outer wall, grown from the ground that is Wormwood, encircles the entire city. At each of the five main gates is a guard tower. Through the outer wall and into the city are many interior walls and fortifications. As we weaved our way through the winding streets and passed many walls, I felt as if we were making our way through a maze. The knight explained its design was to confuse and delay the enemy. For the first time in weeks the smells of blood, smoke and decay were nowhere to be found. The laughter of children and the singing of maidens could be heard carried on the warm afternoon breeze.

Battle Star is of strategic significance because five battle saint orbs are located in the five small hills just beyond each of the city gates. The hills/orbs are located at each corner of the city

with a fifth at the northern point, creating a star-shaped configuration and giving the city its name.

I'd estimate there are about two thousand knights, half of which are the plate armor-clad knights of the Temple, as well as six thousand freelance warriors. Among the civilian population of about ten thousand are adventurers, mercenaries, monks and the occasional practitioner of magic. I saw only a half dozen D-bees at this location but imagine there were others. It is clearly a military town, but despite their readiness for war, the soldiers and people alike seemed cheerful and in good spirit. Our freelance companions departed our company at Battle Star.

The Northern Mountains

From Battle Star and Stone Haven, one can see the looming shapes of the expansive North Mountains. These mountains draw the line between the Kingdom of Light and the Unholy's Empire. They are part of the living Wormwood and said to be dominated by monsters and demons. According to Andrew, the priest, these mountains were created by Wormwood 1000 years ago in answer to prayers to create a natural defensive barrier between the legions of monsters and the last refuge of humankind.

Stone Haven

A day and a half journey beyond Battle Star and through a cluster of hills are several ancient communities collectively known as Stone Haven. They get their name from the fact that there are several walls and buildings made from stone imported from other dimensions. I hadn't realized it, but I had quickly gotten so used to the alien environment of Wormwood and its pink, pale red, tan and brown landscape and buildings, that seeing familiar stone buildings seemed alien and out of place.

Stone Wall

We caught a glimpse of the walls of Stone Wall from a distance on our way to Kravenville. Stone Wall is a small peasant town of 1200 surrounded by a cluster of a dozen tiny villages (4D6 × 10 people). A massive crescent shaped wall of stone 60 feet thick (18.3 m) and 30 feet tall (9 m) stretches in a semi-circle for eleven miles (17.7 km). It was created nearly a thousand years ago to protect the people from demonic invaders. Exactly who is responsible for its construction has been forgotten.

As a fortification, it has only been marginally effective. The demon hordes have overrun this region on a few occasions, leaping, climbing or flying over the wall. A large stone fort once crowned a hill near the town of Stone Wall, but it was smashed into rubble by the Forces of Darkness 800 years ago.

The town of Stone Wall is located near the old hill fort and the stones from the old fort were used to build the six foot tall walls and a handful of buildings. The rest of the town is composed of living buildings.

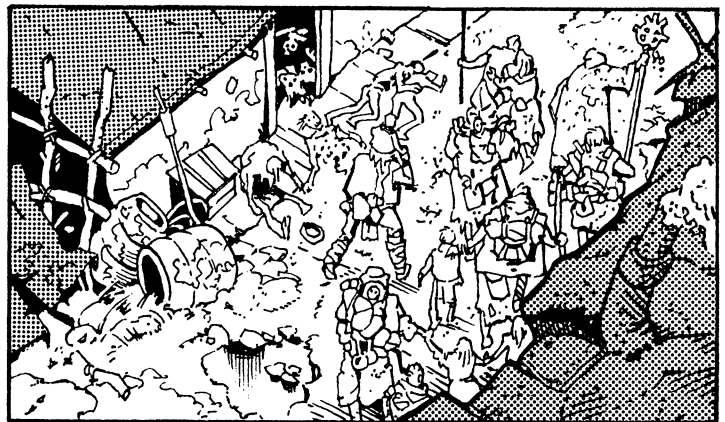
Kravenville

Kravenville is a city of about 11,000 people. Unlike Battle Star, only a third of its population are soldiers and most of them are freelancers. The atmosphere is reasonably friendly, but it is evident that the people worry about attacks by the enemy and are leery of strangers.

The main portion of the city is made entirely of stone imported from other dimensions. The southern portion of Kravenville has natural Wormwood living buildings, but less than 30% of the population lives there. 320 years ago, Thomas Kraven, a temporal wizard and founder of this community, decided to abandon the old bio-structures and create a city of stone. He believed, as do others, that a stone city would be safer because the dark priests and evil wormspeakers could not breach its walls with their magic. Over the centuries before and after, others have built towers, walls and the occasional building made of stone or wood, but only Thomas Kraven was ambitious enough to build an entire town of stone. I counted 114 stone buildings and 19 made of wood. Most are two and three story buildings. There are also several courtyards enclosed by stone walls, 10 to 20 feet tall (3 to 6 m). It is clearly an old community but in a good state of repair.

The largest building is the four-story castle and its three six-story tall towers found on the Kraven Estate. The estate is also the home of a reasonably large community of temporal magicians. The two leaders are the Kraven brothers, Luke and David (8th and 12th level respectively). There are also five temporal wizards ranging from 3rd to 6th level, nine temporal warriors ranging from 3rd to 9th level and six young apprentices. Apparently, the brothers are friends of the Confessor and we were invited to dine with them one evening at the castle.

It was a pleasant affair and one of the few times that we ate food that I could recognize: pheasant, potatoes, beets, an exotic salad, fruit and wine. It was wonderful. The Confessor asked if they could rift us back home, but they declined, noting that the Cathedral had need of their energies for a campaign the very next morning. However, they agreed with our friend, the priest Andrew, that we should meet with a leader of the Cathedral and make arrangements with them to get us home. We spent a week here to rest.



Stone Finger

Stone Finger is a peasant town we spent a night at. In the center of town is a 100 foot (30.5 m) stone tower encircled by a 20 foot tall wall of perfectly smooth stone that resembled concrete. This is the "finger" that the town gets its name from. The tower and wall was erected by the town's true protector, a young, female dragon (7th level thunder lizard) known as Simii.

The town has about 1600 people, mostly human (70%). A small garrison of a few hundred freelancers represents its military. However, counted among its residents are a dozen monks,

two wormspeakers, and a Holy Terror named Max. We encountered Max on our way past the Forest of pillars. Holy Terrors reminded me of giant robots. He was friendly and cheerful and the last friend of the Confessor we would meet on this journey.

The Forest of Pillars

As we headed due south, to our left, we passed the Forest of Pillars. Craggy pillars with blunt tipped, spiny branches can be found in little clusters all over the planet. They seem to serve as shade trees and natural barriers. We had encounters with what I had thought to be large clusters of several hundred pillars in the wasteland, as well as the occasional lone, giant sentinel, but this was a massive forest! Tens of thousands of pillars, some two hundred feet tall, stretched for hundreds of miles, defining the eastern border of the Kingdom of Light.

We were told that families of peasants could be found living scattered throughout the forest. We were also warned that it was a haven for outlaws, spies, rogue demons, wild animals and roving parasites.

Resin Mountains

In the distance to the west, highlighted by a pale yellow and blue sky, we could see the resin mountains. Wild parasites, skelter bats, feathered serpents, wild animals (from other dimensions) and bandits also make their homes in these mountains. The resin mountains are not part of the Living Planet, but created by a mucus secreted by the planet. The resin is an all purpose material used for building everything from furniture to chain link armor. At the foot of the mountain are two mining towns known as The Hammer and The Chisel. Both towns also have a score of resident priests of the Cathedral with a population of roughly 9000 humans and 1000 D-bees.

Hammer Town cuts and digs chunks of resin out of the mountain. Although they also control one of the vents that releases liquid resin, which is cast and molded like molten ore, they are known mainly as manufacturers of raw material and plate armor.

Chisel Town is a manufacturer of finished goods, ornate armor, weapons and statuary. Many artisans, craftsmen, toolers, casters, mold makers and weapon designers live and work in this town. One of their chief products is lightweight resin chain mail.

A garrison of 244 knights of the Temple are posted between both towns for their protection. The knights make daily patrols in and around the towns. Additionally, troops and caravans visit regularly from The Golden City and the Cathedral Stronghold. The Hammer and Chisel enjoy the protection and respect from the Cathedral in exchange for weapons, armor and materials.

Beyond the mountains are hills populated by numerous tiny clans and wilderness families. A typical community seldom exceeds 60 (1D6 × 10 individuals). Some of these tough wilderness folk are said to be hunters and scouts who prey on the mountain animals and wild parasites. Beyond the hills is another large expanse of flat lands dotted with the occasional village. Even from the resin mountains one can still see the shadowy shapes of **The Northern Mountains**. A constant reminder of just how close the enemy is.



The Kingdom of Light

There are three major cities in the Kingdom of Light: True Heart, The Golden City and the Cathedral Stronghold. However, there are several secondary cities and scores of villages scattered throughout the territory. We also saw many troops of knights and freelancers on practice maneuvers. If I had to guess, I'd say that there are five to ten million people living within the territory known as the Kingdom of Light.

The Greenery

The first of the secondary cities we had the pleasure to visit was a wonderful place known as The Greenery. This is a handsome city with approximately 34,000 humans located on the northernmost edge of the Kingdom of Light. Its claim to fame is its extra-terrestrial gardens. The elder counsel had dirt and plants collected and imported from Earth and other worlds to create 100 acres of green paradise. I cannot tell you how homesick it made me to see these wonderful trees, plants and flowers. After some of the horrors we had experienced I fell to my knees on a tiny hill of grass and blossoming clover and wept. I think a tear even came to the eyes of my dear Sir Thorpe.

The people of the Greenery are warm and kind. The contrast to the demon swollen hills of the Unholy's evil empire was like night and day. It was so pleasant that one could almost forget the horrors that laid in wait just beyond the northern mountains. We were invited to stay as long as we liked and I was allowed to roll in the grass, pick fruit and walk through the trees as long and as often as I desired. My escorts were kind enough to let me stay and enjoy the gardens for two extra days before we pressed on.

Monks

While visiting this happy, green oasis, I had the opportunity to talk with a number of warrior monks from the neighboring village of York Town. I found them to be a simple and congenial group of people with kind and noble hearts. They have dedicated their lives to helping and protecting the weak and the poor. I found it curious however, that this group of men and women committed to peace were warriors. The monks were glad to debate philosophy and life style, providing me with many pleasant hours of conversation. In my opinion, these monks are a paradox born from the tumultuous setting on Wormwood. They must live with war and death every day and prepare themselves for combat and demonic horrors. They dream of peace, brotherhood, justice and unity, yet the reality is a very different thing.

I fear that the monks are so impassioned by their commitment to justice and their warrior ways that they look for trouble everywhere. The monks seem to have a criticism for every political group on the planet. They also have an inbred distrust and contempt for most authorities, especially the Cathedral. I lost count of how many stories I heard about the evils and unfair

practices of the Cathedral and the knights of the Temple. Perhaps my viewpoint is prejudiced, but all I could think was, "These organizations may have their flaws, but they are saints compared to the Coalition States."

From what little I had seen, the priests of light and the knights of the Cathedral are mostly good people caught in a bad situation. People are people. None of us are perfect, these monks included. I just found it amusing that these people of peace seemed to try to resolve conflicts through shouting and combat, rather than genuine negotiation and openness. Still, I found the monks refreshingly outspoken, courageous, pleasant and well intentioned. Of course, this has been true of many of the people of Wormwood, proving that adversity can bring out the best in people (and the worst as we had already witnessed).

During my conversations with several monks at the Greenery, I was warned about High Priest Matthew Pentecost, the uncle of the heroic, young Dorey Pentecost of the Knights of the Order of the Hospital. Unlike his nephew, High Priest Pentecost is a man of questionable character. As fate would have it, we would have an unpleasant meeting with this man.

York Town

Although we did not stop to visit, we did pass by York Town. Like many of the smaller communities, there were fewer than a thousand inhabitants. Only a dozen living buildings jutted up from the ground. The largest I am told is the Monastery of Inner Strength, the home of nearly 300 warrior monks and their students.

True Heart

It was here that we lost Andrew, our priest. He had important information to deliver to his superiors, so he travelled ahead to Cathedral Stronghold, while we lingered at True Heart. I had grown to really like Andrew. He had a big heart and a sincerity about him that made him a delightful travelling companion. He tried not to judge people and even came to accept the Confessor. I looked forward to rejoining him and meeting his superiors in a few days, but for now I had a new city to explore.

The city of True Heart was the largest city we had visited yet. I am told that nearly 100,000 people call it home. There is also a small monastery, armies of freelancers and several communities established around the city, making the population of the metropolitan area closer to 160,000.

I was immediately struck by the frequent roar of motor engines. True Heart is the home of the Order of the Knights of the Hospital with a resident force of 8000 troops. These knights love motorcycles! Other than parasites and animals imported from other dimensions, the Living Planet doesn't provide any indigenous animal life that can be ridden like a horse. Somewhere, somehow, the dimension visiting people of Wormwood discovered Earth and motorcycles. Consequently, we saw thousands of them. Some were ancient relics that would have fetched a fortune back on Earth. Others were modified or souped up versions. Most had been converted by techno-wizards to use psychic or magic energy rather than liquid fuel. We also saw several A.T.V. speedsters and other hover cycles and land rovers. Several knights and freelancers we saw carried Coalition, Northern Gun and Triax vibro-weapons and energy guns, as well as the Splugorth/Kittani-style plasma lances, axes and blades.

The knights are also fond of the traditional, techno-wizard modified, black powder pistol, rifle and shotgun. These guns are the ancient, pre-Rifts, one shot weapons used during the time of the American Empire's Revolutionary War. The mystic modifications transform them into powerful one or two shot mega-damage weapons. For example: The average old-style pistol has a range of 200 feet and inflicts considerable damage (61 m; 4D6 M.D.) from a single blast. The skilled knights can reload (sometimes magically) in a few seconds (one melee action/attack). The rifles can fire 700 feet (213 m) and also inflict great damage (6D6 M.D.; shotguns have the range of a pistol but inflict 1D4 × 10 M.D.). I'd estimate that half the knights of the Hospital and a third of the freelancers carried one or more of these archaic weapons. Of the thousands of knights of the Temple we had seen, not one carried a black powder weapon. I suspect it has something to do with status within the social class.

The Hospitallers, as they are often called, are a sort of "blue-collar" knight. The knights of the Temple come from noble heritage. Many are aristocrats who can trace their family's service to the Cathedral a thousand years or beyond. For them, becoming a knight of the Temple is a tradition and a matter of family honor and status. By contrast, the Hospitallers tend to have a more recent and commonplace origin. Although many of the knights of the Hospital also come from generations of knights, at least half have risen through the ranks to earn their place as noble knights. Most don't have a speck of noble blood in their veins. The Hospitallers don't limit their membership to noble families. They accept all people from all walks of life provided that they live by the code of the Hospitallers. Many have taken an oath of poverty to avoid the temptations and trappings that they feel plagues the more arrogant knights of the Temple.



Personally, I cannot say that I saw enough of either order of knights to make a fair and unbiased assessment. I can report that the young Hospitaller who led us from the northern wastelands was a humble and gentle man. He seemed to always put our safety before his own and was extremely polite. He and Sir Thorpe got along famously. The other knights of the Hospital we encountered also seemed to be sincerely concerned about the welfare of others, regardless of their social class. I know this has made the Hospitallers the favorites of the average citizen and especially the lower class.

Sir Thorpe tells me that code of ethics by which these knights live is very similar to his own code as a cyber-knight. The one thing that distressed Sir Thorpe was the knights' commitments to the Cathedral.

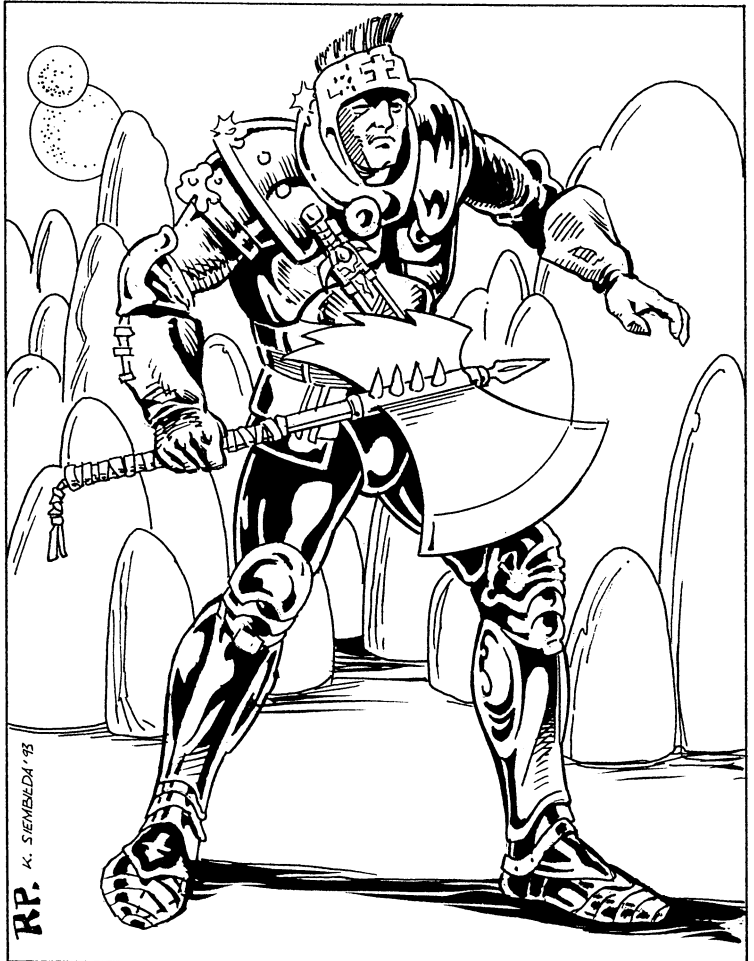
Apparently, the order of the Hospital and the knights of the Temple were created by the powerful religious organization known as the Cathedral over one thousand years ago. The knights are sworn to serve the church before all others. A promise that troubled our noble Hospitaller. He confessed that he and some of his fellow knights did not agree with all the practices and edicts of the church. Over the last 50 years, there had been a number of clashes between the high priests of the Cathedral and the leaders of the knights. With increasing frequency, noble and conscientious Hospitallers who dared to question or defy church leaders were discharged from their duties and forced to continue their fight for freedom as freelance warriors. Our Hospitaller also pointed to the Cathedral's disdain for the apok, monks and non-human freelancers. Yet, his own experiences had proven these people to be courageous and honorable warriors. Why, even "the Confessor," he remarked nervously, had proven to be a trustworthy ally, yet the man is branded as a heretic and a dangerous rogue by the Cathedral.

My sweet, Sir Thorpe tried to comfort the lad the best he could. He told him that a person must do what he knows is right, regardless of the consequences. Regrettably, sometimes it is difficult to know what that right thing is. All he could hope to do was try to be true to his heart. My cyber-knight then shared tales of his own adventures and tough decisions. He spoke of his mentor, the legendary Lord Coake, and the many failures and triumphs he had endured on two worlds. Finally, he offered the Hospitaller a bit of advice that had served him well. "Mistakes will be made. We are only human. But a mistake is not a bad thing if we learn from it and become a better person." Sound advice from a good man who has learned from his mistakes and become a wonderful person.

Cathedral Stronghold

The city known as the Cathedral Stronghold is the largest and most powerful city in the Kingdom of Light. Nearly half a million people fill its streets. A hundred thousand freelancers are camped around the city and 10,000 knights of the Temple call this place home. It is also the seat of power for the Cathedral. In many regards, it reminded me of stories about fairy-tale kingdoms with their legions of knights, gleaming palaces and much pomp and ceremony. Like True Heart, it is a bustling metropolis with a variety of different people and social classes (and far fewer motorcycles).

The campus of the Cathedral covers a two mile radius. Its lavish courtyards are filled with fountains, statues and the occa-



sional imported tree. In the center of the main courtyard is a plain, undecorated hill. Slumbering inside that hill is one of the two battle saints that protects the city. I have never seen a battle saint, but I am told it is fundamentally a giant, 100 foot (31 m), mystic robot of incredible power.

In front of the Cathedral palace is a giant parade grounds where the knights march and display their training. It is also the site for tournaments, festivals, prayers and speech making. I found the city to be impressive and pleasant. However, the Cathedral reminded me a bit of the Coalition States. Like the CS, they were well intentioned and had done a great deal of good. I don't think anybody could dispute that it was the Cathedral and their inspirational knights, both of the Temple and of the Hospital, who kept all of Wormwood from falling into the clutches of the Unholy. Still, from the things I had seen (and was yet to see), I saw the seeds of corruption and callousness taking root.

The Knights of the Temple

I don't mean to sound judgmental, and I must state for the record that my views have been colored by my association with supposed "outlaws" all my life. In fact, I am often regarded as one myself, simply because I speak my mind. This having been said, I found the Knights of the Temple to be generally unpleasant. Many had a haughty attitude and lacked the giving spirit of the monks or the Hospitallers. As a matter of fact, the knights of the Temple look down upon their fellow order of knights and the impudent monks. And therein lies my problem with the Knights of the Order of the Temple. Many of these knights seem concerned with social status, appearance, conformity, power

and glory. They seek to maintain the status-quo and do not work for the betterment of “all” people. They often seem concerned only with material wealth and the power and the glory of the Cathedral and their Order of the Temple. Those of a lesser class are looked down upon as inferiors.

Sir Thorpe, particularly after his many talks with our young Hospitaller, could not help but notice how closed the knights of the Temple were to outsiders. Most refused to discuss with him anything more than the most superficial of subjects. Few were willing to talk about their ethics or code of conduct. Most dismissed him as a prying visitor who had no business in their affairs. They did treat us with reasonable courtesy, but we were always left with the feeling that we were tolerated rather than welcomed.

I may be overreacting from years of conflict with the Coalition States and others who use the claim of “superiority” to subjugate and oppress those less empowered than they. Still, I found many of these knights to be strutting peacocks with their noses in the air and their minds in the gutter. However, I shared a considerable amount of time with members of the Hospitallers and fighting monks and very little with the Templars, so my assessment may be entirely unfair.

In the knights’ defense, I must say that we saw many of them in action against the Forces of Darkness and they were fearless. I am told that the Templars are among the best fighters on the planet and some of their champions are without equal. They are definitely a force to be reckoned with and they do help a lot of good people.

Once in the wastelands, we saw a dozen battle weary knights of the Temple enter a peasant town of frightened people lost to despair. As they entered the town, the knights pumped up their chests and proudly marched down the main avenue with what must have been their last ounce of strength. I know it was my imagination, but even their dust covered and battered armor seemed to suddenly shine a bit more. Their little procession brought people to their feet and cheers from those who had rushed to their windows. The very presence of these twelve knights brought the peasants hope. We followed from a distance and watched. The knights of the Temple maintained their regal and superior attitude, but were not mean or condescending. They were gracious and kind. I overheard their commander offer to stay for a while to keep the townsfolk safe from roaming monsters recently loosed in the area.

I realized then that the knights of the Temple were the symbol of strength and hope. And that many were noble and good. However, seeing them in their own environment, surrounded by the superficial glitter of the city, their shining armor seems tarnished and their strength of spirit buried beneath arrogance. It seemed ironic to me that the presence of the Cathedral, the very force that created them, was also the power that restrained and diminished them.

High Priest Matthew Pentecost

I had the pleasure of meeting the charming Dorsey Pentecost, a captain in the order of the knights of the Hospital, while visiting True Heart. I was expecting his uncle, a distinguished high priest of the Cathedral, to share some of his nephew’s character. I was sadly mistaken. The Confessor, condemned by the Cathedral as a heretic, was not allowed on Cathedral grounds and was waiting for us back at our boarding house. We were on our own.

After waiting for an audience with High Priest Pentecost for over an hour, we were ushered into his private meeting chambers. The room was a massive, domed chamber with 50 foot (15 m) tall, vaulted ceilings. My spirits soared when I saw Andrew, the priest who had helped lead us to the Kingdom of Light, as he entered with High Priest Pentecost and stood next to his throne. However, we quickly realized that Andrew would be of little help to us. We were not allowed to speak to him as he stood like a wooden soldier, frozen next to his superior. He seemed sad and we later speculated among ourselves that he had been chastised for some crime or failure. Perhaps his association with the heretic, the Confessor. We would never know.

Matthew Pentecost reeked of arrogance. He carried himself with the air of a king and viewed us with a look of disdain. Before he opened his mouth I knew we would get no help from this man.

“I understand that Andrew here,” he motioned toward our old companion, “suggested that the Cathedral may be able to help you in your ... ah ... predicament. I regret that is not possible. Our resources are entirely committed. The war, you know.”

He rustled in his seat and eyed us carefully. “So tell me. How is it that you came to visit our world and why did your journey start in the land of our enemy?”

This was the beginning of four hours of interrogation. Poor Andrew just stood there silently. His sad eyes pleading with us to forgive this atrocity. It was clear from High Priest Pentecost’s questions that Andrew had given him a complete and accurate report. We could add little to what he already knew. Matthew Pentecost was a man who liked to exercise his power over others. I have seen his kind a thousand times. Little tyrants who need to justify their own worth by humiliating or intimidating others. To be honest, I was surprised we were allowed to leave. The monks had warned me about this man and I now shared a bit of their contempt for the Cathedral.

When we returned to the boarding house, we packed our bags and found the Confessor. He apologized for any trouble his presence may have caused us and agreed that our stay in this town should be a short one. We left that night for Golden City.

The Golden City

The Golden City lives up to its name. It is a sparkling clean place inhabited by clean and sparkling people. The wormspeakers and priests can, to some degree, control and adjust the color of the buildings. The colors possible include several shades of pastel yellow, sand, tan, a golden wheat color, beige, light brown and even a pinkish salmon color. Most of the buildings in the Golden City are shades of yellow and golden wheat. To accentuate this even further, real gold leaf and paint from other dimensions has been used to highlight and decorate its gleaming towers and spires.

This city is a thriving metropolis that seems oblivious to the world outside its boundaries (or so they pretend). There are many theaters, dance halls, taverns, merchant shops and places for social gatherings. A small park near the square has exotic trees and flowering plants — a miniature version of the lovely Greenery we had visited a few weeks earlier. The streets were free of litter and the golden towers shined in the sunlight.

The people were cheerful and friendly. Clean, smiling faces greeted us at every turn. The style of dress was more ornate

with a definite eye for fashion. There were feather plumed hats, long dresses, leather jackets, brightly colored cloaks, silk and a variety of material imported from other worlds. Some of the women positively dripped with gold and jewelry. Even the knights we saw wore highly polished and decorative armor. I felt like a peasant in my traveling clothes, even though I had washed them only the day before. All this beauty and life, and yet something bothered me about this sparkling city with its sparkling people. What was there not to like, I muttered to myself aloud. "The people," responded Sir Thorpe and the Confessor in unplanned unison. Then it dawned on me. All those clean, smiling faces with their glistening white teeth and impeccable clothing. This was a rich city. A city for the elite of Wormwood's high society — richer and more elaborate, in some ways, than the Cathedral Stronghold. This was the home of the noble families, the retired knights of the Temple, champions of renown, aging priests, techno-wizards, and family members, young and old, of Wormwood's aristocracy.

There was nothing particularly wrong with this, it was just a striking contrast to the rest of the world we had seen. It even made me sad, because it seemed that these people were trying desperately to make the terrible world outside disappear and the war to be forgotten. Yet, beneath their happy faces, they had to be just as frightened as the peasants they excluded from their city.

I'd guess the Golden City harbored around 100,000 people. A garrison of 2000 knights of the Temple, 500 Hospitallers, 5000 freelancers, a battle saint and a battle orb, were all part of the city defenses located at the edge of town.

We had come to the Golden City to find the temporal wizard we had dined with at Kravenville. The Confessor found him in a few hours, so we had little time to explore the city in more detail. The Confessor had hoped the wizard would intercede with the Cathedral on our behalf. He frowned and said this would be a waste of time. High Priest Pentecost was second to the Supreme Spiritual Leader and such a confrontation would cause him too much grief. Instead he offered an alternative solution. He would teleport us to the independent city of Worldgate where he was confident an associate would gladly rift us home.

Sir Thorpe asked what this would cost us, since opening a dimensional rift was no easy task. The temporal wizard flashed us a wicked looking smile and said, "When you see Worldgate you'll understand. Besides, my friend is jealous that I spent an evening with Miss Tarn. I did not realize I sat in such celebrated company. My friend has taught me otherwise." With those words he lifted up a copy of an NGR edition of one of my books. I nearly fainted.

Worldgate

The Gateway to a Hundred Worlds

We arrived at Worldgate in a flash. Unlike our eventful rifting to Wormwood, there is no sensation of travel or disorientation. One moment we were standing in the parlor of the temporal wizard, watching him weave his magic, and a second later we were standing in the busy streets of Worldgate.

Our host had "popped" us in at the infamous street bazaar on the east end of the city. He was right. The moment I saw Worldgate I understood why getting us home would not be a

problem. It was a dimensional trade center with rifts connected to many different worlds. Considering all the items we had seen from Earth, it would be a simple matter to get us home. I think Worldgate reminded me too much of the Chi-Town burbs and dimensional bazaars I have visited in the past. They always have a multitude of strange odors and are very loud. After several months of relative peace and pleasantness, this noisy, bustling city banged inside my head like a rock thrown into a tin drum.

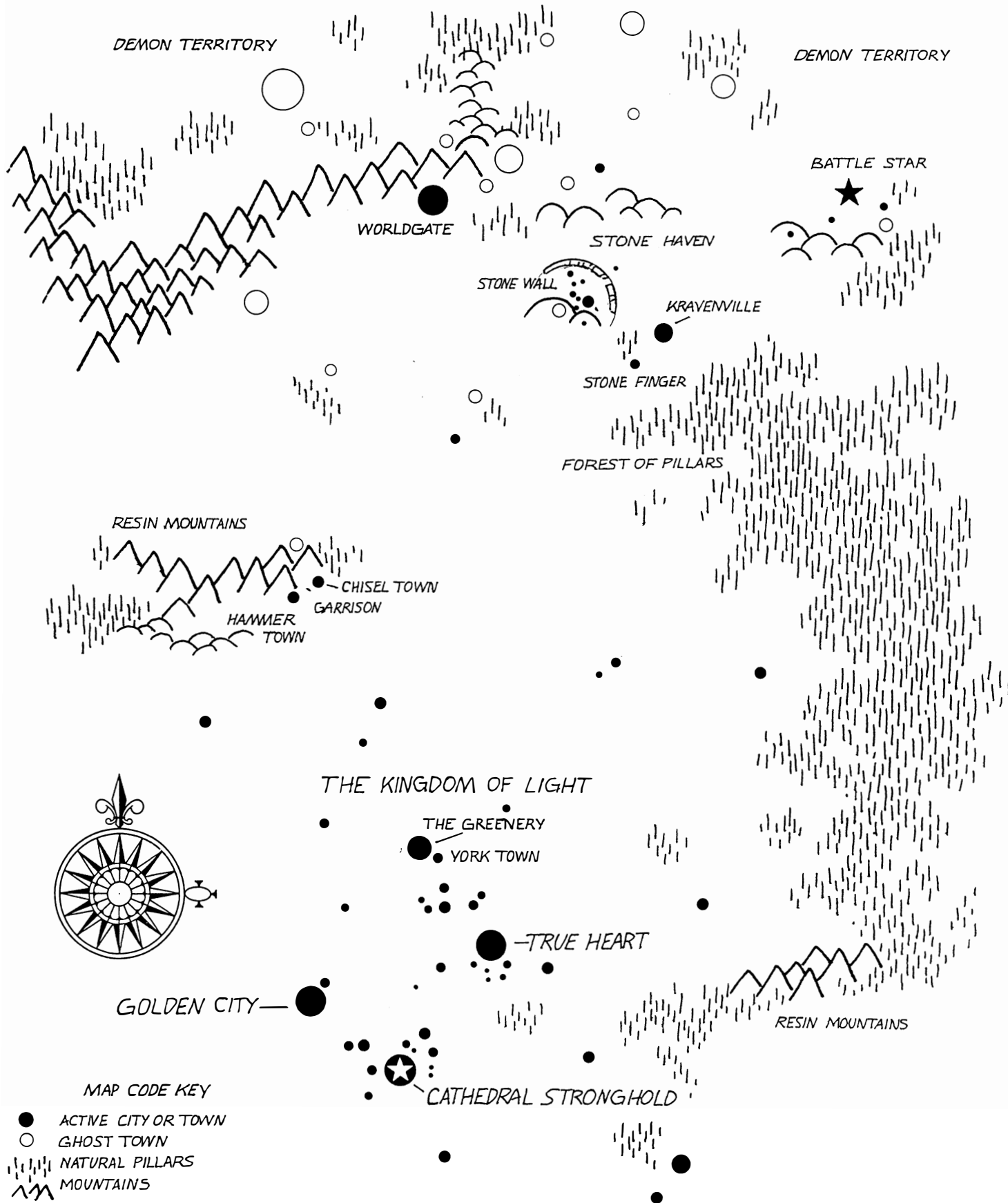
Worldgate was another sharp contrast to the usual on Wormwood. Merchants were everywhere. Half the population was inhuman and the oily fuel smells of modern civilization mingled with the exotic aromas of alien smells. A gang of freelance warriors roared down the street on motorcycles and a suit of power armor swished over our heads. A sunaj assassin stood in the doorway of a tavern. A morphworm, transformed into a beautiful woman to entice a passerby and a pair of lizard men squabbled over who had the right to buy some last extra-dimensional trinket.

Worldgate is the last of the powerful free cities. Within its walls are a quarter of a million residents, with another 100,000 visitors at any given time (50% D-Bees, 25% supernatural beings and creatures of magic, and 25% human). **King Luke Shrombek** is the benevolent ruler, a human shifter (14th level, unprincipled alignment). The Ruling Council (partners) includes Ki El, the Temporal Raider (10th level, anarchist); Robert Pastworth, a human temporal wizard (6th level, anarchist and Ki El's student); Hinderfruit the Morphworm; Badweather, a sowki (8th level, aberrant evil), and Lashara Annthar (11th level techno-wizard; female, unprincipled, and human).

The Council and most inhabitants dislike and ignore the Cathedral and live as they please. Like most dimensional freeports, they have questionable ethics and deal as freely with non-humans as they do the Champions of Light. The Confessor assured me that although Worldgate seems to welcome the minions of darkness and occasionally engages in trade with the Forces of Darkness, this is really just a ruse used to plant spies within the monsters' community, keep tabs on them and secretly undermine their operations. I was honored that he trusted me with this delicate information.

Of course, the Cathedral dislikes Worldgate and warns its people to stay away from it. They believe the rulers of Worldgate are monsters in league with the Unholy and have even considered military action against them, but have thought better of it. I also suspect that Worldgate threatens the Cathedral's view of the world and may be seen by some as a threat to their quest for power. I had heard Worldgate mentioned during our visit at Stone Haven. Certainly those people regarded the city with fear and suspected it of every evil and decadence imaginable. Furthermore it is located on the edge of the Northern Mountains that separate humankind from the Unholy's evil empire. I would think that it is a place to be avoided by the citizens of most god-fearing communities.

I guess I should not have been surprised that the "gateway to a hundred worlds," of which my homeworld was one of the most popular, would be familiar with my writing, but I was floored. It turned out that the director of the Earth rift was an avid fan of Earth human culture and politics. As a result, he had collected many of my writings and was a big fan. Our price of passage to home was autographing all of his books with a



DEMON TERRITORY

DEMON TERRITORY

BATTLE STAR

WORLDGATE

STONE HAVEN

STONE WALL

KRAVENVILLE

STONE FINGER

FOREST OF PILLARS

RESIN MOUNTAINS

CHISEL TOWN

GARRISON

HAMMER TOWN

THE KINGDOM OF LIGHT

THE GREENERY

YORK TOWN

TRUE HEART

GOLDEN CITY

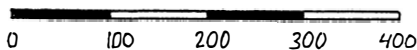
RESIN MOUNTAINS

CATHEDRAL STRONGHOLD

MAP CODE KEY

- ACTIVE CITY OR TOWN
- GHOST TOWN
- ||||| NATURAL PILLARS
- ▲ MOUNTAINS

100 MILES/160KM PER HALF INCH



personal message for each (which he dictated). His current rift was linked to Europe and the closest he could get us to home was enchanted England. It was close enough and we accepted. Besides, I had always wanted to visit England and Europe. We would have to wait five more weeks before we could leave, so the Confessor left to pursue more pressing matters. During our stay at Worldgate, we met the ruling body and many officials. It was ridiculous how many ... dare I say it ... “aliens” wanted to meet with us to talk about life on Earth and my adventures. I suspect that we could have left for Earth that afternoon except we were required to meet with so many people. I also suspect that our little benefactor made a handsome sum and earned many favors by using my celebrity. Still, it was a small price to pay to get home.

Some Final Thoughts

I hate to say it, but after my visit to Wormwood, I have a greater understanding of the fears that drive the Coalition States. I have seen a world besieged by monsters. It is a planet with people not unlike our own, enslaved by demonic, supernatural beings and bloodthirsty D-bees with no regard for life. Some are hate filled, sadistic beasts who live to punish and hurt others because they like to do so. Others are fiends who raise humans like cattle and feed on their bones. It is a battleground where humans and D-bees alike fight for the tiniest crumbs of freedom and happiness. It terrifies me, as it must the human supremacists of the Coalition, to think that the Earth could become like Wormwood. We must never let down our guard and ignore the dangers that the world of the supernatural represents. Every night since my return, I pray that my visit to the Living Planet is not a glimpse of the horror that may become our own future.

All this having been said, I must still condemn the Coalition States. They are so blinded by their fears and their own poorly disguised quests for power, that they attack and destroy all who are different.

I must condemn the Coalition’s indiscriminate slaughter of D-bees, the innocent with the evil. I watch in horror their campaigns of genocide in the name of humanity. Not all non-humans are evil. Many are much more like us than many people are willing to believe.

One of the other things I glimpsed on Wormwood is humankind’s ability to become the very monsters we loathe and fear. Traitorous villains who adapt to an atmosphere of hate, fear and brutality. Human beasts willing to enslave and kill — justified by their own twisted views of survival, superiority and the quest for power.

This warning goes not just to the Coalition States, but to the Federation of Magic, Lazlo, and all the people of the world. We cannot let ourselves be blinded by hate and fear. We cannot let ourselves believe that we have the right to control, enslave or torment any intelligent being, no matter how alien he may be. I have seen many practitioners of magic summon and enslave supernatural beings or force D-bees to do their bidding. I have seen cruel masters beat their chattel or sacrifice their less-than-human lives on selfish ventures. On Wormwood, I have seen humans join the Forces of Darkness to profit on the blood of their own people. I have seen the hopelessness in the eyes of the children and the horror etched in the faces of their parents.

Pandora’s box has been opened and the Earth has been transformed by it. If Worldgate is the gateway to a hundred worlds, then the Earth must be the gateway to 10,000. We must learn to find peace and happiness on this strange, new Earth of ours. But more than anything else, we must learn to cherish that which makes us human. We must steal away those good attributes, our zest for life, our need for freedom and our search for knowledge. The curious mind, the compassionate heart, friendship, love, and joy and all the rest must be kept alive and nourished. To do otherwise is to become the monsters we so fear.

Erin Tarn

Wormwood

The planet known as Wormwood is located in a different dimension than Rifts Earth. Whether this is a parallel dimension similar to our own or something completely different is not known. Wormwood does share a few things in common with Rifts Earth. It was once populated entirely by humans, magic is real, and supernatural monsters have invaded the world via dimensional rifts.

There are also some extremely striking differences. Most natives of Wormwood (humans) do not have psionic abilities. Science and technology have given way to the pursuit of magic and spiritualism. There are no ley lines, but the entire planet seems to generate mystic energy. Furthermore, the planet itself defies the laws of nature. It has no apparent water, vegetation, insects or wildlife and it is alive!

The Secrets of Wormwood, The Living Planet

In many ways Wormwood is an enigma even to its inhabitants. Any psychic visiting Wormwood will immediately sense something strange about this world. Trying psychometry/object read on the rock-like formations, spiralling towers and crystals will reveal that they are not inanimate objects but a *living* part of the planet! Since they are alive, nothing more can be learned through object read (the same is true of angel hair, blood stones and symbiotes).

The planet is a massive living organism of unknown origin! Most visiting scientists, scholars and practitioners of magic versed in the mysteries of the Megaverse, have concluded that Wormwood is an artificial world. In this dimension (heck, in any dimension), it represents the pinnacle of terraforming — the creation of a habitable world for space colonization. Actually, Wormwood goes far beyond the concept of transforming an uninhabitable world into an environment capable of supporting life. As far as anybody can tell, the very planet itself was created and designed to *grow* into a suitable habitat for human beings.

Whether Wormwood is the result of an unknown super-science or magic is unknown. That it was designed by human or human-like beings is almost a certainty. Whoever was responsible and however they accomplished its creation, Wormwood is a marvel. The only other planet suspected of being a living being is the legendary Eylor, but it is unlikely that the two are related in any way and exist in two different dimensions (see **Rifts World Book 2: Atlantis** for more about Eylor).

The Ultimate, All-Purpose, Self-Generating Environment

The planet, Wormwood, is a living organism. The planet is about half the size of Earth. There are no trees, grass, flowering plants, insects, or wildlife. Any soil, rocks or tiny patches of vegetation (typically moss, mold, fungus, a scraggly vine or weed) have been brought to the planet from other dimensions. The artificial planet has no indigenous life of any kind, although it does seem to have been designed for human habitation. Where the humans came from (descendants of a human space colonization team?) is also a mystery. All of the non-human beings, monsters and animals found on the planet are visitors or invaders from other worlds.

Virtually everything about the environment is created, controlled and maintained by the living planet. Presumably, Wormwood is programmed or conditioned to maintain habitable conditions for human life no matter what. Whether the planet has an intelligence in the human sense, or how smart that intelligence may be, is impossible to determine. It is likely that any measure of intelligence is limited and narrowly focused on maintaining a habitable environment for humans. In this regard, Wormwood is probably like a preprogrammed organic computer. Independent thought, imagination and emotions are probably impossible. Instead, the planet functions like a massive machine that automatically responds to certain conditions and stimuli. It is these mechanical responses that generate the breathable atmosphere, controls the temperature and weather, create the hills and mountains and most other elements for human survival, from food to building materials.

Some humans from **Rifts Earth** may see some similarities between Wormwood and Millennium Trees. Both are living creatures that seem to have been “designed” to give humans a safe place to live. It is remotely possible that the Great Trees of Life and Wormwood are the creations of the same spacefaring people, but this is unlikely. It is also important to point out that the Millennium Tree appears to be a much more sentient and active partner with humans and humanoids of a peaceful nature. The trees seem to recognize individuals, show emotions, and express friendship, happiness, sorrow, anger and concern. They also exhibit psionic communication. Wormwood does not appear to communicate psionically. The living planet only responds in a consistent and mechanical fashion to recurring situations/stimuli.

Human Habitats

The powers of Wormwood are truly amazing. The planet senses the needs of the people (via magic or psionics, or both) and responds accordingly. Visitors to Wormwood will notice that most dwellings have an organic look to them. That’s because

they are a living part of the planet. Most of the shapes are spherical, oval, tubular, or a combination of the three. The larger communities, especially the cities, have hundreds of tower-shaped structures reaching hundreds of feet into the sky like rocky tentacles (or worms).

Inside these structures are chambers/rooms, hallways, stairs, portals to the outside (windows and doorways) and almost everything that the inhabitants might need in the way of a liveable habitat. Mouth-like doors open and close when a person approaches (or upon command) like the automatic doors at the supermarket. Some of the openings and outcroppings will have horns, spines or teeth-like appendages and ornamentation, again reflecting the structure’s organic nature. There are seat-like receptacles for waste disposal reminiscent of toilets and garbage disposals (presumably the living planet recycles and uses waste products in some way).

Since these “buildings” are part of the planet’s *skin*, they are mega-damage structures and very sturdy (almost impossible to topple).

When a new habitat is needed, it grows out of the ground. An entire village or small city can be grown in only a few short years. Existing habitats also shrink or grow as needed. New buildings appear, like magic, to accommodate a growing population (or projected growth/birth rate). Existing buildings will alter in shape and size to adjust to the needs of the inhabitants.

When a habitat is abandoned, it remains empty for years, but over time, the living places sink back into the ground — absorbed into the body of the planet. Likewise, when parts of these structures are broken/severed through acts of violence, the fragment seems to disintegrate within a matter of days and is absorbed back into the planet.

Priests and wormspeakers can influence the shape, interior design and rapidness of construction. Through the use of magic, the speed of growth can be accelerated by five times and a building can be completely molded to the desires of the magic user or priest. It is through the use of magic that odd shaped buildings, cathedrals, forts and palaces are created. It is as if the human or demonic architect mentally or spiritually links himself to the planet and directs the appearance, style and construction of the building. This union between man and his planet also accelerates the construction of the building from a year’s time to only a few (1D6) months! Priests and wormspeakers can also summon and create water fountains and pools.

The demon inhabited **Crawling Towers** are another manifestation of the planet’s bio-habitats. In this case, the structures seem to reflect the more ugly nature of those who dwell inside them, but these too are fundamentally tubular shaped towers rising from the ground. However, unlike most dwellings, which are stationary, the **Crawling Towers** move! They slowly creep along the ground, following the conquering armies as they move across the land, hence their name.

Mountains, Hills and Building Materials

Mountains, hills and tall megalithic pillars break the otherwise smooth and desolate landscape of the planet. In some cases, they are generated to create recognizable landmarks for its human inhabitants. They also provide shade and places to hide and play. Many of the towering columns or pillars have knobs and stubby limbs that can be climbed like the branches of a tree. It is



interesting to note that there were only a few low mountain ranges before the inhuman invaders arrived. Since then, over the last several hundred years, the old mountains have doubled in size and new mountains have appeared. Presumably, these new, more treacherous mountains were created by Wormwood to help protect its human population. Mountain terrain is more difficult for invading monsters to traverse and provides more hiding places.

Unlike the buildings created for the cities, the **hills** and **mountains** seem comparatively permanent, although they may shrink or grow by as much as 15% within a single year, none are known to have ever vanished. Likewise, new mountains never appear out of thin air and take about a century to create (hills take only a decade).

There are two types of mountains. The largest are part of the living planet and stand 1200 to 2000 feet (366 to 610 m) tall, seldom higher. The smaller ones range from 500 to 900 feet (152 to 274 m) and are made of secreted mucus or resin. These rock hard mucus mountains are loosely comparable to the formation of Earth lava mountains. Like lava, liquified resin flows out of openings in the planet's surface. Unlike lava, the liquified resin is a thick, warm, sticky glop that resembles the consistency of liquified plastic. It is not boiling hot and does not spray from the bowels of the planet in violent spasms. It flows quietly and gently from an opening in the ground. Consequently, it is only dangerous if a character stands or lays in an active resin stream and allows himself to be covered and suffocated.

The liquid resin/mucus can be poured into molds and removed when hardened. The hardened item is as strong as steel and as light as plastic! Hardening mucus resin that is still a bit soft can be bent and shaped as it continues to harden. The hardened "rock" can be chiseled, powdered, or cut into slabs or cardboard thick sheets and made into a variety of items. This substance, sometimes referred to as "all-purpose boogers" by insensitive (and disgusted) visitors, is used to make everything from arrowheads, table tops and belt buckles to weapons, armor, and sculptures.

Angel Hair

Another useful substance created by the living planet is something the humans call "angel hair." It is a white, yellow or tan substance that magically appears in the sky about 30 to 100 feet (9 to 30.5 m) high and gently floats to the ground. Angel hair is long (6 to 12 feet/1.8 to 3.7 m), fine strands of a cotton-like substance. This material is used to weave rope, clothes and fabric. Although it has the look, weight and feel of cotton, it is three times stronger and, as clothes, wears/lasts five times longer.

Just as with the buildings it erects, the planet seems to intuitively know when the people need the fibers. Angel hair also appears at specific areas, especially at or near places of habitation in regular cycles. It can also be made to appear on demand by priests and wormspeakers.

Water

One of the most striking environmental aspects (at least from an Earth person's point of view) is the complete absence of surface water. There are no oceans, seas, lakes, rivers, streams or even ponds. Although there is an atmosphere and occasional clouds, there is seldom any rainfall. All the water (exactly how much water is unknown) is contained *inside* the planet below the surface. Water, in the way of fountains and bathing pools, is located at all bio-habitats and can even be found inside buildings and towers like indoor plumbing.

Priests and wormspeakers use prayer and concentration to summon water whenever it is needed. The dry, hard ground (the skin of the planet) transforms to create a pool of water or a small pillar from which water bubbles out like a drinking fountain in a park. Such water springs can also be found randomly in the wilderness, but these too are created by the planet when it senses that a human or group of humans need water. Wormwood cannot sense all the needs of every individual and people have died from dehydration. It is more likely to respond to the general need of a group of people (the larger, the better). Water is plentiful at all cities and villages.

Food

Wormwood creates food by generating edible fungus and worms. Although this may look and sound disgusting, the little critters are nutritious and tasty. The natives don't think twice about eating them. With the invasion of other-dimensional beings, there is also a plethora of animals and other life forms (plants, especially if specially grown) that are edible. Even the horrible air-fish are edible.

It also creates food caves. These places are always located in or near places of human habitation. They are large caverns beneath the ground filled with light green and brown fibers. The fibers run from the floor to the top of the cavern's roof. They are cut down and can be eaten raw or cooked. The green fibers have a taste reminiscent to spinach or cabbage and the brown to squash or pumpkin. The fibers grow back quickly so there is always plenty to eat. Food caves are seldom found in demon territory unless there is a substantial human population present.

Most of the demons and monsters are carnivores who feed on the flesh of humans and other creatures. Some, like the demon

goblins, are cannibals who feed on each of their own kind when other food sources are not available. Others are psionic or P.P.E. vampires who feed on emotions or mystic energy.

Breathable Air

Nobody really knows where the air comes from, but there is an atmosphere suitable for humans. The wormspeaker will tell you that they breathe the life-giving breath of Wormwood. Exactly what that may imply is hard to say. Harmful radiation is also deflected, absorbed or neutralized in some way.

Wormwood is also able to regulate surface temperature and control the weather. As stated previously, there is no surface water and there is seldom any rainfall of any kind, let alone storms or tornados (nor can the living planet create them). Approximately once a week, the humidity level rises and a fog-like mist will cover $2D4 \times 10\%$ of the planet. The wind is typically under 10 mph (16 km).

The average surface temperature is a dry 80 degrees Fahrenheit. On occasion (typically $1D4$ times annually), the surface temperature will inexplicably increase, or decrease, by as much as 15 degrees. Such temperature increases seldom last more than 48 hours. There are also "Hot Spots" or deserts where the temperatures will soar to 100 degrees and last for most of the year. These "Hot Spots" are always located where there are invading demons and few humans. They often appear and disappear without warning, but never where there are many humans present.



Symbiotic Organisms

Worms, claws, crawlers, angels, battle saints and even crystals and blood stones are living manifestations of Wormwood, generated by the planet. The typical Wormwood symbiot does minimal damage and causes comparatively little disfigurement to the host body. They impart the user/wearer with beneficial powers.

The Cathedral frowns upon the use of symbiotes, but does rely upon angels, battle saints and a few others. Like most everything else provided by the planet, it seems to generate them on a regular cycle, as well as upon demand by high level priests and wormspeakers (but "summonings" of symbiotes are never a sure thing). Life force cauldrons, life force batteries, and parasites are aggressive and dangerous symbiotic organisms summoned (created?) by the Forces of Darkness. Of all the things provided by Wormwood, symbiotes and similar creatures are the rarest.

The Infection

Wormwood has been invaded by dangerous organisms; the Unholy and his minions. They are like a cancer that feeds on and damages the body. The demonic hordes might be thought of as germs spreading an infection and attacking the human inhabitants who serve as the planet's defending antibodies. In this sense, the relationship between the humans and Wormwood

is completely symbiotic; each needing the other to remain healthy and survive.

Wormwood has responded to the invasion of the Unholy and his minions like the human body might to disease. The "Hot Spots" are futile attempts to burn out the infection with fever. The angels and helpful symbiotes are provided to assist its human antibodies to destroy the infection. It has even tried to restrict food, water and shelter from the demonic invaders. However, the Unholy and the Host are able to use Wormwood's own body and the human defenders against itself. They feed on the bodies and life energy of its human defenders. The humans they do not devour are enslaved, destroyed or corrupted. Some are drained of their life force and used to spread the malignancy.

In addition the invaders use Wormwood's own mystic energy to create horrible aberrations. They force the planet to create more life damaging pestilence in way of parasites and foul symbiotes. Wherever the invaders dominate, the land is transformed to reflect their monstrous image. Like a blight, they create cities that are festering lesions filled with tumorous towers, dark caverns and ugliness that suits their inhuman and vile nature. It is this malignancy that forces Wormwood to create the hideous crawling towers, destructive parasites, life force cauldrons and other monstrosities.

For now, Wormwood and its human population continue the fight against the invaders but should the day arrive that the planet is completely conquered and/or all the humans destroyed, Wormwood will die.

The History of Wormwood

Nobody is likely to ever learn the true origin of Wormwood, The Living Planet. If the human inhabitants ever knew, that knowledge has been long forgotten. There is little doubt that it was *engineered* as a method of space or dimensional colonization. There is strong evidence to suggest that Wormwood's creators may have been humans. Whether or not they originated from Rifts Earth is not known, but a possibility, though unlikely. More likely, humans from a parallel dimension may have created living worlds to serve as outposts and satellites for intergalactic or trans-dimensional exploration and colonization.

Another, possibility is that Wormwood is the creation of True Atlanteans. Many clans fled disasters by running into a myriad of different dimensions. Many are the myths, legends and rumors regarding the incredible mystic knowledge and power of the ancient Atlanteans. These inventive and arrogant people are also infamous for overreaching themselves and unleashing forces better left undisturbed. They are also associated with supernatural beings like the Unholy and his demonic menagerie of followers. Although tattoo magic is not known on Wormwood (which strongly discounts the likelihood of an Atlantean connection), many of the inhabitants do cover their bodies in tattoos.

The Wormspeakers and Knights of the Order of the Hospital, both of whom are said to be linked to the living planet, tell this short and tragic tale:

"Wormwood was once a paradise where peace, magic and knowledge was supreme. With supremacy came idle time, self-indulgence, greed and intolerable arrogance. Soon the builders of the world turned to other worlds and engaged in games of conquest. Supernatural beings became the target of their conquests. They made fearsome demons their lap dogs and slaves.

The humans revelled in their power over such beings and engaged in acts of cruelty and depravity. With arrogance and power came cruelty and weakness. When one has no respect for his enemies, and little respect for life, he becomes one of the defeated.

“So it was that the Host were summoned from a shadowy place meant to contain them. The monsters rose up and broke the shackles of slavery. Savagely they and their brothers slashed out with the angry cry of retribution. Cruelty can only give birth to cruelty. So it was that these monsters craved for more than their freedom or even the blood of their masters. They desired to conquer, crush, and enslave their enslavers. Thus, the Age of Darkness came upon Wormwood. An age that has lasted for over a millennium. A time and place where monsters and evil reign supreme, and corrupted men and women serve demonic masters.

“The Age of Darkness ... The Great Tribulation engulfs us. Torment and sorrow is everywhere. Yet the monsters have fallen victim to the same arrogance and believe they are all powerful. This shall make them weak. And though it may take a hundred generations, they too shall fall.”

Many of the Wormspeakers, scholars and heroes believe that the balance of power is about to change. This has caused increased military conflicts around the world. As a sign, they point to the return of many dimensional portals, increased magic energy, and the appearance of other-worldly visitors!

Technology

There is little manufacturing on Wormwood and no high-tech facilities for mass production whatsoever. Most items are hand-made by craftsmen and artists. There are fabric makers, weavers, tailors, potters, tool makers, weapon makers, resin casters, sculptors, and similar, but no factories. Thus, the tech-level for mass production is low, roughly equivalent to 15th century Earth. Items such as guns, motorcycles and other higher tech-level articles are “imported” (purchased, traded, or stolen) from other dimensions. The humans of Wormwood have been known to visit favorite worlds in other dimensions on a regular basis. There they acquire different things ranging from food, candy and alcohol to guns/weapons, motorcycles and building materials (See the section entitled *Dimensional Doorways*).

Magic is the technology of Wormwood

Wormwood is a place of magic and the supernatural. Science and technology as we know it does not exist. There may be the occasional D-bee energy rifle or pistol, but the human and demon inhabitants use magic or rely on their supernatural powers. The “high” magic that exists is roughly equal in strength and power to any technological creation from Rifts Earth. There is mega-damage body armor, flaming swords and other energy weapons, robot-like zombies, and even giant robots such as the Battle Saints.

Techno-wizardry is one of the most popular of the magic O.C.C.s on Wormwood. Shifters and temporal wizards are two others. There are no ley line walkers, although some priests and many demons have *spell casting* powers reminiscent of the line walker and mystic.

Other Important Features of Note

- **No ley lines exist on Wormwood.** Ley line walkers (and druids) will find the absence of ley lines very disturbing. Such a phenomenon is unprecedented and completely alien. Virtually all conventional planets and even strange, other-dimensional realms are laced and linked with ley lines. It is part of the cosmic order. The absence of ley lines on Wormwood seems to defy the cosmic laws of the Megaverse! This revelation will make ley line walkers and similar magic O.C.C.s, like druids, feel disoriented, vulnerable and afraid. The laws of reality that make up the world they know is gone!

This also explains why even the most experienced dimensional travelers have never discovered the planet. Even when it is connected to a world with a permanent dimensional rift, it remains invisible. The absence of ley lines places it out of the usual balance of the known universe, locating it in a sort of cosmic “blind” spot that cannot be seen from any of the usual angles. This may also explain why the mythical living planet, Eylor, has escaped detection by the millions of explorers who have searched for it over the eons.

After a period of adjustment, the mage will realize that even Wormwood must be connected to the Megaverse on an unrecognized, cosmic level. Furthermore, he or she will realize that the living planet does generate mystic energy. After several months, the line walker will be able to feel mystic energy pulsing through the planet although too faint to be used as a ley line. On Wormwood the magic energy flows like blood through the veins, deep inside the planet. Places known to produce symbiotes, angels and Battle Saints are where the veins of energy are closest to the surface. At these places of power, the ley line walker can try to draw on the energy like a faint ley line.

The mystic energy of Wormwood and its inhabitants can be captured, stored and magnified through crystals, blood stones, life force batteries, life force cauldrons, and certain symbiotes. These items are extensively used by the demon hordes, particularly P.P.E. draining symbiotes, batteries and life force cauldrons. Such receptacles of magic energy are often necessary to perform demanding feats of magic and to open dimensional rifts.

The Unholy and the Forces of Evil also participate in blood sacrifices of humans to capture and/or use the amplified P.P.E. that is released at the moment of death. These blood rituals may be formal sacrifices or spur of the moment occurrences. As few as one person or as many as a thousand may be slaughtered.

An astute line walker may eventually discover that the magic energy of Wormwood is most powerful underground in caves (including food caves) and rare subterranean passages. The mystic energy inside these caves is equal to that of a ley line and will be a place of comfort and power for most ley line walkers. Druids will also feel more at ease and closer to nature inside the Living Planet. This revelation (if shared with others) will make wormspeakers wonder if the myths of an inner world, deep inside Wormwood, are true. As long as any human can remember, there have been myths that tell about a second, mystical world enclosed somewhere inside the hollow center of Wormwood, but not even the wormspeakers know how to find it.

- **Elemental magic** is dramatically limited. Magically created earthquakes, quicksand, rainstorms, hurricanes, tornados, river of lava, grow plants and similar spells are impossible on Wormwood. Dust/sand storms are possible because there is an atmosphere and surface dust, but in the case of the others, there are no elements to magically manipulate. An earthquake, lava or quicksand pit cannot be created because the planet is a living creature and is not made of earth, rock and lava. The hard skin of the ground and the walls of the buildings are not stone and cannot be affected by such spells as rock to mud, crumble rock, sculpt stone, travel through earth, and similar. Stone magic is equally ineffective on this planet.

All elementals feel uncomfortable on Wormwood, particularly earth and fire elementals because they are out of their element and therefore weakened and vulnerable. Air and water elementals are less restrained than fire and earth, but still at a disadvantage.

- **NO psionics.** The human inhabitants, native to Wormwood, do not have psionic powers as recognized by psychics on Earth and other worlds. The planet does not speak or send empathic transmissions and cannot communicate directly with its inhabitants or with visiting psychics from other dimensions. However, Wormwood does have some level of psionic power as is evident from the fact that it seems to sense the needs of its human population and tries to respond to them. This is also seen in the construction of habitats, food, angel hair and symbiotic organisms.

Psychics from other dimensions will observe the following. The entire planet, including buildings, has the aura of a living creature. The symbiotes, stones, and crystals also have a similar "signature" aura. This means that seemingly inanimate objects are actually alive and cannot be object read. Items created from the mucus resin or angel hair are not alive but still have a distinctive aura.

Psionic characters do not have any special advantage on Wormwood. They cannot communicate directly with the planet or manipulate it in any special way. Bio-manipulation, mind bond, mind control of any kind, telepathy, empathy and empathic transmission have no effect on the planet, but may affect symbiotic organisms. In fact, psychic powers are diminished by some sort of psionic interference, presumably emanating from the planet itself.

Psionic Penalties: Reduce the range of all psionic abilities by half. Reduce duration by one-quarter. Presence sense, sense magic and sense evil are virtually useless. Sensing powers will always detect the presence of Wormwood and others. Magic is in the air and the stench of evil is everywhere.

- **The symbiotes, crystals, stones** and other living things created by Wormwood are powerless in other dimensions. It is the planet that keeps these items alive and gives them their powers. When removed from the planet, they die within 1D6 hours. Symbiotic organisms shrivel up and fall off, stones and crystals turn to dust and parasites curl up, die and then turn to dust.

Inanimate objects (weapons, armor, etc.) made of the mucus resin or articles of clothing made from angel hair are not alive and do not suffer any penalties from being removed from Wormwood.

Characters who draw their powers from Wormwood are also adversely affected by separation from the planet. All O.C.C. special powers, such as those of the Wormspeaker, confessors and priest, instantly disappear the moment they step into a different dimension or leave the planet. The characters only retain their natural attribute abilities and learned skills. Upon their return home, the lost powers return at full strength within 24 hours.

- **All natives of Wormwood are mega-damage creatures.** Exactly how this is accomplished is not known. It may be the result of Wormwood's mystic energies, special powers, the food people eat or a combination of them all. What is known is that the native human inhabitants of the planet are minor mega-damage creatures, but human in every other way. Wormwood natives who travel to other dimensions will remain mega-damage beings in environments that are extremely rich in magic like Rifts Earth (but not the Palladium World or 20th Century Earth, where magic exists but is at comparatively low levels). Human visitors to Wormwood from other dimensions remain S.D.C. beings, although their offspring will be mega-damage beings if they have lived on the planet for years and/or their mate is a native of Wormwood. Symbiotes and crystals are also mega-damage things.
- **The language of the human inhabitants of Wormwood is Earth English!!** This is another mystery that cannot be easily explained and further suggests a link to Rifts Earth or an Earth from a parallel dimension or time. The people of Wormwood have an affinity for Earth weapons and devices, so it is a possibility that they adopted English as the language of choice at some point (but why not Spanish or French or Chinese?). That theory is as good (or bad) an explanation as any. This certainly makes communication with visitors from Earth easy. All human inhabitants of Wormwood speak English (or from a Rifts Earth perspective, American, including some 20th Century slang, like "Born to Boogie." About half the population can read and write, at least to some degree. All priests of the Cathedral are literate, about 80% of the Knights of the Order of the Temple and 70% of the Knights of the Order of the Hospital.

Most (90%) of the demons speak a guttural language known as Demongogian. Dragonese and an unusual dialect of Gobblely are also spoken by some of the demons (35%) and all demon goblins. As a result, about 45% of all human warriors and 20% of the priests can speak demongogian and 15% speak Gobblely and/or Dragonese. Sixty percent of the demons also speak English/American at 50% to 80% proficiency. **Note:** Temporal raiders and their students speak Dragonese/Elf, English/American and Demongogian.

Dimensional Doorways

Earth has always been a favorite "trading zone." In fact, it is likely that some of the myths, legends and stories regarding ancient gods, wizards, superhuman individuals, demons, strange visitors, and alien abductors can be attributed to visits by Wormwood humans (and in the last thousand years, Wormwood's demonic rulers).

Both humans and demons alike, have been known to send not only traders and scouts, but small armies of dimensional raiders to capture and return items wanted or needed back on their homeworld.

These raids and acquisitions often follow trends or fads. For a while, black powder weapons were all the rage. Later, motorcycles (which are still quite popular) were in big demand. Currently, vibro-blades, Kittani style plasma weapons (swords, axes and lances), rune weapons, alien symbiotes, and hovercycles are very desirable, especially by the humans. This has led to raids in the Splugorth's Atlantis, the New Phoenix Empire, Triax, Coalition States, Lazlo, New Lazlo, and Tolkeen. Visitors from Wormwood have also explored portions of Africa, the Mediterranean, England and the Midwest of North America (including Xiticix territory). Up to this point, they have gone mostly undetected; recognized only as "dimensional raiders" or nomadic D-bees. Not even the Splugorth are yet aware of Wormwood (a world they would find most interesting).

Wormwood is connected to Rifts Earth via four permanent dimensional "rifts." The oldest and most infamous is located at **Lalibela** in the Ethiopian mountains of northeast Africa. This is the oldest portal to earth (since about 6000 B.C.) and provides easy access to the Egypt/New Phoenix Empire, Africa, the Middle East and the Mediterranean countries. It is important to note that the Unholy and his minions have controlled this portal for the last 1000 years. Another ancient rift is located in Calgary (Canada) and a third can be found in the mountains of Romania (the latter providing close proximity to the New German Republic). The newest active rift is found in the ruins of Old Detroit, giving Wormwood raiders access to the hub of civilization and technology within the Coalition States and surrounding territories. There are no permanent rifts on the continent of Atlantis or to the dimensional prison that contains other Host. There is also one permanent dimensional doorway to the planet of the demon goblins and skelter bats.

Temporary rifts created through magic are used to gain access to other parts of the world. Shifters, temporal raiders, the Host and many of the demons and practitioners of magic can open dimensional rifts to other, specific locations on Earth (and other

dimensions). The usual limitation of having visited/know the target location applies, but Earth is well known to the denizens of the Living Planet. **Note:** Remember, the Unholy and his Host can never leave Wormwood, however, they can work their magic to open a rift so that others may pass through it. The Unholy frequently sends spies and raiding parties to Earth, but has no intention of invading it or working with other forces of evil. He fears the power of alien intelligences and does not want to attract attention to his domain. Thus, he and his demonic warriors are careful to avoid conflicts (and alliances) with supernatural beings on Rifts Earth.

The Unholy and to a lesser degree, the humans, frequently open rifts to other worlds to acquire supplies and raw materials. The demonic raiding parties will suddenly appear out of thin air, attack, pillage, grab what they can and leave. The typical dimensional raiding party is well organized, has one to four objectives, accomplishes those objectives, and departs before the local defenders can completely mobilize to counter their attack. Common objectives are the acquisition of food, booze, livestock, raw materials, weapons and vehicles, or a unique magic item. Black powder guns were popular among the Wormwood humans a few hundred years ago and Earth-style motorcycles are still the rage. The demons will occasionally kidnap women and children to use as their playthings, slaves, food or to replenish the life force batteries and life force cauldron.

Both the humans and the demons prove to be stealthy and cunning. They will avoid a direct conflict whenever possible — why fight when you can quietly steal what you came for? The element of surprise, speed, and ruthlessness combined with hit and run tactics have served them well. A typical raiding party suffers less than 10% casualties. Espionage and reconnaissance missions are typically limited to six to twelve operatives. Among the demons, the leader will almost certainly be a temporal raider, shifter or proven warlord. Larger raiding parties can number from 24 to 96.

The inhabitants of Wormwood know little about Earth's politics and struggles, nor do they care. Earth inhabitants, including the Splugorth, True Atlanteans, gargoyles and Merlin, know nothing about Wormwood and have never visited that world. Erin Tarn is the first Earthling to visit in over three thousand years.



Reactions from Earth Powers

1. **The Coalition** will see Wormwood as a living hell. Its existence will only strengthen their resolve that magic is evil and that all practitioners of magic and supernatural creatures must be destroyed to insure humankind's survival. Learning about Wormwood is likely to provoke the CS to escalate their military efforts on Earth. Tolkeen, Kingsdale and the Magic Zone will be among their first targets. Lazlo, New Lazlo and other communities known to harbor the supernatural and promote the use of magic will be next. They will also purge the Burbs of practitioners of magic and demonic visitors, as well as redouble their efforts to close or contain known dimensional rifts. It may also make Emperor Prosek consider making a formal alliance with the NGR.

The Coalition States have no sympathy for the plight of humans on Wormwood and will avoid making any alliances or helping them in any way. Furthermore, natives of Wormwood, human and inhuman alike, will be considered Enemies of Humanity and added to the CS extermination list. To the CS, they deserve their fate for relying on magic and associating with demons. They will be viewed with revulsion and fear, and shot on sight. Their plight will only serve to reaffirm that the Coalition's way is the only way!

2. **Triax and the New German Republic (NGR)** are likely to respond in a way similar to the Coalition. The ordeal that the humans of Wormwood face mirrors their own struggles against the Gargoyle Empire. While they sympathize with the heroes of Wormwood, they will not associate with them in any way. Unlike the CS, the NGR's reasons are a bit less emotional. The NGR fears that any association with the humans of Wormwood can only bring upon them the wrath of the Unholy and his demon armies. If the Unholy and his forces should join the Gargoyle Empire or launch a second, unrelated offensive against them, the NGR *might* fall. They cannot afford this risk, no matter how unlikely, thus, the NGR will remove themselves from the situation and hope for the best. Like the CS, seeing (or even learning about Wormwood from Erin Tarn) will inspire the NGR and Triax to increase their efforts against the Gargoyle Empire. Sadly, this will make them even more savage and severe in their dealings with ALL non-humans.

3. **The people of the Palladium World** are likely to see Wormwood as one of the planes of hell, or as a domain of demons (a fairly accurate assessment). However, they are characters from a more noble and heroic age and may be willing to champion the cause of the wormwood humans. Thus, a number of heroes, priests and adventurers may be willing to venture to Wormwood to help fight the monsters!

Demons (humans and all characters) from Wormwood become S.D.C. creatures in the Palladium world, where magic energies continue to wane. Despite the fading mystic energy, Palladium is a world where magic and demons are commonplace. Humans and humanoid allies (elves, dwarves, etc.) are the dominant lifeform and are quick to crush supernatural invaders and to fight the Forces of Evil. The intelligent and military minded wolfen will also view Wormwood demons as dangerous monsters to be purged from their land. Some may even be willing to travel to Wormwood to help the humans. Only the most evil or foolhardy, evil sorcerers, dark priests and monsters will welcome any sort of alliance. The Western Empire is one location where humans

may consider an Unholy alliance — such is the greed and mania of that decadent and morally corrupt kingdom. See the **Palladium (fantasy) RPG** and many supplements for details about this unique world.

4. **Earth of Beyond the Supernatural, Heroes Unlimited, Ninjas & Superspies, or modern times:** With few exceptions, Twentieth and Twenty-first Century humans do NOT believe in magic or the supernatural! This makes them somewhat vulnerable to demonic entities and monsters. If the monster is tricky and hides in the shadows, the average person will never even know they exist. Of course, psychic and paranormal investigators, spiritualists, martial arts masters, and secret practitioners of magic will recognize and challenge the monsters. Any all-out attack by supernatural monsters in this entirely human dominated world will see an organized response by the police and military (although the demons will probably be labeled as crazed mutants or extraterrestrials).

Demons (humans and all characters) from Wormwood become S.D.C. creatures on the Earth of this time period. Magic energies are at their lowest level in history and returning to Wormwood will be difficult. The characters will have to open a dimensional rift at a ley line nexus at a time when mystic energy surges, like during an eclipse or solstice. Even then, blood sacrifices or other sources of additional P.P.E. may be necessary.

5. **High-tech worlds of science** are likely to respond to supernatural phenomena and the concept of "demons" as complete bunk. Fiction. Myth. This may blind them, at least for a while, to the true danger these creatures represent. However, once the threat is recognized, their high-tech weapons and equipment should be more than enough to destroy the invaders. They may even be able to pursue them back to Wormwood via experimental dimensional vehicles or portals of their own.

6. **Pantheons of the Gods:** Powerful supernatural beings sometimes considered to be gods, by humanoids, may also take an interest in Wormwood. However, they are more likely to be involved in far more pressing games and matters. Only lesser godlings are likely to take an active hand in the struggle on the Living Planet. For in depth descriptions and information about mythical gods, see **Rifts Conversion Book Two: Pantheons of the Megaverse** scheduled for a March 1994 release.



The People of Wormwood



An Atmosphere of Terror

All humans are expected to obey the Unholy and the Forces of Darkness. They must show submission, reverence and respect to all who directly serve the Unholy, including his lowliest and most vile demonic minions. Those who fail to do so are brutally punished. Most humans hate and despise these monsters.

All organizations and churches are illegal and most have been destroyed. Those who refuse to accept and serve the Unholy suffer at the hands of his minions, unnatural plagues, disasters, persecution and poverty. Their plight continues until they submit to his will or perish. Most peasants who dare to speak out against him or are suspected of helping enemies of the Unholy, are beaten or otherwise subjected to cruel mercies, but allowed to live. It is the most outspoken, militant and organized individuals who are the Unholy's primary targets.

The following speech is typical of the Unholy, his mind-set and fear tactics. Tragically, he backs his words up with action; the Unholy does not make idle threats.

"The quiet 'sheep' who cower before me and my legion of trusted demons, but whisper prayers to the gods of light or curse my name, are of little consequence. They obey the laws and bow before me out of fear, if not loyalty. I allow them to crawl back into the shadows of their homes and gather at secret places to pray to the gods who have forsaken them. They can turn their miserable faces toward the Cathedral and plead for redemption and freedom. I do not care.

"With time, these fools will learn that I am the ONLY power on Wormwood. That it is I alone who holds their fate in my claws. If they want to wallow in filth and poverty and whisper to deaf gods, let them. If they choose to pin their hopes on lost causes, so be it. Thus, shall continue their pitiful existence. But let no being dare to raise his hand against me!

"I am a tolerant master. I will not strike down the whisperers because they do not embrace the comforting darkness, but I will crush my enemies. My enemies are any man, woman or child who raises sword or clenched fist against me. My enemy is any damned soul who would openly speak against me or against those who serve me. My enemy is any deluded individual who actively serves the Cathedral or one of the fading cults in any way.

"To knowingly help my enemies, even by offering so little as a crumb of food or a word of comfort, is to invoke my wrath! Traitors will be hunted down like dogs and suffer greatly before joining other traitors in the life force cauldrons! Their families will become the playthings of my minions and suffer so horribly that they will beg for death, but be denied such tender mercy.

Such is the wrath of the Unholy! Know it! Accept it! Fear it!! Fear me and obey.

"Also know that those who embrace me as their master and accept the ways of darkness, shall have full, peaceful and joyous lives. Look around you. See who prospers and who suffers. The choice is an easy one. Join me and live. Defy me and suffer. Die knowing that we feast on your soft, moist bones and drink your tears."

The Average Citizen

Many humans (but far from all) have given in to despair and no longer fight — they are the broken and the defeated. They go about their lives with little joy and without hope for the future. They feel helpless, mind their own business and try to avoid conflict. The majority of the *broken* people commiserate in their misery. They try to turn a blind eye and cold heart to the Cathedral and the champions who continue the fight for freedom. They neither help nor hurt these warriors, meaning that they will not feed, bandage, hide or even speak to a freedom fighter, but they will not summon the demonic authorities, cause trouble nor volunteer any information against them either. Even if they know a fallen hero is wounded and hiding under their porch, they hold their tongue and turn away. However, if questioned directly by the demon hordes, these broken people will confess what they know to protect themselves, their loved ones and possessions.

Under certain circumstances, the character might help a fellow human in some inconspicuous ways. This might include things like leaving food, a blanket, old clothing, tools/weapons, a riding animal, etc., in a place where they can be easily stolen or utilized by the hero. Leaving a barn door unlatched, keeping a barking dog inside, or mentioning aloud some important bit of information (all potentially helpful to a refugee or hero) without ever making contact with that individual. Thus, if the character is questioned by the authorities, he can honestly say he knows nothing about the character they are hunting.



A sort of “double-talk” has developed among the average citizens in regard to such incidents. If asked whether or not a suspicious group of characters have been seen, the humble citizen will quickly respond with the truth: “Yes, I passed three strangers in the alley near the hardware shop.” He may even offer some basic descriptions and data such as, “The woman was favoring her arm. She may have been hurt.” With this his questioners may thank him or more likely growl a warning like, “This better be true.” or “You better be right.” Unless they seriously threaten him, seem to know more and/or ask more direct questions, the citizen will not *volunteer* anything more (like the fact that he later heard somebody in his tool shed and a freshly baked pie has disappeared from the window sill).

The citizen may notice a pair of worried eyes staring up from a crack beneath his stairs even as he is being questioned, but looks away and says nothing. The more wily or bold may ask his demonic questioners some questions of his own, designed to inform the person in hiding. Questions like, “Who are these people and what have they done?” followed by, “You don’t think they are still around here do you?” “Are the streets guarded? What about the sewers?” and similar things. The answers to these questions may provide valuable information and assistance to the character hiding beneath the stairs. After the questioners leave, the citizen goes inside his home and bolts his door. He has done his good deed for the day and is likely to ignore any direct contact or pleas for help. He may even threaten to call the authorities if the fugitive does not leave him alone; “Go away! We can’t help you. If you don’t leave ... I’ll ... I’ll call the authorities!”

Frequently, these individuals want to help but are too frightened, brow-beaten, or weak-willed to do so. **Note:** Typical alignment of the average, broken citizen is unprincipled and anarchist. Before they are condemned, characters should realize that these people know firsthand just how horrible the Unholy and his minions can be. They must worry not only about their own safety, but for the safety of friends and family, and in some cases, the entire community. It is not unreasonable for the monsters to punish women and children or scores of people for the indiscretions of one person. Punishment can be torture, death or a fate worse than death. Consequently, the experienced Champion of Light doesn’t even try to involve helpless civilians in his exploits and always tries to avoid implicating them in his battle with evil.

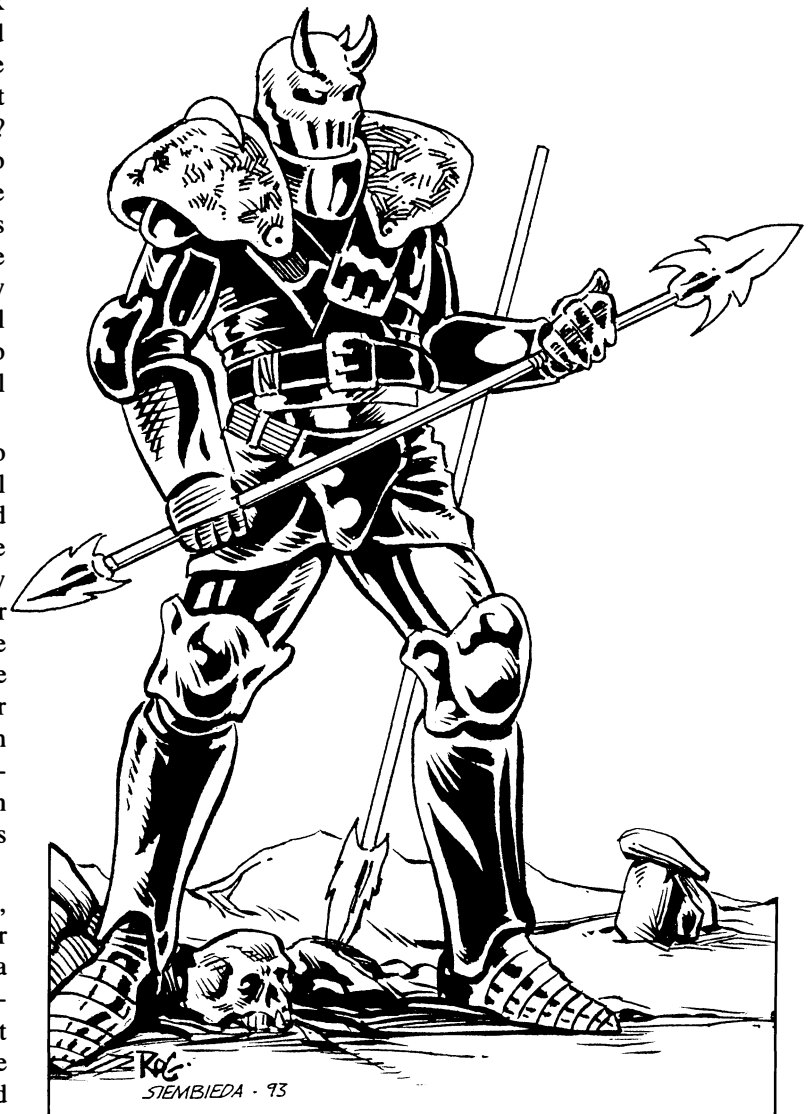
It is the rare event that a typical, apathetic (or more likely, terrorized) citizen will openly defend a Champion of Light or attack the minions of Darkness. Remember, Wormwood is a violent and merciless world where evil beings dominate, terrorize, bully and molest weaker creatures. Still, under the right circumstances and inspiration, even these down-trodden people and those who thought they have given up on life, can find renewed hope and courage. The Cathedral and the Champions of Light offer such inspiration and hope.

Human Minions of Evil

Some humans (about 25%) have joined the Forces of Darkness. These traitorous swine have little regard for other people, justice or freedom. They tend to be self-serving individuals concerned only with the safety and prosperity of themselves and/or their family. Friendship and alliances are only a commodity to be used and sold. As loyal subjects of the Unholy, these turncoats

enjoy special privileges. They tend to have the nicer houses, own valuable possessions, are given permission to operate businesses and have the freedom to travel without fear of attack. They are seldom harassed by the demon hordes and are frequently warned of coming retribution, dangers and trouble. Most of the merchants and the well-to-do of Wormwood’s demon-ruled cities and villages have sworn allegiance to the Forces of Darkness. They have forsaken their freedom and sold out their fellow humans (and some would say souls) for their own good fortune.

These people serve the Unholy as loyal citizens/servants. They will finger a suspect and accuse a fellow citizen without hesitation. They are alert for trouble and report any suspicious strangers or activity. They may even help lay traps for the unsuspecting and try to lure Champions of Light and other-dimensional visitors into the clutches of the Host and their legion of demons.



The most vile humans are those who willingly serve as priests, spies, assassins and warriors for the dark forces. Many are as evil as the monsters they serve. A few have even risen to be trusted and revered captains, governors and high priests and command their own legion of subservient demons and supernatural forces! **Note:** The typical alignment of these human minions are anarchist, miscreant and diabolic. They are never of a good alignment, unless that character is being played as a stupid, unsuspecting pawn.

Champions of Light

Many humans still fight the good fight and dream of a future where the people of Wormwood can live free from the Forces of Evil. The following section presents several new Occupational Character Classes (O.C.C.s) and organizations found on Wormwood who oppose the conquering monsters.

The Armed Forces of The Cathedral

Priest of Light O.C.C.

Knights of the Order of the Temple O.C.C. (Templars)

Knights of the Order of the Hospital O.C.C. (Hospitallers)

Apok O.C.C. (Elite special agent/commando)

Church Affiliates

Freelancers O.C.C. (Warriors — common folk)

Monk Warriors O.C.C. (common folk — martial artists)

Wormspeakers O.C.C. (common folk — shaman)

Holy Terrors O.C.C. (Warriors — common folk)

Symbiotic Warrior O.C.C. (common folk)

Also see optional monster R.C.C.s

Other Available O.C.C.s* (see *Rifts & the England World book*)

Knight O.C.C.

Shifter O.C.C.

Techno-Wizard O.C.C.

Temporal Raider R.C.C.

Temporal Warrior O.C.C.

Temporal Wizard O.C.C.

Vagabond O.C.C.

Wilderness Scout O.C.C.

***Note:** The ley line walker, mind melter and other O.C.C.s and races can come to Wormwood from other worlds, but they are not occupations indigenous to this planet.

The Cathedral

The social and political orientation of the people on Wormwood is religious, spiritual and mystical. The supernatural, magic and the demonic are part of their everyday lives. Consequently, much of their social-political structure is built around religious beliefs, churches and spiritual leaders. It is simply a reflection of their society and the forces at play in their world.

There were once many different churches and social organizations, but one by one they have been destroyed or corrupted by the Unholy and his supernatural minions. The last of the great churches is the paramilitary organization known as **The Cathedral**. Although a mere shadow of its former self, it remains the most powerful weapon against the Forces of Darkness.

The Cathedral is not a place. It is *many* places — a thousand hidden pockets from which the last **Priests of Light**, their champions, and followers do what they can against the monsters who would destroy, enslave and pervert all that is good and human.

The Cathedral is filled with good men and women who valiantly cling to nobility, honor, justice, and hope. The most devout believe this is the time of **The Great Tribulation**, a terrible period of trial and damnation in which their spirit and very souls are challenged by evil. The Great Tribulation is seen as the last great battle between good and evil. When it is over, only one will stand triumphant. How long the Great Tribulation may last (Years? Centuries? Eons?), they do not know, but most good people have sworn to fight till their last dying breath. Their dedication to the Cathedral and their quest to drive the Forces of Darkness from their world actually gives most people the will to keep going. It helps make their struggle against seemingly overwhelming numbers a noble quest — a holy quest!

The idea of a holy war gives every aspect of their struggle mystical and religious overtones. Champions of good are considered to be blessed, chosen or holy. The most courageous and powerful may even be considered godsent or saints. People, places and things are given spiritual or religious significance. The names of people, places, relics, weapons and events reflect the humans spiritual view of the world and their association with good or evil. Those people and things associated with the forces of good are often referred to as “holy,” “chosen,” “blessed,” “ordained,” “sacred,” “divine,” “sainted,” “graced,” “pure,” “righteous,” “devout,” “pious,” and similar.

The enemy, human or inhuman, are all part of the forces of evil and “The Darkness.” They are all, “demons,” “demonic,” “unholy,” “ungodly,” “monstrous,” “vile,” “hell spawn,” “corrupted,” “perverted,” “damned,” and so on.

The Heart & Soul of Freedom

The Cathedral functions as a secret (and not so secret) network of resistance fighters, warriors, spies, priests and healers. There are secret temples, underground operations, hideouts, outposts and operatives in virtually every city. It is rumored that there are even agents within the highest circles of the hierarchy of The Unholy. These highly placed secret agents provide the freedom fighters with important information about the activities of the enemy and, when possible, allows them to help prisoners escape festering prisons, the arena, and life force batteries. These champions dare to tread among the demons so that they may bring the light of peace and freedom to their fellow humans.

Although the Forces of Darkness tighten their grip on the human cities, there still remains several clusters of fortified, human camps and free cities who have yet to fall before the armies of The Unholy. These strongholds for freedom and communities suspected of being allied to The Champions of Light

are the most beleaguered of cities. In addition to periodic sieges by armies of monsters, The Unholy sends plagues, monstrous spies and assassins to undermine them. The inhabitants are constantly troubled by thieves, assassins, vandals, monsters, and sickness. Supernatural predators, roving entities, pestilence, and shadowy monsters of all kinds are given free reign to plunder, hunt, torture, maim, and molest any community that refuses to swear allegiance to The Unholy — or who appear to be allied to the Forces of Light. These locations frequently also become the target of invading demon armies and unallied bandits and marauders. (Un)Natural disasters also seem to trouble those who do not succumb to the darkness.

The largest and most well protected of the free cities will have an entire army camped within its borders, but there are only a few of these defiant fortress cities. Most communities are considerably smaller (2D6 × 1000 inhabitants) and have no army to protect them. The only protection most of these communities have are the knights, priests and freelancers operating within the Cathedral underground or who happen to be visiting.

Other communities under the watchful eyes of the dark minions pretend to be the quiet “sheep” that The Unholy desires. They show no evidence of threat or discord to the rule of The Unholy, but actively work against him by establishing secret safe houses, temples, food and weapon caches, and information networks. They also help the cause of freedom by hiding, supplying and supporting rebels, priests and warriors of The Cathedral. They also spread words of hope and encouragement among the people by reporting triumphs and good deeds on whispering lips.

A typical community under the rule of the monsters, but who actively supports The Cathedral will have a handful of secret operatives and champions working out of their town. These heroes strike for freedom and disappear back into the shadows before the villains can counterattack. Their guerilla tactics might bring to the minds of Earth scholars the legends of Robin Hood and Zorro. Knights of the Order of the Temple, Knights of the Order of the Hospital and Freelancers are usually involved in underground operations and serve as the community’s covert protectors. Priests of Light, monks, apok, practitioners of magic, and adventurers may also establish or participate in these organizations (although the three latter O.C.C.s tend to be wanderers who seldom stay at one location for any length of time).

The Darkness within The Cathedral

The Cathedral and its legion of well intentioned champions is not without its blemishes. There are highly placed individuals interested only in restoring the power they once held, rather than saving lives or restoring freedom. They work fastidiously to establish doctrines and create new laws that will best serve their power structure. They are men and women who miss the gilded halls, the smell of incense and the collection plates rattling with new money. They are nearly as selfish and evil as the monsters they fight, and use the courageous, good and kindhearted champions for their own misguided purposes. They knowingly breed hate, fear, and vengeance to control and dominate “their” people. They try to manipulate the heroes and warriors, like the playing pieces in a much grander game of conquest and power, for it is they who would be kings. It is they who want to hold the power and reap the rewards of conquest and victory. The outcries of

the oppressed are a tool to be used in directing and motivating their soldiers. Worst of all, some have secretly allied themselves with the very demons who enslave their people; all for the lust of power or glory.

The poor fool who dares to question the motives, conduct, or justice of these evil high priests (whether that fool be a peasant, hero or fellow priest) is chastised as being misguided or confused. Those who persist in their questions are accused of being heretics, madmen or traitors, and may even be banished from the church! Those branded as a heretic or traitor are scorned, and in many cases hated, feared and occasionally slain by other “god-fearing” members of The Cathedral. In some cases, the rabble-rouser/heretic disappears in the night, coincidentally falling victim to monsters. Criminals who are proven (despite questionable evidence) to be in league with the Forces of Darkness are imprisoned and/or slain for their crime. Thus are created such frightening rogues as **Lazarus Vesper** and the mysterious, masked demon warrior known only as **The Confessor**.

Social Positions, Power & Money

The value of a person in human society, by human beings, is generally based on his/her position within that society. Personal belongings, including magic items, symbiotes, crystals, gems, special weapons, armor, clothes, riding animals, relics and trinkets from other dimensions may buy a certain amount of respect and can be used to purchase/trade for services or material goods, but have little effect on that person’s place in society. Similarly, physical, psionic, magical or supernatural power may evoke fear and obedience, but it will not earn the characters any respect, love or reverence by humans. The Unholy and his minions are seen as worthless scum, yet it is the monsters who rule much of the world and dominate most human beings. This has only earned them their hate not respect.

A character is typically judged by his standing within the community and reaps the benefits of that position. The **high priest** is the absolute highest social rank one can achieve, with the possible exception of a “*sainted*” *hero*. The high priest is the royalty of Wormwood’s humans and is practically worshipped. High priests are like kings. They serve as spiritual and political leaders, as well as the generals of the Armies of Light. The lesser priests, knights, freelancers, and citizens all respect, honor and obey these leaders. The average citizen will jump to his feet and do everything in his power to fulfill any request, laws or edicts. It is among the high priests where such absolute power sows the seeds of corruption. Only the feared and outcast apok dare to regularly question and ignore orders from on high (which usually earns them the disdain of knights and citizens alike).

By comparison, the **average priest** is like a noble lord or prince, second in the hierarchy only to the high priest. They are highly regarded and honored as leaders and heroes because of the vital role they play in the community. Priests settle disputes, make judgements, heal the sick, feed the hungry, raise water from the ground, help build cities, slay monsters, protect the people, offer words of comfort and inspiration, bring news, offer prayers, bury the dead, and much more. In exchange for these valuable and often dangerous services, they are automatically given access to all the facilities the community has to offer.

They are provided with a nice (if not the nicest) place to live, given food and drink, praised in song and festivals, awarded gifts as tokens of gratitude and affection, and are treated to a great deal of attention and comfort. In some cases, they receive just about anything they need or want. However under most circumstances, they are given or offered more than they need or accept. Most priests and good high priests are kind and generous characters who understand the hardships of the average citizen. Thus, they ask only for their necessities and little more in return for their good works.

Next on the social totem-pole, as perceived by the average citizen, comes the **wormspeaker**. This character is valued and respected as a shaman or holy-person; a priest-like character who can speak to Wormwood and has many priestly powers. Some wormspeakers are regarded as highly as the priests of light, though few are as revered as high priests. This means they enjoy most of the perks and privileges of the average priest.

Next in the social hierarchy are **True Champions of Light** (heroes of renown), **hospitallers** (the people have higher regard for these knights than the Cathedral's elite Templars), **techno-wizards**, and **templars**, in that order.

In the middle strata, the order is **monks**, **the average citizen**, **freelance warriors**, **wilderness scouts**, and many types of **practitioners of magic**. Among the average citizenry, elders and civic leaders are given the highest regard, followed by parents, children, and single, adult females and males. A particular person may also be regarded above others for acts of heroism, charity or ability.

Temporal warriors, **temporal wizards**, **temporal raiders**, **vagabonds**, **non-allied adventurers**, **mercenaries**, **D-Bees**, **friendly monsters**, **shifters**, **criminals** and **traitors** (pretty much in that order) represent the lowest ranks of society. As such, they are treated with little respect (and often fear or disdain).

The lowliest of the low is the **Apok**, who is feared more than the dreaded Dark Priests and as much as any monsters serving The Unholy.

Goods and services are acquired by the trade of other goods and services. For example, citizens will gladly provide knights, freelancers and even mercenaries with modest room and board, food, sharpen weapons, fix or even replace armor, and provide most *basic* needs in exchange for their protection from bandits and monsters. Armor, weapons, food, items, healing and services can be traded for other goods and services. Remember, the humans of Wormwood are poor and their resources limited. Items from other worlds tend to cost more than common items.

The Hierarchy Within the Cathedral

High Priest
Priest of Light
Knights of the Order of the Temple (aka Templars)
Knights of the Order of the Hospital (aka Hospitallers)
Apok (aka The Avengers)
Monks
Freelancers
Citizens
All others

The Hierarchy Within Human Society

High Society

High Priest

Sainted Heroes (famous heroes)

Priest of Light

Wormspeakers

Knights of the Order of the Hospital (aka Hospitallers)

Champions of Light (heroes of renown)

Techno-Wizard

Knights of the Order of the Temple (aka Templars)

Middle Class

Monks

Elder Citizens & Community Leaders

Average Citizens

Freelance Warriors & Heroes

Wilderness Scouts

Practitioners of Magic

Lower Class

Temporal Warriors/Wizards/Raiders

Symbiotic Warriors

Vagabonds

Unallied Adventurers

Mercenaries

D-Bees

Holy Terrors

Shifters

Criminals

Traitors

Apok

All others

The Priest of Light O.C.C.

Long ago, the priest was a scholar, teacher, healer and spiritual leader. Today, the priest must add warrior to his list of duties. All are versed in the basics of combat and self defense. Many wear armor and carry weapons, but most still consider themselves to be teachers, healers and counselors, rather than fighters.

All priests of light are versed in the lore regarding Wormwood and the monsters that infest it. This information includes the creatures' weaknesses, strengths, habits and how to best protect against them. The priest is also knowledgeable about symbiotes and has the power to remove them.

The greatest mystical power of the priest is his or her ability to commune with and manipulate the planet Wormwood. Remember that Wormwood is alive — the buildings, spires, and mountains are all part of its living body. Through prayer and concentration, the priest actually changes and shapes a tiny area of that living body. This ability is most striking when exhibited inside the living buildings. With a short prayer and mental focus, the character can open a doorway where none existed previously. The wall simply spreads apart as if a pair of giant invisible hands were pushing soft clay. Water fountains emerge from the floor/ground like a blossoming flower and then shrink back into the ground as if it had never existed. Portals can be made to close



and stairways made to emerge from the very walls. The priest can magically make a hut rise from the ground and alter living buildings in any way he desires.

This means the priest plays a pivotal role in the construction and design of buildings, and the survival of humans. When freedom fighters make a siege against the enemy (or try to sneak into demon strongholds) a priest leads the way, creating doorways in solid, mega-damage walls, closing off exits, repelling parasites and defending against evil. In fact, a priest makes the perfect urban spy and is typically a member of any reconnaissance team or commando strike force sent into the cities or against crawling towers.

Despite the few evil and power hungry individuals within the church's high command, most priests of light are caring and compassionate men and women who help the downtrodden. They fight to keep the spark of humanity and the quest for freedom alive. Some wander from city to city righting injustices and slaying monsters. There are even priests known as "monster hunters." Many priests join the knights and freelancers as members of an armed force, healing the injured, protecting the good, and fighting at the side of trained soldiers. Some stay at temples or within a community to help build defenses, organize the people, and establish secret networks of resistance fighters. Others focus on healing, teaching and guidance. All are noble characters trying to do what they can to restore peace to their world.

O.C.C. Abilities for the Wormwood Priest of Light

1. **Alignment:** Any, but the majority are good. Approximately 5% are evil, 20% are selfish, 20% unprincipled, 35% scrupulous and 20% principled.

2. **P.P.E.:** Permanent Base: $1D4 \times 10 + 50$, plus an additional 2D6 P.P.E. per level of experience. Additional mystic energy can be drawn from symbiotic crystals, stones and other priests (if given freely). Unlike the practitioners of magic from **Rifts**, they cannot draw energy from other beings, except by blood sacrifice or when offered it from other priests. Furthermore, there are no ley lines from which ambient energy can be tapped (however, some subterranean caves are places of power and work like ley lines). P.P.E. is normally restored at a rate of four points for every hour of rest.
3. **Meditation:** The ability to focus one's thought in prayer is a necessity of life for the priest. Without it, they cannot use their magic powers. Meditation and prayer also enables the character to regain spent P.P.E. at a rate of ten points per hour. Meditation restores physical damage at a rate two times faster than ordinary people.
4. **+20 M.D.C.** (S.D.C. in non-magic rich environments); remember all native humans of Wormwood have adapted to the energies of the Living Planet and are mega-damage creatures in P.P.E. rich environments such as Wormwood and Rifts Earth. Roll 1D6 per each level of experience to determine the M.D.C./hit points. Body armor is also worn for additional protection. **Note:** Human visitors from Earth or the Palladium world will be considered weak and delicate S.D.C. beings.
5. **O.C.C. Bonuses:** +2 to save vs horror factor, +3 to save vs supernatural and psionic possession, +1 to save vs magic.
6. **Communion with Wormwood (magic powers):** The priest starts with the following powers over Wormwood.
 - Create a Burial Place
 - Create a Fountain of Water
 - Create an Opening
 - Close an Opening
 - Life Fuel
 - Locate Places of Evil
 - Impervious to Symbiotes
 - Mold Structures

The character selects one additional ability at levels one and two, two abilities at level three and four, and one for each subsequent level of experience.

The Priest of Light O.C.C.

Attribute Requirements: None. A high I.Q., M.A. and M.E. are a definite advantage, but not a necessity. **Note:** Reduce skill bonuses by half if the character's I.Q. is six or less.

O.C.C. Skills:

- Lore: Monsters & Demons (+15%)
- Lore: Wormwood (35% + 5% per level; includes the history, legends and world information presented in this book).
- Language: American (98%)
- Language: Demongogian (+20%)
- Literacy: American (+20%)
- Math: Basic (+20%)
- First Aid (+10%)
- Wilderness Survival (+10%)
- W.P. Blunt
- W.P. of choice
- Hand to Hand: Basic

The basic combat skill can be increased to expert at the cost of one "other" skill selection or hand to hand: martial arts at a cost of two "other" skills.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select six "other" skills from any of the available categories; plus one additional skill at levels three, six, nine and twelve. **Note:** Available skills may include "off-world" skills such as botany, chemistry, computer operation and piloting tech-vehicles.

Communication: Any

Domestic: Any (+15%)

Electrical: None

Espionage: Any

Mechanical: None

Medical: None, other than O.C.C. skill.

Military: None

Physical: Any except acrobatics and boxing.

Pilot: Any, except power armor, robots, tanks, and spaceships.

Pilot Related: None

Rogue: Any

Science: Any (+10%)

Technical: Any (+15%)

W.P.: Any

Wilderness: Any (+5%)

Secondary Skills: The character gets to select four secondary skills from those listed. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantage of the bonus listed in the parentheses. All secondary skills start at the base skill level.

Standard Equipment: Two hooded robes for travelling, one ceremonial robe, a pair of boots, a pair of gloves, a hat, first-aid kit, sleeping bag, blanket, 1D4 small pouches, one medium size sack, backpack or satchel, utility belt, 50 feet of rope (15 m; made from angel hair), and 1D4 weeks of food rations.

Weapons: 1D4 wooden stakes and mallet, silver, crystal or resin cross, and a choice of two or three weapons. Most use a combination of the ancient, modern and magic, player's choice, although the availability of magic items may be limited by the GM (most likely techno-wizard items).

Armor: Chain mail and various types of light armor provides 40 M.D.C. with no prowl penalty. A half suit of plate armor and padding provides 50 M.D.C. but is -5% to prowl. Light plate or scale mail 60 M.D.C., but -10% to prowl. Medium plate, banded or splint armor 75 M.D.C., but -15% to prowl. Full plate offers 100 M.D.C., but has a -20% prowl penalty. Note that there are dozens of different styles of armor. Characters can also wear armor from Rifts Earth or any other world. Most priests tend to wear light to medium armor.

Transportation: Most walk.

Money: Not applicable. Valuables, weapons, food and services are usually given in exchange for other items or services. A character is typically judged by his standing within the community. Most priests are highly respected and honored within the human society of Wormwood. Thus, they are automatically given access to all (or most) buildings/homes, provided with a nice place to sleep, given food and drink, and treated to a great deal of attention and comfort.

Cybernetics & Bionics: Virtually non-existent, except for what other-dimensional visitors bring with them from their home world.

Symbiotes: The priest of light never uses symbiotic organisms but can summon the battle saint and other symbiotes, and can use stones and crystals.

Note: The typical player character should start at level one or two. The typical range of experience for the average non-player character will be 1D4 + 2.

High Priest (NPC)

There is a congress of high priests who operate as the ruling body of the Cathedral. Generally, each major city has one high priest. Those whose city or territory has been conquered by the Forces of Darkness and/or is occupied by monsters, is either in exile at one of the free cities or leads the underground freedom fighters and/or church in that area. The largest number of displaced high priests and other priests and servants of the Cathedral are located in the Kingdom of Light at the city known as the Cathedral Stronghold.

The High Priest is a social status achieved by experienced priests and those who are recognized and elected as the heads of the Cathedral. The church rulers are usually high level (9th and higher) and make the laws, administer justice, command the armies of the Cathedral (see knights) and direct the efforts of other Champions of Light who have joined their struggle.

The Cathedral holds command over two armies of knights, the Knights of the Temple and the Knights of the Hospital. They also try to manage and control two sub-groups of special operatives, the Apok and monks.

O.C.C. Abilities for the High Priest of Light

1. **Alignment:** Approximately 10% are evil, 20% are selfish, 10% unprincipled, 40% scrupulous and 20% principled.
2. **P.P.E.:** Same as the average priest, plus a special bonus of 1D4 × 10 points.
3. **Meditation:** Same.
4. **M.D.C. Bonus:** Add another +10 M.D.C.
5. **O.C.C. Bonuses:** Additional bonuses: Another +2 to save vs horror factor, +2 to save vs supernatural and psionic possession, and +1 to save vs magic.
6. **Communion with Wormwood:** Same, plus select three additional spells of choice.
7. **Attribute Requirements:** An I.Q. and M.A. of 12 or higher. A higher M.E. and P.E. are advantageous, but not a necessity.
8. **Level Requirement:** A high priest must be 9th level or higher. Most are 9th to 13th level, few are 14th or 15th level.
9. **O.C.C. Skills:** Same as the Priest of Light, but add six "other" skills all at fifth level proficiency.



Apok, The Avenger

The Apok is the most notorious of the Cathedral's legion of warriors and protectors. These are men and women who started life as Champions of Light. Some, like the Confessor, are believed to have even been priests of light who fell prey to greed, hate, envy or any number of other vices and joined the Forces of Darkness. They served the Unholy for many years, but they have since seen the light and have forsaken the ways of evil. The apok have again joined the fight against evil and have dedicated their lives to the eradication of the Unholy and his dark minions from Wormwood.



The apok have stared into the face of evil and seen their own reflection. They have walked the path of evilness and hurt (if not killed) many people. They are truly sorry for their past and are dedicated 100% to the destruction of evil! They cannot be bribed, tempted, or diverted from their task! This keen eye for recognizing evil is used on all beings and has given these Champions of Light a clear view of the corruption and evil that is slowly spreading in the heart of the Cathedral. This caused some apok to point an accusing finger at some of the evil and selfish high priests who are using the church for their own means. Some, like the infamous Confessor, have defied orders and even attacked a high priest. They have been branded as dangerous rogues, heretics or traitors and are the most feared — and said to have again become servants of evil. However, for now, the apok turn their attention to the greater evil of the Unholy and his demonic followers.

The Apok target the most diabolic and inhuman of villains and are merciless in their fight against them. They are especially hard on fellow humans who have sold out their own people for personal power, wealth or glory. Yet, they are also capable of showing incredible compassion to the innocent and good who suffer at the hands of evil.



Despite their courage, sacrifice and good deeds, the apok are feared and viewed with great suspicion. They were evil once, so people wonder and fear that they may be lured to the darkness again. The apok understand and accept these sentiments. They do not blame the people for their fear and apprehension, even hate — after all, they betrayed them once, they earn their distrust, resentment and fears. It is the price all apok pay for their past treachery and evil deeds. That is why they wear the demon mask as a brand and reminder of their past crimes. So that all may know that they were once fallen champions, but have risen to become the living nightmare of the Forces of Darkness and the avengers of the people.

The Unholy and his minions hate and fear the apok above all others. They know that these heroes have an uncanny insight to their tactics, desires, pleasures and the inner workings of their minds. The apok know their cities and many of their dark secrets because they were once part of their evil legion. The minions of darkness see the apok's demon mask as the symbol of their destruction, the eradication of evil and a reflection of doom the demons have brought upon themselves.

When a villain becomes an apok, he must be truly sorry for his vile past, must be 100% committed to changing his life and dedicated to destroying the Forces of Darkness even if means sacrificing his own life to do so. To make the transformation to become a true apok, the character prays and concentrates, then steps into a life vat cauldron. If he is 100% sincere, he will emerge 2D4 minutes later, reborn as a Champion of Light. All old, original O.C.C. skills are lost and a new life (and experience table) begun as one of the apok. The character's alignment will become principled or scrupulous, his demon mask will be held in his hand, and he will have the powers of the apok (and of the mask whenever it is worn). The reborn character always starts as a first level apok. The typical player character should start at level one or two. The typical range of experience for the average non-player character will be 1D4 + 3. Less than 10% of the apok are higher than 7th level experience. It is estimated that there are less than 1000 of these champions.





The Powers & Abilities of the Apok

1. **Alignment:** Good! 40% are principled and 60% scrupulous.
2. **P.P.E.:** Permanent Base: $1D4 \times 10 + 20$, plus an additional 2D6 P.P.E. per level of experience. Additional mystic energy can be drawn from symbiotic crystals, and stones. They cannot draw energy from other beings and will not engage in blood sacrifice, even of the most foul villain. The character's P.P.E. reserve is restored at a rate of four points for every hour of rest or through meditation.
3. **Meditation:** The ability to focus one's thoughts in prayer enables the character to regain spent P.P.E. at a rate of ten points per hour and gives the apok the ability to pilot battle saints and battle saint orbs.
4. **+40 M.D.C.** (S.D.C. in non-magic rich environments); remember all native humans of Wormwood have adapted to the energies of the living planet and are mega-damage creatures in P.P.E. rich environments such as Wormwood and Rifts Earth. Roll 1D6 per each level of experience to determine the M.D.C./hit points. Also see the 200 M.D.C. bonus from the mask. Body armor is seldom worn for additional protection.
5. **Communion with Wormwood (Priestly magic powers):**
Close an Opening
Create an Opening
Create Shelter
Heat Point
Hell Fire (inflicts $3D4 \times 10$ damage when cast by an apok)
Impervious to Symbiotes (excluding the demon mask, battle saint and battle saint orb)
Invisible to Magic Seeing (Special: Constantly on with no P.P.E. cost)
Locate Home Town
Locate Places of Evil
Repel Symbiotes
The character selects one additional ability at levels four, eight and 12, excluding summoning magic.
6. **Impervious to horror factor — always saves.** The apok has walked with monsters and stared into the blackness of his own soul and potential for evil — there is nothing more frightening.
7. **Impervious to all forms of possession and mind control.** Having seen the depths of his own potential for evil has given the apok an iron will, great determination and an unbreakable spirit. This character is dedicated to good and nothing will stop him, short of death.
8. **Supernatural strength and endurance.** The strength of the apok's resolve has given both the spirit and the body superhuman strength. Add +2D6 points to P.S. (considered supernatural), +3D6 to spd, +2 to save vs poison, disease, and all types of magic. Also see bonuses from the mask.

The Brand of the Apok: The Demon Mask

The Apok is further empowered by the Demon Mask. This mask is not a sign of evil, nor meant as a badge of honor, it is worn as a brand to remind the apok of his former life and crimes. The mask tells all who see it that this warrior was a Champion of Light, a traitor who turned to evil and became a minion of darkness. It is said that when the Unholy is slain and all of his evil minions have been destroyed or cast off of Wormwood, that

the mask will become powerless and the apok can finally live in peace.

The mask of each Apok is different. It is said that each man or woman shapes the mask by his or her mind and the guilt of their past crimes. Although others may wear ornamental masks made to resemble a monster or demon, only the apok wears the demon masks of Wormwood, a living symbiotic organism created by the living planet and molded by the repentant warrior. The mask sticks to the face like magic and cannot be forcibly removed. Only the apok warrior can remove the mask when he so desires.

1. The mask gives the Apok a horror factor of 16 to all demons and evildoers of Wormwood, including the Unholy. The mask reflects the evil of demonic creatures and shows them the face of their own destruction. Horror factor is 10 when viewed by characters of a good alignment.
2. All of the apok's attacks inflict double damage to supernatural beings and creatures of magic, including demons, vampires, dragons and alien intelligences. The damage is doubled regardless of the type of weapons, so a dagger that normally inflicts 1D4 damage will inflict 2D4 damage. A laser rifle that normally inflicts 4D6 M.D. will inflict $4D6 \times 2$ M.D.; furthermore even S.D.C. weapons inflict mega-damage against supernatural evil when in the hands of the apok!
3. +1 attack per melee
4. +1 on initiative
5. +200 physical M.D.C. and heals ten times faster than normal.
6. The mask itself is indestructible and radiates magic.

The Apok O.C.C.

Attribute Requirements: None. A high I.Q. and M.E. are a definite advantage, but not a necessity. **Note:** Reduce skill bonuses by half if the character's I.Q. is six or less.

O.C.C. Skills:

- Lore: Monsters & Demons (+25%)
- Lore: Wormwood (25% + 5% per level; includes the history, legends and world information presented in this book).
- Language: American (at 98%)
- Language: Demongogian (at 98%)
- Language: Gobblely (at 98%)
- Literacy: American (+20%)
- Math: Basic (+30%)
- Wilderness Survival (+20%)
- W.P. Blunt
- W.P. Sword
- W.P.: Three of choice
- Hand to Hand: Expert

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select six "other" skills from any of the available categories; plus one additional skill at levels three, six, nine and twelve. **Note:** Available skills may include "off-world" skills such as botany, chemistry, computer operation and piloting tech-vehicles.

- Communication: None
- Domestic: None
- Electrical: None
- Espionage: Any (+10%)
- Mechanical: None



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Medical: None
Military: None
Physical: Any except acrobatics
Pilot: Any, except power armor, robots, tanks, and spaceships.
Pilot Related: None
Rogue: None
Science: Any (+10%)
Technical: Any (+10%; +20% on any language or literacy)
W.P.: Any
Wilderness: Any (+10%)

Secondary Skills: The character gets to select four secondary skills from those listed. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantage of the bonus listed in the parentheses. All secondary skills start at the base skill level.

Standard Equipment: Two hooded cloaks, two shirts, two pairs of pants, a pair of boots, a pair of gloves, sleeping bag, blanket, 1D4 small pouches, one medium size sack, backpack or saddlebag, 1D4 utility belts, 50 feet of rope (15 m; made from angel hair), and 2D4 weeks of food rations.

Weapons: A silver, crystal or resin cross, 1D6 wooden stakes and mallet, two silver plated daggers, 1D4 + 1 knives, sword and a choice of two additional weapons of choice and one magic weapon of choice. Most use ancient and magic weapons exclusively.

Armor: Light leather, padded and resin chain mail may be worn (20 to 40 M.D.C., but mostly for show).

Transportation: Most walk.

Money: Not applicable. Valuables, weapons, food and services are usually given in exchange for other items or services. A character is typically judged by his standing within the community. The apok are feared, disliked and on the bottom of the social totem-pole.

Cybernetics & Bionics: Virtually non-existent, except for what other-dimensional visitors bring with them from their home world.

Symbiotes: Never uses any symbiote except for the battle saint or orb.

The first ten years of a monk's training are dedicated to the mastery of himself and the martial arts. A disciple only becomes a first level monk after these years of arduous training. Monasteries are simple, bare bone communities where young and would-be monks are cloistered away from the temptations of the world to learn martial arts and develop inner strength. It is interesting to note that many monks will learn to master their inner spirit in ways of superhuman focus and control, but seldom find inner peace because they are so driven. In fact, the majority are obsessed with destroying the Unholy and his dark minions and wander the land seeking out evil in its myriad forms.

The monks, along with the apok, recognize some of the evil and self-serving forces within the Cathedral and are not afraid to point it out. Monks can be extremely self-righteous and outspoken. Many openly criticize the Cathedral and treat its priests and Knights of the Temple with sarcasm and little respect. This has created a certain amount of animosity between the priests of the Cathedral, especially the bad ones, and some members of the knightly orders, particularly the Knights of the Temple. Even many of the good priests and knights find a lot of monks to be unnecessarily rude, crude and belligerent. However, a monk will show great respect and honor towards knights, priests and fighters who have proven themselves in combat. Many treat the apok like celebrities.

O.C.C. Abilities for the Wormwood Monk

1. **Alignment:** Any, but the vast majority are good.
2. **P.P.E.:** Permanent Base: 1D6 × 10, plus an additional 2D6 P.P.E. per level of experience. Additional mystic energy can be drawn from crystals. Unlike practitioners of magic from **Rifts**, they cannot draw additional energy from other beings, except by blood sacrifice, and there are no ley lines. P.P.E. is normally restored at a rate of four points for every hour of rest.
3. **Meditation:** The ability to focus one's thoughts in prayer is important for the monk to use his magic powers, special martial arts powers of mastery and to pilot battle saints and orbs. Meditation and prayer also enables the character to regain spent P.P.E. at a rate of ten points per hour, and increases healing by three times.
4. **1D4 × 10 + 30 M.D.C.** (S.D.C. in non-magic rich environments); remember, all native humans of Wormwood have adapted to the magic energies of the planet and are mega-damage creatures in P.P.E. rich environments such as Wormwood and Rifts Earth. Roll 1D6 per each level of experience to determine base hit points/M.D.C. Body armor can also be worn for additional protection, though few monks ever do so. Human visitors from Earth or the Paladium world will be considered weak and delicate beings.
5. **O.C.C. Bonuses:** +3 to save vs horror factor, +3 to save vs supernatural and psionic possession, +1 to save vs magic.
6. **Communion with Wormwood (Priestly Powers):** Select four from the following:
 - Close an Opening
 - Create an Opening
 - Create a Fountain of Water
 - Locate Places of Evil
 - Locate Food & Resources

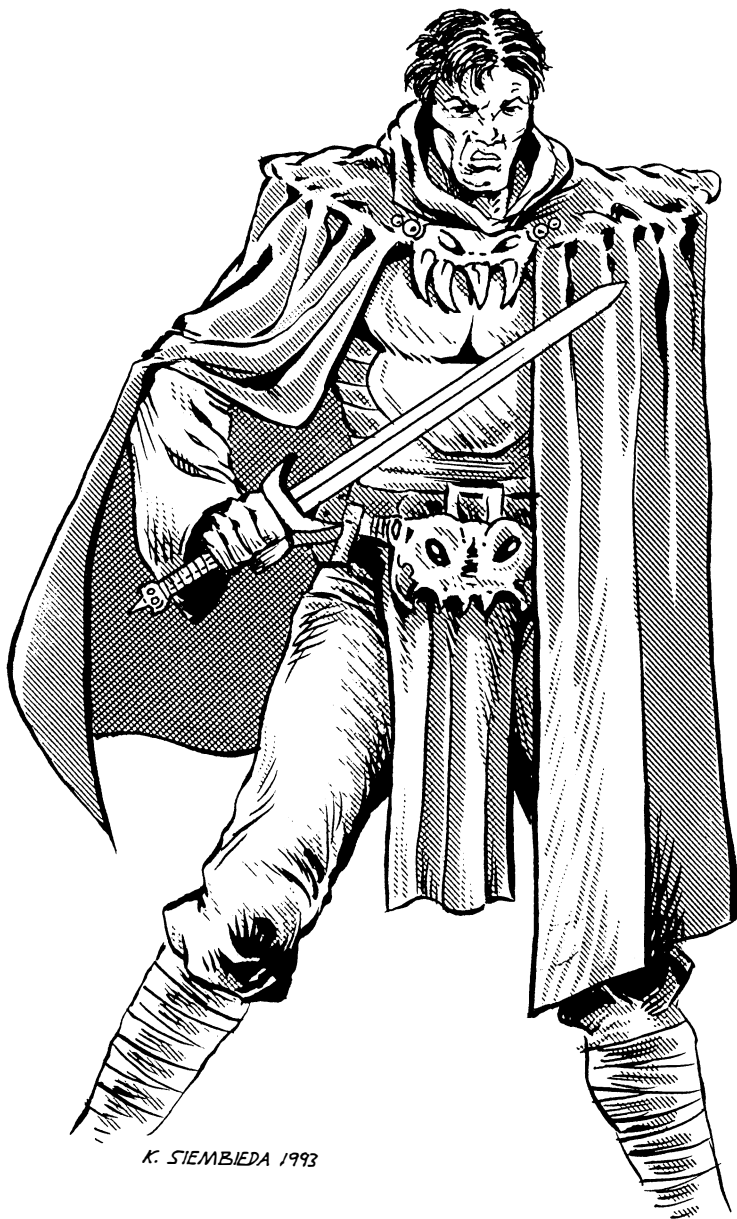
Monk O.C.C.

The monk represents a loose knit organization of religious communities that have splintered away from the laws and teachings of the Cathedral. Most monks believe that the Cathedral is too removed from the people and too concerned with material wealth and power. They also see the leaders of the Cathedral as being bogged down by bureaucracy and politics, making them a ponderous group of plotters and not expedient enough in making important decisions and fighting monsters.

Wormwood monks are very narrowly focused. Their goals are to destroy all monsters and help the innocent. To keep themselves in touch with the needs of the people, they have taken an oath of poverty and have forsaken all political aspirations (and view those who have such aspirations with distrust). They are common folk, like the people they protect. Monks also help the common people in their daily chores and work. When not involved in combat they are working the fields, building and helping healers and teachers. The typical monk is a hard working laborer as well as a master of hand to hand combat.

Locate Home Town
Summon Battle Saints & Orbs
Invisible to Magic Seeing

7. **Powers of Mastery:** Each monk also studies one specific area of focus and ability. Each area of mastery provides the character with additional orientation, skills, and superhuman abilities. Select only ONE of the three available areas of focus and study.



The Three Areas of Mastery

The Art of Defense
The Art of Offense
The Art of Meditation

The Art of Defense

Defensive Combat Techniques: Paired weapons, punch, kick, entangle, multiple attackers, and Judo style body flip.

Additional bonuses: +2 to roll with impact, +4 to pull punch, +2 on initiative, but ONLY when defending, -2 on initiative for acts of aggression.

Additional Skills: Gymnastics, running, escape (+10%) and two weapon proficiencies of choice from any category.

Disposition: Characters who select this area of mastery tend to be calm, soft spoken and courteous. Most are good natured, friendly, diplomatic and try to avoid unnecessary violence. However, they are the defenders of the weak and skilled fighters trained in the ways of martial arts. This monk will not tolerate injustice, suffering or stand idle while innocent people are being threatened, molested or hurt.

1. Automatic Dodge: An automatic dodge means the character can dodge instead of parry without losing an attack/melee action.

2. Body Hardening: +2D4 × 10 M.D.C. (S.D.C. in an S.D.C. environment weak in magic energy), impervious to normal fire and cold, and resistant to mega-damage fire and cold (half damage). The body is like iron and the character can block strikes from blades, flaming swords and energy weapons with his bare hands. Such blocks will hurt and do damage but will not break the skin!

Punches and kicks are like getting hit with a lead pipe. Mega-damage to supernatural monsters: 2D4 M.D. from a punch or 2D6 M.D. from a kick. S.D.C./hit point damage to mortal creatures: 3D6 S.D.C. from a punch or 5D6 S.D.C. from a kick.

3. Fast Hands: The martial artist can move his hands so quickly that he can block/parry every attack leveled at him simultaneously from multiple attackers without using up a melee attack/action.

4. Kick Parry: The ability to block an opponent's punch/kick/strike with one's feet and legs. A parry does not inflict any damage.

5. Tumble Strike: The martial artist can roll or somersault toward an attacker, making the monk +3 to dodge any attacks aimed at him. He can then strike his attacker by bowling into him, inflicting normal damage and knocking the attacker to the ground (loses one melee attack and initiative, giving the monk the opportunity to pin him or press his attack).

The Arts of Offense

Offensive Combat Techniques: Paired weapons, kick attack, jump kick, leap kick, multiple attackers, and simultaneous attack.

Additional bonuses: +2 on initiative, +1 to strike and +1 additional attack/action per melee round.

Additional Skills: Acrobatics, boxing, W.P. targeting (all) and four weapon proficiencies of choice from any category.

Disposition: Characters who select this area of mastery tend to be outwardly bold, confident, outspoken, undiplomatic and aggressive. They enjoy a challenge, hard labor, are incredibly courageous, flamboyant and dedicated to destroying evil. Most are fairly good natured, but actively seek injustice and cruelty so that the cause may be removed and justice restored.

1. Spirit Fist: A punch, jab or open hand strike that inflicts 1D4 × 10 M.D. to supernatural beings, demons, elementals and creatures of magic, including dragons (1D4 × 10 S.D.C. to non-mega-damage beings). This attack counts as two melee attacks/actions, thus a character with four hand to hand attacks per melee round can use two spirit fist attacks or one spirit fist strike and two conventional attacks.

2. Spirit Kick: A powerful kick that inflicts 1D6 × 10 M.D. to supernatural beings, demons, elementals and creatures of magic, including dragons (1D6 × 10 S.D.C. to non-mega-damage beings). This attack counts as two melee attacks/actions,

thus a character with four hand to hand attacks per melee round can use two spirit kick attacks or one spirit kick strike and two conventional attacks. Penalty: The kicker automatically loses initiative for the next combat round.

3. Spirit Leap Kick: A powerful leap kick that inflicts $3D6 \times 10$ M.D. to supernatural beings, demons, elementals and creatures of magic, including dragons. This must be the character's first and ONLY attack for that melee (the leap concentration and focus uses up all other attacks). All the character can do after the leap kick is defend himself. This means if the monk had four attacks per melee round, his first strike must be the leap kick and all four attacks are used up. After he lands back on his feet, the monk has no more attacks that melee round and can only defend against other attacks by parrying or dodging.

4. Vital Strike: The martial artist focuses his attack to make one vital strike to achieve one of the following results.

1. Disarm opponent: The weapon(s) held in the hands of the character are knocked out of his grasp and go skittering $1D4 \times 10$ feet away! The victim of the attack is surprised and loses the initiative (if he had it) and one melee action/attack. This attack also makes the martial artist seem to be in control of the fight and extremely dangerous. This feeling of being in danger gives the monk a temporary horror factor of 12. If the opponent fails his save vs horror factor he will either surrender or run away from his attacker (may fight somebody else), but regains his composure after $1D4$ minutes.

2. Knock down and stun: This is usually a sweeping kick that knocks the character to the ground. The surprised victim of the strike loses two melee round attacks/actions, initiative, and is in a vulnerable position.

3. Critical bull's eye strike: The monk hits exactly whatever target he was aiming for and inflicts double damage to it!

4. Nerve strike: The attacker hits a part of the body that causes one of his opponent's limbs (typically hand, arm or leg) to become temporarily paralyzed. Paralysis lasts for $1D4$ melee rounds (15 to 60 seconds).

Note: Each vital strike counts as two melee round attacks/actions. All vital strikes are only successful on the roll of a natural (unmodified) 17, 18, 19 or 20. If the natural roll is too low but still hits with modifiers, the character strikes and does normal damage, but still uses up two melee actions in the attempt.

The Art of Meditation & Spirit

Combat Techniques: Basic: punch, kick, and Judo style body flip.

Additional bonuses: +2 to roll with impact, +1 to pull punch, +1 on initiative, recovers 15 P.P.E. per hour of meditation.

Additional Skills: Art (+10%), prowl (+10%), escape (+10%), palming (+10%), concealment (+10%), climbing (+10%), and two weapon proficiencies of choice from any category.

Disposition: Characters who select this area of mastery tend to be introspective, thinkers and debaters who have a love for life and art. Many are willing to consider or discuss any philosophy or point of view and even debate it with the Unholy himself. At the end of the debate, the monk will stand by his beliefs and will stand up to any bully or monster who threatens him or others. "Philosophical viewpoints aside," the monk

might say, "I must insist you stop your despicable activity, or I will have to stop *you*."

Note: Only one power of meditation can be used at a time.

1. Inner (physical) Strength: The martial artist does not fatigue, is resistant to heat and cold (half damage), temporarily increases P.S. and speed attributes by six points, +4 to save vs poison, drugs or disease, +2 to save vs magic and psionics. Duration: Three minutes per level of experience. Limitations: This power can be used three times per 24 hour period.

2. Spirit Strength (overcome adversity): The character can temporarily overcome penalties from exhaustion, pain, drugs, sickness, injury, insanity, psionics, and magic through sheer force of will (mind over matter). As long as the monk's will is in force the penalties are completely gone, but after the period of focus is over, the character is again plagued by the penalties and may collapse. Duration: Three minutes per level of experience. Limitations: This power can be used three times per 24 hour period.

3. Third Eye (aka Spirit Eye): See the invisible, sense evil, sense magic, +4 to save vs horror factor, impervious to possession and mind control, cannot be tempted to do something contrary to the character's alignment or alliances. Duration: Five minutes per level of experience. Limitations: This power can be used three times per 24 hour period.

4. Death Strike: This is a power that is used with great reluctance by most monks and may mean his death as well as that of his opponent. It is typically used only against the most dangerous or evil of foes.

The martial artist can summon all of his physical, spiritual and magic energy (must have at least 20 P.P.E.) to inflict a terrible death blow. The attack must be made with the bare hands (or feet/kick) and always strikes. It inflicts $2D4 \times 100$ M.D. to mega-damage creatures or $2D4 \times 100$ S.D.C. to mortal, S.D.C. beings. If the target of the death strike still survives the attack, that character is temporarily paralysed and knocked senseless for $2D4$ minutes, leaving him open to further attack. If given the chance to recover, the victim remains somewhat disoriented and weakened: reduce speed, combat bonuses and the number of melee attacks by half for $1D6 \times 10$ minutes.

Duration: Instant.

Limitations: The death strike can only be used once per 24 hours.

Side Effects: The deadly attack completely drains the martial artist! All P.P.E. points are gone and no other meditative powers can be used for 12 hours. The character drops to his knees, completely exhausted. His limbs feel like lead weights and the events transpiring around him are a blur. He cannot think, fight, move or talk. For the next $1D4$ minutes the character can only kneel or lay on the ground, helpless.

Finally, the monk regains some of his senses and strength. Still, for the next ten minutes he remains extremely weak and can barely move: one melee action per round, speed is reduced by 80%, all bonuses are gone, skills are impossible to perform and he cannot attack. After this period, the character regains more strength and can function at half his normal level. The number of melee actions/attacks, all bonuses, skill proficiencies and speed are half of normal for the next six hours. The character's meditative powers return after 12 hours.



The Monk O.C.C.

Attribute Requirements: None. A high I.Q., M.A. and M.E. are a definite advantage, but not a necessity. **Note:** Reduce skill bonuses by half if the character's I.Q. is six or less.

Typical Alignments: Approximately 2% are evil, 13% selfish, 20% unprincipled, 40% scrupulous and 25% principled.

O.C.C. Skills:

- Lore: Monsters & Demons (+20%)
- Lore: Wormwood (20% + 5% per level; includes the history, legends and world information presented in this book).
- Language: American (98%)
- Language: Demongogian (+20%)
- Literacy American (+5%)
- Sing (+10%)
- Math: Basic (+30%)
- First Aid (+20%)
- Wilderness Survival (+15%)
- Hand to Hand: Martial Arts
- Note:** See area of Mastery for W.P. and specific combat skills.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select six "other" skills from any of the available categories; plus one additional skill at levels three, six, nine and twelve. **Note:** Available skills may include "off-world" skills such as botany, chemistry, computer operation and piloting tech-vehicles.

- Communication: Any
- Domestic: Any (+20%)
- Electrical: None
- Espionage: Any (+5%)
- Mechanical: None
- Medical: None other than O.C.C. skill.
- Military: None
- Physical: Any except acrobatics, gymnastics and boxing.
- Pilot: Any, except power armor, robots, tanks, and spaceships.
- Pilot Related: None

- Rogue: Any (+5%)
- Science: Any (+10%)
- Technical: Any (+10%)
- W.P.: Any
- Wilderness: Any (+10%)

Secondary Skills: The character gets to select four secondary skills from those listed. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantage of the bonus listed in the parentheses. All secondary skills start at the base skill level.

Standard Equipment: Two hooded robes for travelling, sandals or moccasins, a pair of gloves, first-aid kit, sleeping bag, blanket, 1D4 small pouches, 1D4 medium size sacks, backpack or saddlebag, utility belt, 50 feet of rope (15 m; made from angel hair), and 1D4 weeks of food rations.

Weapons: 1D4 wooden stakes and a mallet, crystal or resin cross, and three weapons of choice. Most use a combination of the ancient, modern and magic; player's choice. The availability of magic items may be limited by the GM (most likely techno-wizard items).

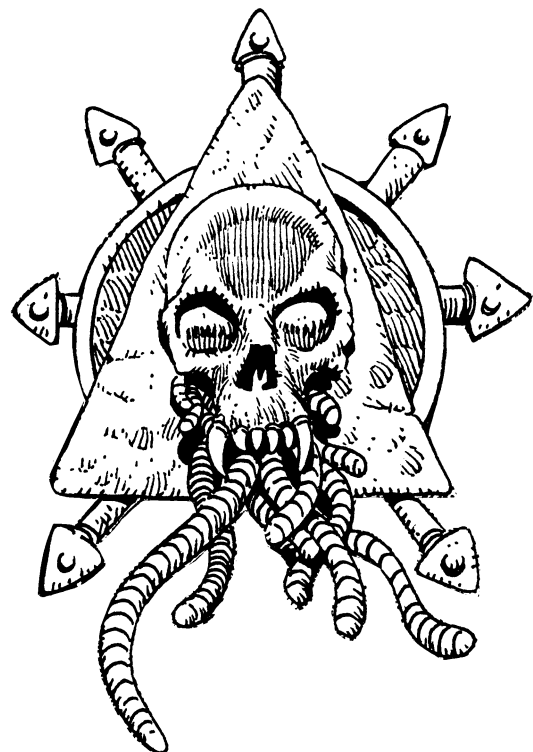
Armor: Most monks wear little or no armor. Armor, especially the heavy and plate types, interferes with movement, agility and speed. Consequently, they would rather rely on their own natural attributes and toughened bodies. Chain mail and various types of light armor provides 40 M.D.C. with no prowl penalty and are the only types considered.

Transportation: Most walk.

Money: Not applicable. A character is typically judged by his standing within the community. Characters exchange goods and services to acquire other goods and services they may need. Monks are highly regarded by most communities, especially those in demon infested lands.

Cybernetics & Bionics: Virtually non-existent, except for what other-dimensional visitors bring with them from their home world.

Symbiotic Organisms: Most monks avoid symbiotes, but may acquire one or two over the years, and will use blood worms and worms of mending.



Wormspeaker O.C.C.

The wormspeaker is born from the peasant class, the common man. He is not usually affiliated with a specific church or kingdom and does not spread any particular doctrine or dogma. They elevate themselves from their humble beginnings through the use of symbiotic organisms and a closeness with the Living Planet, Wormwood. The people consider the wormspeaker to be a holy man and oracle who uses his knowledge and insight to help others. In this respect, the character is more like a shaman or witch doctor than a priest. Although highly regarded, protected and granted favors, few wormspeakers become wealthy or hold positions of power. The closest they come to a throne is to serve as the advisor to the king or his court.

The wormspeakers' occupational character class is usually referred to in the masculine gender because the vast majority (95%) are male. However, women can also become wormspeakers. These characters can see glimpses of the future and sense the presence of evil and magic. Their psionic powers come from a variety of permanent, worm-like symbiotes and similar organisms. These worms give the character a rather repulsive and eerie appearance, most notably a tongue composed entirely of wiggling worms.

They draw their power, through the symbiotes, from the Living Planet, which makes their relationship with the planet more symbiotic than any other character. This special union may be one of the elements that prevents the character from being an evil alignment. The wormspeaker more than any other understands the plight and pain of the living planet, as well as that of the people.

The Powers & Abilities of the Wormspeaker

1. **Alignment:** Any except evil! 20% are anarchist, 20% unprincipled, 20% principled and 40% scrupulous.
2. **P.P.E.:** Permanent Base: $2D4 \times 10 + 30$, plus an additional $2D6$ P.P.E. per level of experience. Additional mystic energy can be drawn from symbiotic crystals, and stones. Unlike the practitioners of magic from **Rifts**, they cannot draw energy from other beings, except by blood sacrifice or when offered it freely from other wormspeakers and priests. Furthermore, there are no ley lines from which ambient energy can be tapped (however, some subterranean caves are places of power and work like ley lines). P.P.E. is normally restored at a rate of four points for every hour of rest.
3. **Meditation:** The ability to focus one's thought in prayer enables the character to regain spent P.P.E. at a rate of ten points per hour and gives the character the ability to pilot battle saints and battle saint orbs. Meditation can also be used to increase his own rate of healing by two times.
4. **+25 M.D.C.** (S.D.C. in non-magic rich environments); remember, all native humans of Wormwood have adapted to the energies of the living planet and are mega-damage creatures in P.P.E. rich environments such as Wormwood and Rifts Earth. Roll $1D6$ per each level of experience to determine the M.D.C./hit points.
5. **O.C.C. Bonuses:** +3 to save vs horror factor, +3 to save vs supernatural and psionic possession, +1 to save vs

magic. + $1D6$ M.E. bonus, + $1D4$ M.A., plus all the bonuses from the symbiotic worms and other organisms.

6. **Penalties:** Reduce the character's P.B. by 50%, no lower than a P.B. of two (takes into consideration all the symbiotic organisms, so don't add those penalties again). -2 P.S., -2 P.P., and - $1D4$ Spd. The wormspeaker has a horror factor of 11 and frightens humans and monsters alike.
7. **Communion with Wormwood (Priestly magic powers):**
 - Close an Opening
 - Create an Opening
 - Create a Fountain of Water
 - Destroy Life Force Cauldron
 - Locate Home Town
 - Locate Places of Evil
 - Remove Symbiotes
 - Ride Giant Parasites
 - Summon and Use Symbiotes
 - Summon Edible Grubs & Worms

Note: The character selects one additional ability per each level of experience. The wormspeaker cannot select the power of impervious to symbiotes and would never create a life force cauldron, magic slime, life force battery, or worm zombie. However, he might use a life force cauldron and magic slime for a good purpose.

8. **Symbiotic Organisms:** The wormspeaker starts out with ALL of the worm symbiotes. He can add one additional symbiote at levels 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 (a total of five, plus worms). Furthermore, he can use symbiotic stones and crystals, the spirit of Wormwood and pilot battle saints and battle saint orbs.
 - Worms of Armor (one set)
 - Worms of Blood (12)
 - Worms of Mending (20)
 - Worm of Power (1)
 - Worm of Seeing (1)
 - Worm of Speech (1)
 - Worm of Spirit (1)

The Wormspeaker O.C.C.

Attribute Requirements: None. A high I.Q. and M.E. are a definite advantage, but not a necessity. **Note:** Reduce skill bonuses by half if the character's I.Q. is six or less.

O.C.C. Skills:

- Sing (+20%)
- Play Musical Instrument (+20%)
- Lore: Monsters & Demons (+20%)
- Lore: Wormwood (40% + 5% per level; includes the history, legends and world information presented in this book).
- Math: Basic (+30%)
- First Aid (+10%)
- Land Navigation (+20%)
- Wilderness Survival (+20%)
- W.P.: One of choice
- Hand to Hand: Basic

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select six "other" skills from any of the available categories; plus one additional skill at levels three, six, nine and twelve. **Note:** Available skills may include "off-world" skills such as botany, chemistry, computer operation and piloting tech-vehicles.



Communication: None
 Domestic: Any (+10%)
 Electrical: None
 Espionage: Any
 Mechanical: None
 Medical: None
 Military: None
 Physical: Any except acrobatics, gymnastics and boxing.
 Pilot: Any, except power armor, robots, tanks, and spaceships.
 Pilot Related: None
 Rogue: None
 Science: Any (+15%)
 Technical: Any (+15%)
 W.P.: Any
 Wilderness: Any

Secondary Skills: The character gets to select four secondary skills from those listed. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantage of the bonus listed in the parentheses. All secondary skills start at the base skill level.

Standard Equipment: Two hooded cloaks, two shirts, two pairs of pants, a pair of boots, a pair of gloves, sleeping bag, blanket, 1D4 small pouches, one medium size sack, backpack or satchel, 1D4 utility belts, 50 feet of rope (15 m; made from angel hair), and 2D4 weeks of food rations.

Weapons: A silver, crystal or resin cross, 1D6 wooden stakes and mallet, two silver plated daggers, one knives, and a choice of one common magic weapon (techno-wizard or made of blood stone or magic crystal). Most use ancient and magic weapons exclusively.

Armor: Most wear worms of armor under their robe or cloak. As an alternative or disguise, they might wear light leather, padded and resin chainmail (20 to 40 M.D.C.). They never wear heavy armor.

Transportation: Most walk or ride giant bug-like parasites.

Money: Not applicable. Valuables, weapons, food and services are usually given in exchange for other items or services. A character is typically judged by his standing within the community. The wormspeaker is treated on par with a priest of light.

Cybernetics & Bionics: Virtually nonexistent, except for what other dimensional visitors bring with them from their home world.

Symbiotes: See number eight under powers and abilities.

Symbiotic Warrior O.C.C.

This character is typically a human or D-bee fighter/warrior type character who relies on the powers provided to him by Wormwood's symbiotic organisms. As a rule, the majority (if not all) of the character's attributes are average or below average.

Dark Symbiotic Warriors are also employed by the Forces of Darkness. The only real difference between them and the player character is their black hearts and evil alignment.

The Powers & Abilities of the Symbiotic Warrior

- 1. Alignment:** Any, but most seem to be anarchist, unprincipled or scrupulous.
- 2. P.P.E.:** Permanent Base: 1D4 × 10, plus an additional 1D6 P.P.E. per level of experience. Additional mystic energy can be drawn from symbiotic organisms, crystals, and stones. However, the symbiotic warrior is not a priest or mage and has few mystic powers. **Note:** The warrior is not trained in the art of meditation.
- 3. +30 M.D.C.** (S.D.C. in non-magic rich environments); remember, all native humans of Wormwood have adapted to the energies of the living planet and are mega-damage creatures in P.P.E. rich environments such as Wormwood and Rifts Earth. Roll 1D6 per each level of experience to determine the M.D.C./hit points.
- 4. O.C.C. Bonuses:** +2 to save vs horror factor, +1 to save vs supernatural and psionic possession, +1 on initiative, +1 to pull punch, +1 to roll with impact, and all the cumulative bonuses from their symbiotic organisms.
- 5. Penalties:** -1 M.E. and -1D4 Spd. The symbiotic warrior has a horror factor of 10 and may frighten humans and monsters alike.
- 6. Communion with Wormwood (Priestly magic powers):**
 Close an Opening
 Create an Opening
 Locate Home Town
 Ride Giant Parasites
Note: The character cannot select additional abilities as he grows in experience.
- 7. Symbiotic Organisms:** The symbiotic warrior starts out with the following symbiotes.

One claw of choice.
 One crawler of choice.
 One star of choice.
 One worm of choice.

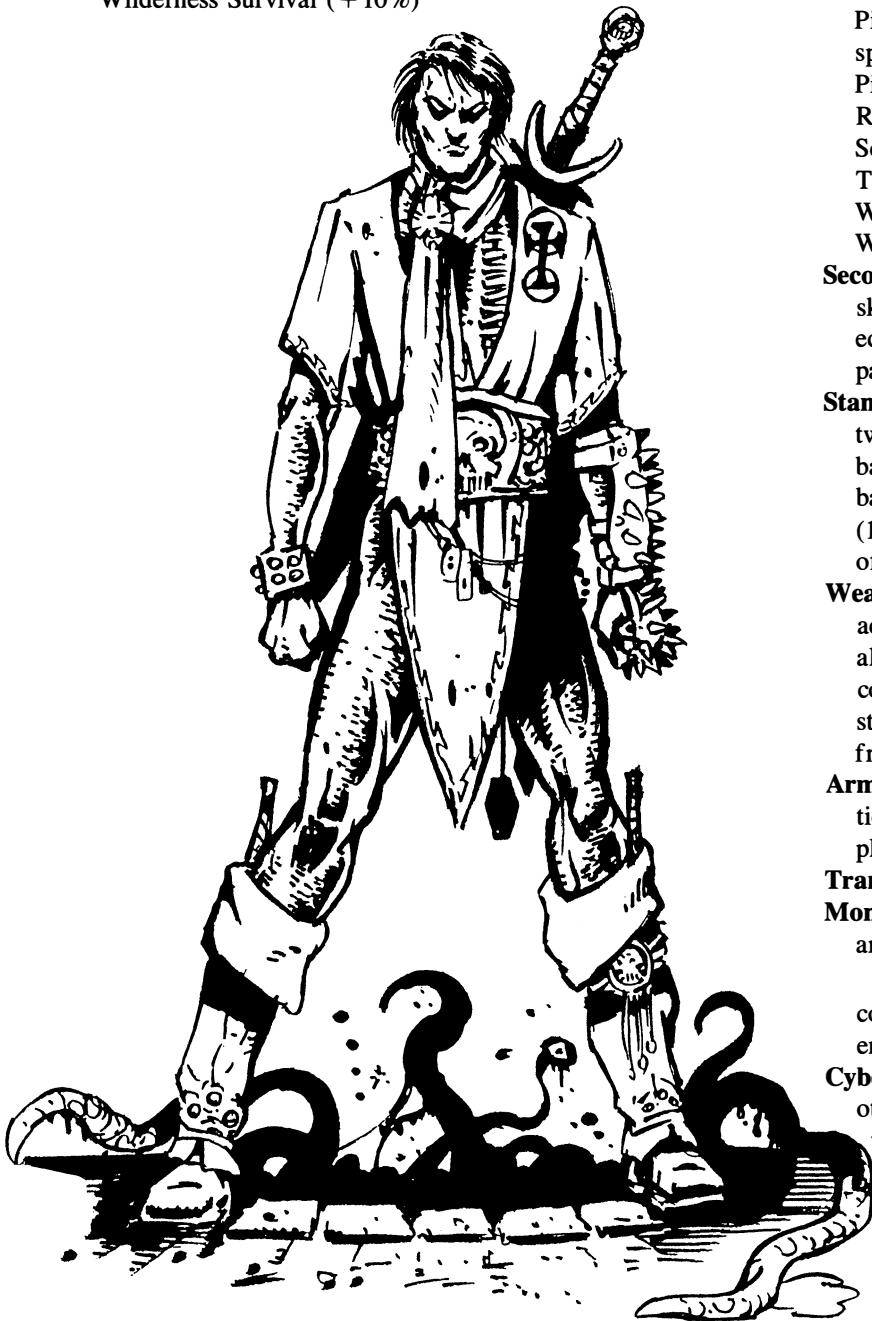
Note: He can add one additional symbiote at levels 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12. Furthermore, he can acquire and use symbiotic stones and crystals, the spirit of Wormwood, worms of blood, worms of mending, and potions and ointments made from magic slime.

The Symbiotic Warrior O.C.C.

Attribute Requirements: None. **Note:** Reduce skill bonuses by half if the character's I.Q. is six or less.

O.C.C. Skills:

Language: American (98%)
 Language: Gobblely (98%)
 First Aid (+5%)
 Land Navigation (+10%)
 Wilderness Survival (+10%)



Horsemanship: All riding animals in general (+5%)
 W.P. Targeting
 W.P. Knife
 W.P. Sword
 W.P.: Three of choice

Hand to Hand: Expert (or assassin if evil)

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select eight "other" skills from any of the available categories; plus one additional skill at levels three, six, nine and twelve. **Note:** Available skills may include "off-world" skills such as botany, chemistry, computer operation and piloting tech-vehicles.

Communication: None

Domestic: Any (+10%)

Electrical: None

Espionage: Any (+5%)

Mechanical: None

Medical: None, other than O.C.C. skill.

Military: None

Physical: Any except acrobatics.

Pilot: Any, except power armor, robots, tanks, and spaceships.

Pilot Related: None

Rogue: None

Science: Math only

Technical: Any (+5%)

W.P.: Any (+5%)

Wilderness: Any (+5%)

Secondary Skills: The character gets to select four secondary skills from those listed. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantage of the bonus listed in the parentheses. All secondary skills start at the base skill level.

Standard Equipment: One hooded cloak or cape, two shirts, two pairs of pants, a pair of boots, a pair of gloves, sleeping bag, blanket, 1D4 small pouches, one medium size sack, backpack or saddlebag, 1D4 utility belts, 100 feet of rope (15 m; made from angel hair), grappling hook and 2D4 weeks of food rations.

Weapons: A silver plated dagger, one knife, a sword and two additional non-magical weapons of choice. The warrior can also select 1D4 magic slime potions and a choice of one fairly common magic weapon (techno-wizard or made of a blood stone or magic crystal). They can also use modern weapons from other worlds.

Armor: Many use symbiotic organisms to provide armor/additional M.D.C., but they can also wear light, medium or heavy plate armor (40 to 100 M.D.C.).

Transportation: Most walk or ride giant bug-like parasites.

Money: Not applicable. Valuables, weapons, food and services are usually given in exchange for other items or services.

A character is typically judged by his standing within the community. The symbiotic warrior is typically on the low end of the social scales.

Cybernetics & Bionics: Virtually non-existent, except for what other-dimensional visitors bring with them from their home world.

Symbiotes: See number seven under powers and abilities.



Holy Terrors R.C.C.

Holy terrors are known as dedicated monster hunters and have always fought on the side of good, but they still frighten most humans. The fear is due in part, because of their inhuman appearance, magic powers, and because they are a complete enigma. Nobody knows who or what they really are! Holy Terrors, as they call themselves, NEVER take off their armor. Many technowizards suspect they are some sort of magic robot and may not even be alive, let alone human. Another theory is that they are the merging of man, machine and magic, which means they may have been human once but have been transformed into something superhuman. On top of this, they possess incredible strength and mystic powers.

Holy terrors first appeared on Wormwood 55 years ago, when a shifter at **Demrogan** opened a dimensional rift and made contact with them. The creatures immediately recognized the minions of darkness and sympathized with the plight of the humans. In a matter of minutes an army of holy terrors was sent to crush the demonic forces. More troops would have arrived, except that the Unholy and his minions were able to fight them and close the rift. The shifter responsible was slain in combat but several thousand holy terrors came to Wormwood before the rift was closed. Since the holy terrors know nothing about dimensional travel, those on Wormwood have no way of returning home and those left on their homeworld have no way of finding Wormwood.

What appears to be artificial armor is part of the being. Ornamental design aspects and color of the armor will vary from one

holy terror to another, denoting individuality. Many of the terrors have adopted American sounding names for easier identification and to make themselves seem more friendly to humans. In many cases they have a dangerous sounding combat name like Brok the Destroyer, but often choose common, even silly nicknames known to their human companions, such as Bob, Sam, Hank, Ernie, Slim, Chubby and so on. Although the creatures may look like a giant suit of walking plate armor, they are not robots and exhibit the full range of human emotions. Perhaps the only difference is that holy terrors are very polite, respectful of others, patient and show a high regard for life.

Note: An estimated 4000 holy terrors arrived on Wormwood. It is believed that 30% have perished fighting the Forces of Darkness. The survivors carry on the struggle.

The Powers & Abilities of the Holy Terror

Alignment: Their alignment can be anarchist (5%), but most are good: 10% unprincipled, 40% scrupulous and 45% principled.

P.P.E.: Permanent Base: 1D4 × 100, plus an additional 20 P.P.E. per level of experience. Additional mystic energy can be drawn from symbiotic crystals and stones. The holy terror is not a priest or mage and cannot draw on ambient energy.

R.C.C. Bonuses: +5 to save vs horror factor, +4 to save vs magic, +4 to save vs psionic attack, impervious to supernatural possession, +2 on initiative, +3 to pull punch, +1 to roll with impact, and see natural abilities.

Weaknesses/Penalties: Rune weapons and fire inflict double damage. Furthermore, holy terrors cannot use any type of symbiotic organism or learn to commune with Wormwood magic.

Attacks Per Melee Round: Three to start and add one at levels four, six, eight, eleven, and thirteen. Plus the creature's breath attack counts as one extra attack per melee when it is used.

Natural Magic Powers: As a creature of magic, the holy terror can use the following abilities without limitation: See the invisible, nightvision 1000 feet (305 m), double in size at will (from 10 ft/3 m to 20 ft/6 m), and turn invisible at will.

Natural Magic Weapons:

Lightning Bolt can be fired from the palms of both hands. 1D6 × 10 M.D., range: 2000 feet (610 m), +2 to strike; the firing of each bolt counts as one melee action/attack.

Laser-like Beams can be fired from the eyes. 5D6 M.D., range: 4000 feet (1200 m), +3 to strike; each blast counts as one melee round action/attack.

Fire Silver Spikes: The holy terror can fire one to four silver spikes from his hands and/or shoulders. Damage: 2D6 M.D. to mortal creatures, 4D6 M.D. to supernatural monsters, range: 600 feet (183 m), and +3 to strike. Full payload: six on each shoulder (12 total), one each of the fingers (4 total) for a grand total of 16. Note that the spikes can be regenerated within 24 hours.

Breathe Toxic Cloud: The terror can breathe a magic cloud from the mouth once per melee round. This breath attack counts as one additional attack per melee round. Everybody in the cloud is affected. The cloud covers an area of about 20 feet (6 m) in diameter and 20 feet (6 m) tall. Three types of clouds:

1. Cloud of sleep: Equal to a fifth level magic sleep spell.
2. Blinding Mist: A pea-soup mist. Those outside the mist cannot see anybody inside the cloud. Those inside the mist can barely see beyond their nose. Fighting is impossible and movement is difficult; reduce speed and the number of melee actions by half. There is a 70% chance of tripping and falling down and losing one melee round action for every four feet (1.2 m) of travel! Duration: One melee round (15 seconds) per level of the holy terror's experience.
3. Toxic Cloud: Inflicts 6D6 M.D. to most life forms and 1D6 × 10 M.D. to supernatural monsters and other creatures of magic. The cloud also causes choking and stomach pain; reduces the victim's number of melee round/actions/attacks by one and reduces combat bonuses by half. Victims who run out of the cloud recover instantly — no further damage. Those trapped in the cloud suffer damage for every seven seconds (twice per melee round) enclosed by its deadly vapors. Duration of the cloud: One melee round (15 seconds) per level of experience.

Magic Spells: Each of the following can be performed two times per 24 hours. Spell strength is equal to the character's level of experience. New spells cannot be learned.

- Call Lightning
- Fire Ball
- Magic Net
- Energy Disruption
- Turn Dead
- Invisibility (superior/others)
- Chameleon (self or others)
- Swim as the fish (self or others)
- Heal Wounds (others)

Psionic Powers: 3D4 × 10 I.S.P. Considered a minor psionic, but powers are limited to sense evil, sense magic, telepathy, and mind block. Often communicates telepathically.

M.D.C. by Location:

- Head (1) — equal to 25% of the main body.
- Hands (2) — equal to 10% of the main body.
- Arms (2) — equal to 25% of the main body.
- Legs (2) — equal to 25% of the main body.
- Main Body — 2D4 × 100 + 200 M.D.C.

* Depleting the main body will destroy the creature, but they can bio-regenerate 2D4 × 10 M.D.C. once per every other melee (30 seconds) and can regenerate lost limbs within 48 hours (head not included).

Statistical Data

Height: 10 feet (3 m) tall normally, but can grow to 20 feet (6 m) in an instant. The increased size is helpful in combating giants, evoking fear and may provide better leverage or a better vantage point.

Weight: 7 tons (triple when a 20 foot giant)

Speed: 2D4 × 10 (remains the same at both sizes)

Leap: 40 feet (12 m) high or lengthwise (add 15 feet/4.6 m from a running start).

Supernatural Physical Strength: 50

Attributes of Note: I.Q.: 2D6 + 8, M.E.: 3D6 + 6, M.A.: 3D6 + 6, P.P.: 2D6 + 10, P.E.: Not applicable, P.B. 2D6 + 4. Holy terrors cannot fly under their own power.

Mega-Damage:

Restrained Punch — 1D6 × 10 S.D.C.

Full Strength Punch or Kick — 6D6 M.D. (+6 from claws)

Power Punch — 2D4 × 10 M.D. (counts as two melee attacks)

Judo Style Body Throw — 2D6 M.D.

Stomp (when 20 ft/6 m tall) — 1D6 M.D.

Crush/Squeeze (when 20 ft/6 m tall) — 2D6 M.D., plus a 01-45% chance of pinning an opponent who is 11 feet (3.3 m) or smaller.

R.C.C. Skills:

Language: American (80%)

Language: Demongogian (80%)

Language: Gobblely (60%)

Basic Math (+30%)

Land Navigation (+20%)

Climbing (+10%)

W.P. Sword

W.P.: Two of choice

Hand to Hand: Expert

R.C.C. Related Skills: Select eight "other" skills from any of the available categories; plus one additional skill at levels three, six, nine and twelve. **Note:** Available skills may include "off-world" skills such as botany, chemistry, computer operation and piloting tech-vehicles.

Communication: Any

Domestic: None

Electrical: None

Espionage: Any

Mechanical: None

Medical: None

Military: None

Physical: Any except acrobatics, gymnastics and wrestling.

Pilot: Any boats or horsemanship (general riding skill; +5%).

Pilot Related: None

Rogue: Any

Science: Any (+5%)

Technical: Any (+5%)

W.P.: Any

Wilderness: Any

Secondary Skills: The character gets to select four secondary skills from those listed. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantage of the bonus listed in the parentheses. All secondary skills start at the base skill level.

Standard Equipment: None! A self contained fighting machine.

Weapons: None to start. Tends to rely on his own formidable powers. However, over the years, the character may add a few magic or high-tech weapons to his arsenal.

Armor: None, see natural M.D.C. by location.

Transportation: Most walk.

Money: Not applicable. Valuables, weapons, and services are usually given in exchange for other items or services. A character is typically judged by his standing within the community. The holy terror is typically on the low end of the social scales among the average citizens, but highly regarded by knights, monks, apoks and freelancers.

Cybernetics & Bionics: Cannot be used by this character.

Symbiotes: Cannot be used on this character.

Note: Average Level of Experience: Player characters should start at first or second level. The average non-player characters will be 1D4 + 2 level. Only 20% are 7th to 10th level.

Freelancer O.C.C.

In the broadest sense of the word, a freelancer can be a good intentioned mercenary or adventurer, wizard, warrior, cyborg from another world, or even a dragon or supernatural being who fights against evil. But the "classic" freelancer is a man at arms, a fighter dedicated to fighting evil and regaining freedom for others. Most importantly, they are officially allied to the Cathedral or other force of good.

The "classic" freelancer is almost always a human from the lower (if not lowest) class of society. Most have aspirations of bettering themselves by becoming a hero or a knight. Most are fighters of reasonable skill who have allied themselves (and frequently work with) the Cathedral and other fighters like knights, monks, heroes, adventurers, and so on. Many look to the knights of the Temple and Hospital as their ideals and try to be like them. Some will even adopt the knight's code of ethics and live up to its lofty goals. In some cases, these lowly freelancers are more true to the code of chivalry and honor than the true knights.

Human freelancers native to Wormwood might be thought of as a peasant army. Few can read or write, none have noble heritage, but most have the heart of a lion and are dedicated to destroying the Unholy and bringing freedom to their people. They are frequently strong, agile and/or skilled with weapons. All are courageous and tenacious warriors who have dared to stand up to the Forces of Darkness. Most have learned to fight from other freelancers and friendly knights, particularly Hospitalers and monks. Although many freelancers follow the Cathedral, just as many are lone wolves roaming the world in search of evil and operating with their own individual codes and beliefs.

Note: Good characters not affiliated with any arm of the Cathedral are simply considered adventurers or mercenaries and can be any O.C.C. or R.C.C.

Special Freelancer's Weapons or Abilities Chart

Roll once or pick one and consult with the Game Master.

01-20 A technological weapon/gun from another dimension.

This may include Kittani plasma weapons, energy pistols and rifles, rail guns, automatic firearms, a pair of vibro-blades, etc. (power armor, cybernetics or bio-wizardry are possible only if the G.M. allows it and he has absolute say as to what these items are). Note: The weapon's power source is likely to have been modified via Wormwood techno-wizardry to make it rechargeable or self-generating.

21-40 Magic weapon or item of medium power.

Game Master's choice. It is most likely (60% chance) to be an item created on Wormwood, but it could be (40% chance) a magic item from another dimension (any of the **Rifts** or **Palladium RPG** magic weapons or items).

41-60 Extraordinary physical strength and endurance.

The character gets an attribute bonus of +6 to the character's P.S. and +1D4 to P.E., as well as an M.D.C. bonus of 1D4 × 10.

61-80 Extraordinary physical prowess and speed.

The character gets an attribute bonus of 1D4 to the character's P.P. and 4D6 to spd., plus a bonus of +1 on initiative and +2 to roll with impact.

81-00 Symbiotic organisms that enhance the Freelancer's abilities

are the roots of this character's powers. Select one star, one worm, and one other symbiote from the category claw or crawler.



Optional Background Table for Freelancers

Roll once or pick one.

- 01-10** Illegitimate son or daughter of a knight, nobleman, priest or famous hero. Driven to follow in daddy's footsteps to prove his/herself to be worthy of noble heritage and recognition. Most people will question the validity or truth of that heritage and regard the character as a con-man or lower class individual.
- 11-20** Son or daughter of an apok. This character is frequently regarded as a "bad seed." Whenever it is learned that he/she is the child of the frightening apok, no matter how good or noble he/she may be, people tend to be frightened or look down at him/her.
- 21-30** Son or daughter of a laborer who dreams of grander things. He craves adventure, fame and glory and has learned the ways of the knight, but is considered a freelancer.
- 31-40** Son or daughter of a career freelancer. The character seeks to excel and bring more acclaim and honor to the family name.
- 41-50** Son or daughter of a vagabond family who wants more in life.
- 51-60** A lowly D-Bee trying to rise above the disdain of being non-human by becoming an honorable freelance knight.
- 61-80** A character of high or low social class (50/50 chance of either) whose family has been destroyed by supernatural monsters. This freelancer seeks revenge more than anything else; becoming a warrior (with aspirations to become a knight?) is a means to that end.
- 81-90** A D-bee warrior who sees being a freelancer as the only means to make a good living. He is officially affiliated with the Cathedral and fights for the freedom of all beings. Dislikes the Knights of the Temple (and vice versa).
- 91-00** A devout follower of the Cathedral who has chosen to support the church by becoming a freelancer.

Freelancer (warrior) O.C.C.

Attribute Requirements: None. A high P.S. and P.E. are recommended as are most physical attributes.

O.C.C. Skills:

- Land Navigation (+ 10%)
- Wilderness Survival (+ 15%)
- Horsemanship (general animal riding skill; +5%)
- Math: Basic (+10%)
- Language: American (90%)
- Language: Demongogian (80%)
- Language of choice (+ 15%)
- W.P. Sword
- W.P.: Select three of choice.
- Hand to Hand: Basic

The basic combat skill can be increased to expert at the cost of one "other" skill or hand to hand: martial arts or assassin at a cost of two "other" skills.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select six other skills, plus two additional skills at level three, and one at levels six, nine and twelve.

- Communication: Any (+ 5%)
- Domestic: Any (+ 10%)
- Electrical: None
- Espionage: Any (+ 5%)
- Mechanical: None
- Medical: First aid only

Military: None

Physical: Any except acrobatics (+ 5% where applicable)

Pilot: Any except robots, power armor, tank, or spacecraft (+ 5%).

Pilot Related: None

Rogue: Any (+ 5%)

Science: Math and astronomy only (+ 5%)

Technical: Any (+ 10%)

W.P.: Any

Wilderness: Any (+ 10%)

Secondary Skills: The character gets to select four secondary skills from those listed. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantage of the bonus listed in the parentheses (). All secondary skill start at the base skill level.

O.C.C. Bonuses: 1D4 × 10 + 20 M.D.C. (S.D.C. in other environments), + 1 to save vs horror factor.

Standard Equipment: Travelling clothes, a pair of boots, a pair of gloves, a hat, sleeping bag, blanket, 1D4 small pouches, backpack or saddlebag, 1D4 utility belts, 100 feet of rope (30.5 m; made from angel hair), a grappling hook, 2D4 resin spikes, and 2D4 weeks of food rations.

Weapons: Four to seven different weapons, including knives and such. The exact type of weapons can vary dramatically from character to character. Some prefer magic and/or traditional ancient weapons. Others prefer magic weapons or high-tech weapons and explosives from other worlds. Most use a combination of the ancient, modern and magic; player's choice.

Armor: The exact type of armor can vary dramatically. Some prefer magic or symbiotic armor while others like heavy plate, light resin chain or high-tech variations from other worlds. Most freelancers tend to wear medium to heavy plate armor.

Basic Types of Armor: Padded, leather or the lightest resin offer 20 M.D.C. and no prowl penalties.

Chain mail and various types of light resin armor provides 40 M.D.C. with no prowl penalty.

A half suit of plate armor and padding provides 50 M.D.C. but is - 5% to prowl.

Light plate or scale mail 60 M.D.C., but - 10% to prowl.

Medium plate, banded or splint armor 75 M.D.C., but - 15% to prowl.

Full plate offers 100 M.D.C., but has a - 20% prowl penalty. Note that there are hundreds of different styles of armor, ornamentation and accessories.

Traditional garb: Freelancers tend to wear medium and heavy armor with a great deal of ornamentation. Armor, helmets, belt buckles, joint protectors and sword handles are decorated with monstrous looking heads, horns, teeth and skulls. They also wear a multitude of belts, straps and pouches. Like the knights they try to imitate, freelancers are also attracted to decorative gauntlets, gloves, boots, capes, cloaks, shields and weapon scabbards.

Transportation: The majority of freelancers walk, but there are a number who ride horses, robot horses, hovercycles, and motorcycles from Rifts Earth and other places. 15% may ride a monster of some sort, including the demon hounds, pegasus, dragonductyl, gryphon or similarly exotic animal (- 10% on horsemanship skill for these exotic creatures).

Money: Not applicable. Valuables, weapons, food and services are usually given in exchange for other items or services. A

character is typically judged by his standing within the community. Among other freelancers and fighters he is judged by his reputation, combat abilities and weapons. Freelancers tend to be part of the lower class, but can become quite well known and respected. Noble and courageous fighters are especially well regarded by knights of the Hospital, monks and other freelancers.

Cybernetics & Bionics: Virtually non-existent, except for what other-dimensional visitors bring with them from their home world.

Symbiotes: "Freelancers" can have as many as four symbiotic organisms, but are generally looked down upon as being low-brow and less noble because of it, especially by the knights of the Temple and priests of light.

Note: The typical player character should start at level one or two. The typical range of experience for the average non-player character will be 1D4 + 2. About 30% are 7th to 10th level, and 5% are 11th to 15th level.

Although many freelancers try to live by the code of the Templars or Hospitallers, these rules of fair play, honor and nobility are often bent or abandoned by would-be knights and the less chivalrous, selfish or evil warriors. They are also frequently disregarded when fighting supernatural monsters and inhuman foes.

The Knights of the Order of the Temple

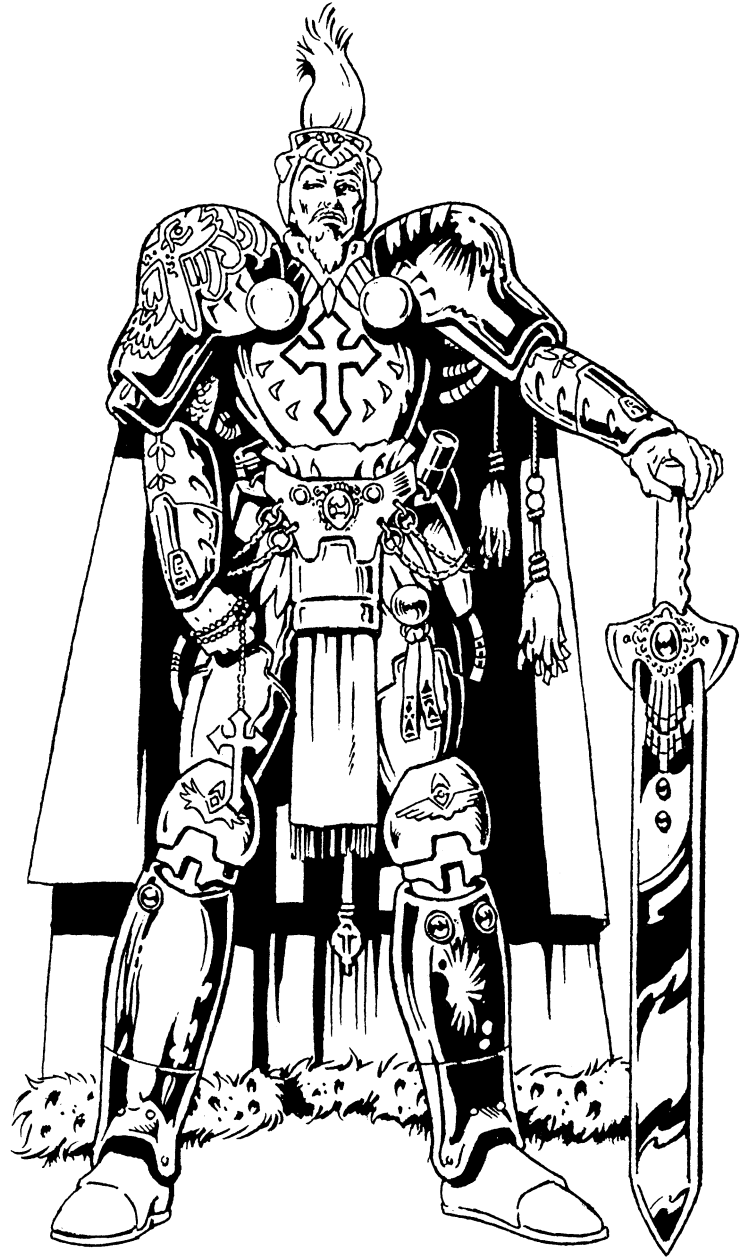
The **Knights of the Order of the Temple** are also known as the "Templars" and "Knights of the Cathedral." The vast majority are primarily aristocratic knights who can trace their family heritage back hundreds of years. Most come from a long line of Templar Knights. Others trace their lineage back to the old ruling powers, priests of the Cathedral or come from upper class society.

The knights of the Temple march gladly and sometimes harshly into battle, swords shining silver and glinting with the blood of their fallen enemies, banners flying, trumpets trumpeting, energy lances crackling, robot or monster steeds arching against the wind and firelight. Many wield ancient and powerful weapons of magic passed on from generation to generation. Others have high-tech weapons and vehicles acquired from other dimensions. The poorest among them take what they can from the enemy and turn their own weapons against them.

The Knights of the order of the Temple are the Cathedral's most favored and trusted order. Most of these knights stay close to the gilt-hemmed robes of the church's most powerful priests and obey their every command without question. Their loyalty is to the Cathedral first, then to the Order of the Temple, and then to all others. The rule of thumb is that if a high priest (who speaks for the Cathedral) commands it, it must be right, true and good, and obeyed without question. If it seems wrong, the knight assumes he must be mistaken and that the priest must be privy to some secret information or divine insight.

The worst thing about these knights is that they hold themselves above most others to the point of indifference and cruelty. The meanest and most arrogant knights of the Temple use the rulings of the church like a weapon. If a high priest proclaims

an individual to be an enemy of the church, the knights accept this with blind obedience; and the enemies of the Cathedral are treated most harshly. These brutes wear the commands of the Cathedral like armor, so that no matter how ruthless, cruel or murderous they behave, they can point to the church and say they were only following orders.



In many regards, the knights of the Temple are reminiscent of Earth's Japanese samurai. Most of the knights and their families have served the Cathedral, or even a particular line of priests or order, for over a thousand years. They are so loyal and dedicated to their masters that even the most good and noble knight obeys without question. To question a priest, especially a high priest is to lose one's honor. To disobey or ignore an order is treason and will result in severe punishment, demotion in rank, and bring shame to the noble family. To openly defy or question the Cathedral or a high priest (unless there is concrete proof of wrongdoing) is grounds for immediate, dishonorable discharge from the Order of the Temple. The shame to the generations of the family is without measure. Furthermore, the knight and his family all drop from upper class to low class and

are subjected to ridicule. Expulsion from the order may also lead to being branded a traitor, heretic or unfaithful and the knight may even be excommunicated from the church. Thus, most knights of the Temple are fanatically loyal to their Order, the Cathedral and their spiritual leader(s).

The Code of The Temple Knights

The code of the Knights of the Order of the Temple is loosely similar to that of the cyber-knights and knights of Camelot. The laws of fair play, honor and nobility are often bent when dealing with non-humans, the lower classes and those the Templars do not regard with honor or respect, including the apok, monks, holy terrors and mercenaries.

1. To Live

- Live to serve the Cathedral and Wormwood.
- Live to defend the Cathedral from ALL of its enemies (whoever they may be).
- Live to defend the Order of the Temple.
- Live to defend the people and the innocent.
- Live one's life so that it is worthy of respect and honor (and this means obeying the orders of the Cathedral without question).
- Live for freedom, justice, and all that is good.
- Never depend on non-human or supernatural forces.

2. Fair Play

Note: Not applicable to the apok, D-bees, monsters, lower class and Forces of Darkness.

- Never attack an unarmed human foe.
- Never use a weapon on a human opponent not equal to the attack.
- Never attack a worthy (human) opponent from behind.
- Never lie to a high priest or fellow knight of the Temple.
- Never cheat a high priest or Knight of the Temple.
- Never betray, abuse or torture a high priest of the Cathedral or Knight of the Temple.
- Avoid lying to and cheating Knights of the Hospital, Champions of Light, priests of the Cathedral and others.
- Avoid torture and abuse of others whenever possible. **Note:** This rule is conditional. It can be broken if it means protecting or helping the greater good of the Cathedral, the Temple Knights, or will help many people over the good of the few.

3. Nobility

Note: Not applicable to the apok, monsters, the lowest classes and Forces of Darkness.

- Obey the laws of the Cathedral.
- Obey high priests of the Cathedral and commanders within the Order of the Knights of the Temple.
- Show respect to the Cathedral, its priests and the Templars.
- Administer justice.
- Administer mercy.
- Protect the innocent.
- Exhibit self control.
- Respect women.

4. Valor

Note: The following are ardently applied only to the high priests of the Cathedral, Knights of the Temple, recognized authorities and the upper class. The treatment of all others is conditional.

- Fight for the ideals of The Cathedral and all that is good.
- Never abandon a knight or high priest of the Cathedral.
- Try never to abandon or betray a friend, ally, or noble cause.
- Crush evil in all its monstrous forms!
- Slaughter the monsters that steal our land and rob our people!
- Fight to win at all costs when opposing the Forces of Darkness!
- Avenge the wronged, murdered and betrayed.
- Defend the weak and innocent.
- Exhibit courage and honor in word and deed.

5. Honor

Note: The following are ardently applied to the high priests of the Cathedral, Knights of the Temple, recognized authorities and the upper class. The treatment of all others is conditional.

- Always keep one's word of honor.
- Always maintain one's principles.
- Never betray a confidence or comrade.
- Avoid deception.
- Respect life and freedom.
- Die with honor.

6. Courtesy

Note: The following are ardently applied only to the high priests of the Cathedral, Knights of the Temple, recognized authorities and the upper class. The treatment of all others is conditional.

- Exhibit manners.
- Be polite and attentive.
- Be respectful of priests, women, and laws.

7. Loyalty

- To the Cathedral, Wormwood and recognized authorities.
- To freedom and the code of the Knights of the Temple.
- To one's friends and those who lay their trust in thee.
- To the destruction of evil.

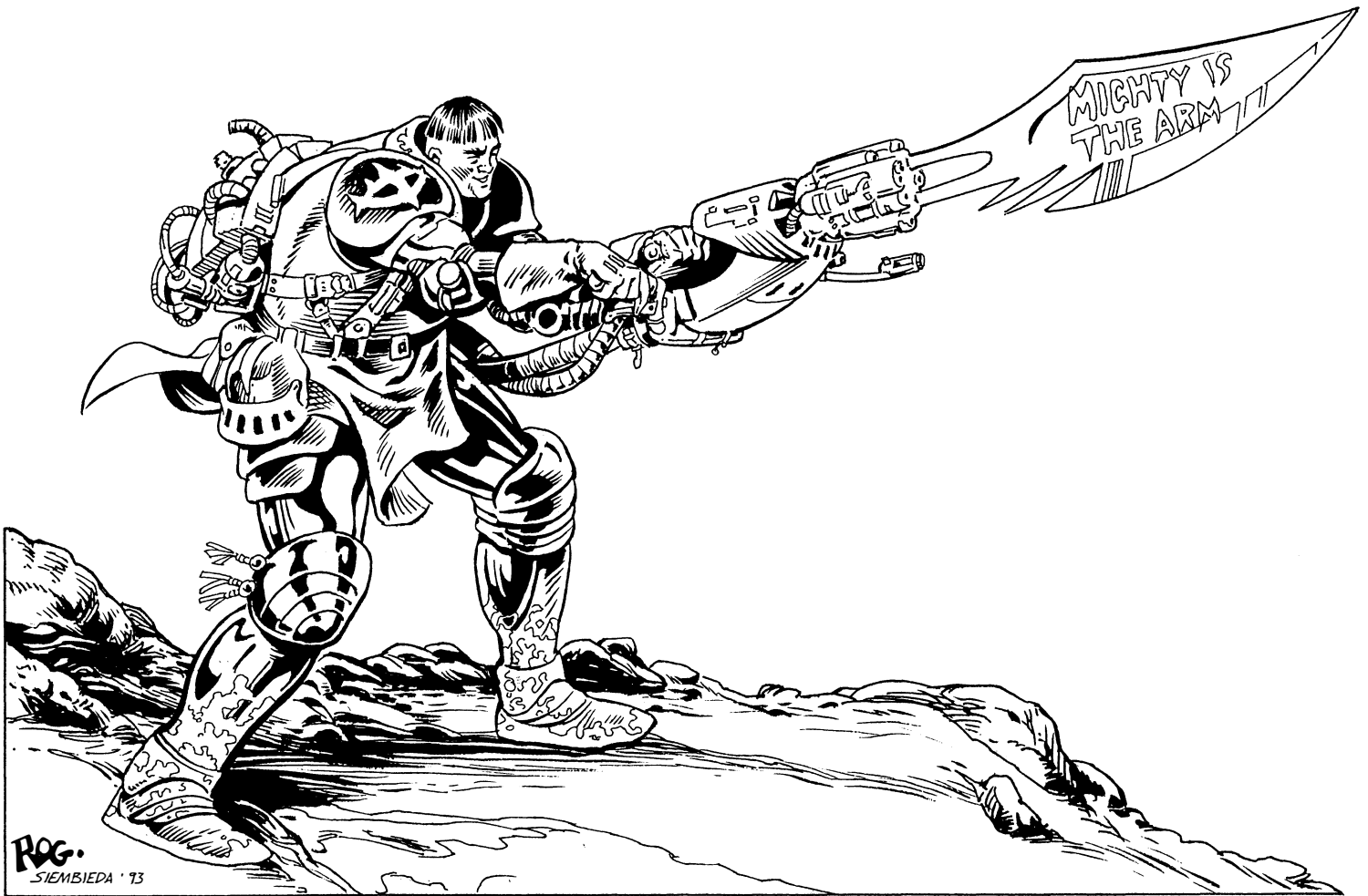
Knight of the Temple O.C.C.

Attribute Requirements: P.S. and P.E. of 14 or higher, a high P.P. is also recommended but not required. What is required is noble/upper class heritage. Most are the sons and daughters of Knights of the Order of the Temple (70%), relatives of priests of light (20%) or heroes of renown (8%). Only 2% come from some other social class.

O.C.C. Skills:

- Land Navigation (+10%)
- Wilderness Survival (+15%)
- Horsemanship (general animal riding skill; +10%)
- Pilot Motorcycle (+15%)
- Math: Basic (+25%)
- Language: American (98%)
- Language: Demongogian (90%)
- Language of choice (+15%)
- Literacy: American (90%)
- W.P. Targeting
- W.P. Knife
- W.P. Sword
- W.P.: Select two ancient and two modern.
- Hand to Hand: Expert

The expert combat skill can be increased to conventional martial arts (or assassin if an evil alignment) at the cost of one "other" skill selection.



O.C.C. Related Skills: Select six other skills, plus two additional skills at level three, and one at levels six, nine and twelve.

- Communication: Any (+5%)
- Domestic: Any (+10%)
- Electrical: None
- Espionage: Any (+5%)
- Mechanical: None
- Medical: First aid only
- Military: None
- Physical: Any except acrobatics (+5% where applicable)
- Pilot: Any except robots, power armor, tanks, or spacecraft (+5%).
- Pilot Related: None
- Rogue: None
- Science: Any (+10%)
- Technical: Any (+20%)
- W.P.: Any
- Wilderness: Any (+5%)

Secondary Skills: The character gets to select four secondary skills from those listed. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantage of the bonus listed in the parentheses (). All secondary skills start at the base skill level.

O.C.C. Bonuses: 1D4 × 10 + 40 M.D.C. (S.D.C. in other environments), +3 to save vs horror factor, +1 to save vs magic, +1 on initiative and one additional attack per melee! Meditation helps the knight to focus and heal twice as fast as normal.

P.P.E.: 6D6 + 6

Standard Equipment: Travelling clothes, a set of dress clothes or dress body armor, a pair of boots, a pair of gloves, a hat, sleeping bag, blanket, 1D6 small pouches, backpack or saddlebag, 1D4 utility belts, 100 feet of rope (30.5 m; made from angel hair), a grappling hook, 2D4 resin spikes, and 2D4 weeks of food rations.

Weapons: Six to eight different weapons, including a knife, sword, and one magic weapon. The exact type of weapons can vary dramatically from character to character. Some prefer magic and/or traditional ancient weapons. Others use magic weapons or high-tech weapons and explosives from other worlds. Most use a combination of the ancient, modern and magic; player's choice.

Knight Armor: The exact type of armor can vary dramatically. Most knights of the Temple prefer to wear medium to heavy plate armor. The average knight will own two different suits of armor. Common types include:

Light plate or scale mail: 60 M.D.C., but -10% to prowl.

Medium plate, banded or splint armor: 75 M.D.C., but -15% to prowl.

Full plate: 100 M.D.C., but has a -20% prowl penalty.

There are hundreds of different styles of armor, ornamentation and accessories. Most knights of the Temple seem to wear armor and clothing with white, silver, grey, blue, yellow and gold colors and accents and tend toward ornate and frequently oversized knee, elbow, and shoulder guards. Helmets, face masks, belt buckles and sword handles are ornate or depict monstrous looking faces and features. There is also a style of armor that uses death's heads, fangs, horns and spines as part of its motif. Reinforced and decorative gauntlets,

gloves, boots, capes, cloaks, and weapon sheathes are also popular, especially with light types of armor. Accessories include a multitude of belts, straps and pouches.

Transportation: 40% of the Templars ride motorcycles or hovercycles from Rifts Earth! 20% ride horses, robot horses, pegasus, unicorns, gryphons or other attractive, "noble" creatures from Earth or other dimensions (-10% on horsemanship skill for these exotic animals). The rest walk.

Money: Not applicable. Valuables, weapons, food and services are usually given in exchange for other items or services. A character is typically judged by his standing within the community. Most knights of the Temple are highly respected and honored within the human society of Wormwood. They are given access to most buildings and homes, provided with a nice place to sleep, given food and drink, and treated to a great deal of attention and comfort.

Cybernetics & Bionics: Virtually non-existent, except for what other-dimensional visitors bring with them from their home world.

Symbiotes: True knights of the Temple are NOT allowed to ally themselves with or depend on anything not human. They will NOT use symbiotic organisms or slime magic, but can pilot the battle saint, battle saint orb and link with the spirit of Wormwood (all of which are considered to be great honors). They can also use blood stones, crystals, techno-wizard items and rune weapons.

Note: The typical player character should start at level one or two. The typically range of experience for the average non-player character will be 1D4+4. About 30% are 9th to 14th level.



The Knights of the Order of the Hospital



The common slang name for this order of Cathedral knights is "Hospitallers" or "Knights of Mercy." These noble knights are eternal optimists. They seldom seem to despair even in the face of evil and death. For this reason, the character must have a high mental endurance (M.E.) and many also have a high mental affinity (M.A.).

Typically, the hospitaller is a strong moral character of a good alignment (never evil, rarely anarchist). They serve as healers, moral advisors, scholars, philosophers and historians, as well as dedicated protectors of the weak and innocent. Most are excellent speakers who can inspire hope and strength by their words. Those who are not so eloquent inspire others through their actions, firm resolve, gentle mercies, kindness and personal sacrifice. They ask not for reward or thanks, taking solace in the fact that they help others and show the way to goodness and victory.

As a rule, the knights of the Hospital always remain true to their moral code of ethics and justice. They cannot be corrupted by the promise of riches, glory, or power, and seldom give in to blackmail or torture. On another world, in another time, they might be considered noble and courageous *paladins*, as well as healers. For this reason, they are sometimes viewed with concern and contempt by corrupt high priests and knights of the Temple. Power hungry and evil churchmen recognize these knights as a threat to their quest for personal glory and power. They know that one day, the hospitallers will see them as a menace and rise up to destroy them. Many of these noble knights already watch the growing corruption within the power core of the Cathedral with a concerned eye. For the time being, the knights of the Hospital turn their attention toward a far greater evil, but when that battle is over they will turn their attention to the corruption within the Cathedral. The Forces of Darkness and evil Cathedral high priests fear these good knights, because the man who cannot be corrupted is a force that cannot be turned.

Knights who question the justice, honor or commands of corrupt Cathedral leaders are viewed with disdain and given the most dangerous assignments or sent to faraway lands. Those who publicly defy or chastise church leaders are expelled from the Order of the Hospital and may be excommunicated and branded heretics. However, even though many Hospitallers have served the Cathedral for generations, this punishment is far less devastating than it is to the knights of the Temple. Most citizens will judge the character by his past and present words and good works and may decide that the church is mistaken in its chastisement of this noble knight. The people, freelancers and fellow knights of the Hospital may treat the character a bit more coolly and with some suspicion, but they will not ridicule or avoid him until he earns such treatment in their eyes.



The Code of The Knights of the Hospital

The code of the knight of the hospital is very similar to that of the cyber-knights found on Rifts Earth.

1. To Live

- Live to serve the Cathedral and Wormwood.
- Live to defend the Cathedral and all that's good.
- Live to defend the people and the innocent.
- Live one's life so that it is worthy of respect and honor.
- Live for freedom, justice, and all that is good.

2. Fair Play

- Never attack an unarmed foe (even monsters).
- Never use a weapon on an opponent not equal to the attack.
- Avoid engaging in torture and abuse.
- Avoid lying to your fellow man.
- Avoid cheating.
- Avoid dark magic and questionable alliances.

3. Nobility

- Obey the laws of the people.
- Administer justice equally for all.

Administer mercy equally for all.
Protect the innocent regardless of class or race.
Show respect to authority, but not corruption.
Exhibit self control.
Respect women.

4. Valor

Exhibit courage in word and deed.
Defend the weak and innocent.
Destroy evil in all its monstrous forms.
Crush the monsters that steal our land and enslave the people.
Avenge the wronged.
Never abandon a friend, ally, or noble cause.
Fight for the ideals of the Order of the Hospital and justice with valor.

5. Honor

Note: Not applicable to criminals, traitors, evildoers, monsters and Forces of Darkness.

Always keep one's word of honor.
Always maintain one's principles.
Never betray a confidence or comrade.
Avoid deception.
Respect life and freedom.
Die with honor.

6. Courtesy

Note: Not applicable to criminals, traitors, evildoers, monsters and Forces of Darkness.

Exhibit manners.
Be polite and attentive.
Be respectful of host, women, and honor.

7. Loyalty

To the Cathedral, Wormwood and recognized authorities.
To freedom and the code of the Knights of the Hospital.
To one's friends and those who lay their trust in thee.
To the destruction of evil.

Knight of the Hospital O.C.C.

Attribute Requirements: M.E. 15 or higher. A high M.A., P.S., and P.E. is also suggested, but not mandatory. If the character's I.Q. is six or less, reduce the skill bonuses by half.

Most are the sons and daughters of Knights of the Order of the Hospital (50%), others are relatives of priests of light (15%), heroes of renown (20%), or a member of the lower class who has struggled to become a Knight of the Hospital (15%). **Note:** The knights of the Temple and some high priests look down upon the Hospitallers because of their mixing of social classes and acceptance of all classes and races.

Alignment requirement: Any, but most are principled or scrupulous. Unprincipled (selfish) is also acceptable. It simply means the character has doubts and fears and must struggle with those feelings to make the right decision from time to time — but he does usually make the right decision and is basically a good person.

Anarchist alignments *may* be acceptable if the Game Master allows it. However, he will be counselled by other knights to strive to become a better person of a good alignment. If the anarchist character has not attained a more good alignment by third level (unprincipled is okay), he or she will be banished

from the Order of the Knights of the Hospital and lose all of his healing powers. The character (often disgraced and bitter) can continue as a "freelance" warrior/fighter on the side of good or become a mercenary. However, the Hospitallers will always view him with shame and suspicion.

O.C.C. Skills:

Dance (+15%)
Sing or Play Musical Instrument (+15%)
Horsemanship (general animal riding skill; +5%)
Pilot Motorcycle or Hovercycle (+10%)
Land Navigation (+20%)
Wilderness Survival (+15%)
Paramedic (+20%)
Biology (+10%)
Math: Basic (+15%)
Language: American (98%)
Language: Demongogian (98%)
Language of choice (+20%)
W.P. Targeting
W.P. Knife
W.P. Sword
W.P.: Select two of choice.
Hand to Hand: Expert

The expert combat skill can be increased to conventional martial arts (or assassin if an evil alignment) at the cost of one "other" skill selection.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select six other skills, plus two additional skills at level three, and one at levels six, nine and twelve.

Communication: Any (+5%)
Domestic: Any (+10%)
Electrical: None
Espionage: Any (+5%)
Mechanical: None
Medical: None, except O.C.C. skill
Military: None
Physical: Any except acrobatics
Pilot: Any except robots, power armor, tank, or spacecraft (+5%).
Pilot Related: None
Rogue: Streetwise, palming and concealment only.
Science: Any (+10%)
Technical: Any (+10%)
W.P.: Any
Wilderness: Any

Secondary Skills: The character gets to select four secondary skills from those listed. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantage of the bonus listed in the parentheses (). All secondary skills start at the base skill level.

O.C.C. Bonuses: 1D4 × 10 + 30 M.D.C. (S.D.C. in other environments), +2 to save vs horror factor, +2 to save vs magic, and +2 to save vs disease. Recognizes poisons, drugs and magic potions/slime 40% + 5% per level of experience. Meditation is the same as the priest.

P.P.E.: 6D6 × 2

Standard Equipment: Travelling clothes, as set of dress clothes or dress body armor, a pair of boots, a pair of gloves, a hat, sleeping bag, blanket, 2D4 small pouches, backpack or satchel, 1D4 utility belts, first-aid kit (including scalpels, sutures and needles, bandages, etc.), six blood worms,

1D4 × 10 worms of mending, 100 feet of rope (30.5 m; made from angel hair), a grappling hook, 2D4 resin spikes, and 2D4 weeks of food rations.

Weapons: Six to eight different weapons, including a knife, sword, and one magic weapon. The exact type of weapons can vary dramatically from character to character. Some prefer magic and/or traditional ancient weapons. Others prefer magic weapons or high-tech weapons and explosives from other worlds. Most use a combination of the ancient, modern and magic; player's choice.

Knight Armor: The exact type of armor can vary dramatically. Most knights of the Hospital prefer to wear light to medium armor, although they may opt for heavy plate armor when going into a major battle. The average knight will own two different suits of armor. Common types include:

Light plate or scale mail: 60 M.D.C., but – 10% to prowl.

Medium plate, banded or splint armor: 75 M.D.C., but – 15% to prowl.

Full plate: 100 M.D.C., but has a – 20% prowl penalty.

There are hundreds of different styles of armor, ornamentation and accessories. Most knights of the Hospital seem to wear armor that resembles leather, chain mail or half plate with many straps, belts and pouches. Ornate and frequently oversized knee, elbow, and shoulder guards. Helmets, face masks, belt buckles and sword handles are ornate or depict monstrous looking faces and features. There is also a style of armor that uses death's heads, fangs, horns and spines as part of its motif. Reinforced and decorative gauntlets, gloves, boots, capes, cloaks, and weapon sheathes are also popular, especially with light types of armor.

Transportation: 30% of the Hospitallers ride motorcycles or hovercycles from Rifts Earth! 10% ride horses, robot horses, pegasus, unicorns, gryphons or other attractive, "noble" creatures from Earth or other dimensions (– 10% on horsemanship skill for these exotic animals). The rest walk.

Money: Not applicable. Valuables, weapons, food and services are usually given in exchange for other items or services. A character is typically judged by his standing within the community. Most knights of the Hospital are highly respected and honored within the human society of Wormwood. They are given access to most buildings and homes, provided with a nice place to sleep, given food and drink, and treated to a great deal of attention and comfort.

Cybernetics & Bionics: Virtually non-existent, except for what other-dimensional visitors bring with them from their home world.

Symbiotes: True knights of the Hospital never wear/link with symbiotic organisms, but will use healing worms, magic slime, stones and crystals. They can also pilot battle saints, battle saint orbs and link with the spirit of Wormwood (all of which are considered to be great honors).

Note: The typical player character should start at level one or two. The typical range of experience for the average non-player character will be 1D4 + 4. About 30% are 9th to 14th level.

Other O.C.C.s Common to Wormwood

Other Occupational Character Classes available to the inhabitants of Wormwood include: **Techno-wizard**, **shifter**, **dragon**, **wilderness scout**, and **vagabond** (see *the Rifts RPG*), **knight**, **temporal raider**, **temporal warrior**, **temporal wizard** (see *Rifts World Book 3: England*) and the more traditional spell caster (see *the wizard in the Palladium fantasy RPG*).

Similarly, characters from any dimension, **Rifts** or other RPG worlds, can visit or make their home on Wormwood. Among the most likely are the occasional dragon, demons, deevils, entities, and various monsters found in the pages of *The Rifts Conversion Book (number one)*.

Note: Psionics and mastery over high technology are a rarity among the *native* population on Wormwood. Robots, cyborgs, juicers, crazies, cyber-knights and mind melters are NOT indigenous to the planet. Necromancy (as presented in **Rifts World Book 4: Africa**) is not one of the mystic arts known or practiced on Wormwood.

Some Basic Combat Squads

Champions of Light

Note: Freelancers can include characters, human and non-human, of any O.C.C., R.C.C. or dimension! They can include wormspeakers, techno-wizards, demon hound riders, shades, shifters/summoners, line walkers, dragons, cyborgs, power armor clad warriors, robots, D-bees and peasants. The Cathedral squads are predominately human knights, priests and trusted affiliates of the church.

Typical Cathedral Reconnaissance Squad

- 1 Priest of Light
- 2 Knights of the Temple or one Apok
- 2 Knights of the Hospital or 2 Freelancers
- 2 Freelancers or adventurers of any O.C.C. or R.C.C.

Typical Freelance Reconnaissance Squad

- 1 Wilderness Scout
- 1 Wormspeaker
- 1 Techno-Wizard or other man of magic
- 2 to 4 Freelance warriors or other O.C.C.

Typical Cathedral Commando Squad

- 1 Apok
- 1 Priest of Light
- 2 Knights of the Temple
- 2 Knights of the Hospital
- 2 Freelancers or adventurers of any O.C.C. or R.C.C.

Typical Freelance Commando Squad

- 1 Apok or Holy Terror
- 1 Temporal Raider/Wizard/Warrior
- 1 Wormspeaker or Priest of Light
- 2 Monks or Symbiotic Warriors or Knights of the Hospital
- 4 Freelancers or adventurers of any O.C.C. or R.C.C.

Typical Cathedral Monster Hunter Squad (Seek & Destroy)

- 1 Apok
- 2 Priests of Light
- 2 to 4 Knights of the Temple or Hospital
- 2 to 4 Monks or Freelancers, or additional knights

Typical Freelance Monster Hunter Squad (Seek & Destroy)

- 1 Wormspeaker or Priest of Light
- 1 Techno-Wizard or other practitioner of magic
- 2 Monks or Temporal Raider/Wizard/Warrior or Wormspeaker.
- 2 Human freelancer warriors or any fighter O.C.C.
- 2 Holy Terrors or Symbiotic warriors or other non-human freelancer characters of any O.C.C. or R.C.C. (dragon, shade, etc.)

Typical Cathedral Infantry Squad

- 1 Wilderness Scout or Priest of Light
- 2 to 4 Knights of the Hospital
- 2 to 4 Knights of the Temple
- 4 Freelancers

Elite Cathedral Infantry Squad

- 6 Knights of the Temple
 - 2 Knights of the Hospital
 - 2 Priests of Light
- Note:** All are human.

Typical Freelance Infantry Squad

- 1 Wilderness Scout
- 1 Wormspeaker or Priest of Light
- 2 to 4 Monks or Knights of the Hospital
- 2 to 4 Human Freelancer warriors
- 2 to 4 Symbiotic Warriors and/or Holy Terrors, or Non-human freelancer characters of any O.C.C. or R.C.C.

Non-Player Heroes

The Confessor

The Confessor is the most famous and feared of all the apok. He is a mysterious loner and a monster slayer who travels the land righting wrongs and crushing evil wherever he finds it. He is a one man wrecking crew who thwarts The Unholy with his every move. Each battle is a personal triumph and a challenge to The Unholy to face him, yet the Unholy has ignored all such challenges and pretends that the Confessor is of little consequence. However, his minions feel otherwise and that is working to the Confessor's advantage. The Unholy's indifference (and apparent fear) toward the Confessor breeds uncertainty among the demon hordes. They wonder why their leader fears this man. And if the all-powerful Unholy has reason to fear this apok, then the lowly minions have excellent reason to fear him. Some troops have been known to quake in fear with the mention of his name and others have run in terror at the sight of him.

The Confessor is quickly becoming a legendary figure among demons and humans alike. Many are the stories of how mighty warlords challenged the man behind the mask and perished at his hands. Half the stories are gross exaggerations or complete fabrications, as is common with mythic figures, but they only enhance his terrifying image. Some have even suggested that it was the Confessor who plucked out the Unholy's eye.

Sadly, the Confessor's reputation terrifies his fellow humans as much as any demon. All apok were once champions of light who betrayed their fellow man. Consequently, it is difficult for most people to trust any apok. The Confessor is feared more than most because of his legendary stature. Again the logic seems to be, if the demons fear him then mere humans have even greater reason to be afraid. This situation is complicated

by the Cathedral's branding the Confessor as a heretic and dangerous madman. Of course, in the case of the corrupt high priests of the Cathedral, they have good reason to fear the Confessor and his fellow apok, because the robes of the church will not protect them from these avenging warriors. The Confessor has already struck down two priests he claimed to be traitors of humankind.

The Confessor — Apok O.C.C.

- Alignment:** Scrupulous
- Attributes:** I.Q. 17, M.E. 19, M.A. 17, P.S. 32, P.P. 21, P.E. 14, P.B. 15, Spd 33.
- Hit Points/M.D.C.:** 306
- P.P.E.:** 136
- Horror Factor:** 16 when wearing the mask.
- O.C.C.:** Apok
- Level of Experience:** 11th
- Natural Abilities:** Strong willed, confident, and resourceful.
An obsessive personality (currently obsessed with destroying the Forces of Darkness).
- Psionic Powers:** None.
- Magic Knowledge:** Communion with Wormwood/Priestly
magic powers: Same as all apok, including create and close openings, hell fire (3D4 × 10 M.D.), impervious to symbiotes and repel symbiotes, plus create stairs and destroy life force cauldron.
- Combat Abilities:** Expert.
- Attacks per Melee Round:** Six (includes boxing and O.C.C. bonus).



Bonuses (includes combat and attribute bonuses): All attacks do double damage (O.C.C./mask power)! +1 on initiative, +5 to strike, +6 to parry and dodge, +20 to damage, +2 to pull punches, +2 to roll with impact and critical strike or knockout on an unmodified roll of 18-20. +2 to save vs psionic attack, +2 to save vs magic, and +2 to save vs poison and disease. Impervious to mind control, impervious to possession, and impervious to horror factor. Meditation is the same as the priest.

Skills of Note: All the usual skills from the Apok O.C.C. all at 98%, plus intelligence 82%, disguise 85%, escape 90%, tracking 90%, boxing, paired weapons, W.P. targeting, W.P. sword, W.P. energy rifle. Speaks American, Demongogian, and Gobblely, all at 98%.

Standard Equipment: Travelling clothes, two hooded cloaks, two sets of clothing, a pair of boots, a pair of gloves, a hat, sleeping bag, blanket, 4 small pouches, backpack, 2 utility belts, first-aid kit (including scalpels, sutures and needles, bandages, etc.), six blood worms, 30 worms of mending, 100 feet of rope (30.5 m; made from angel hair), a grappling hook, 4 resin spikes, and 2 weeks worth of food rations.

Weapons: Double bladed forearm claw (2D6 M.D.), two throwing knives, resin cross, short sword (2D4 M.D.), claymore (3D6 M.D.; usually slung on his back), broadsword with a doubling crystal (inflicts 3D6 M.D.), one techno-wizard black powder pistol (4D6 M.D. per shot; 200 ft/61 m range, payload: single shot). Note: Don't forget that the apok inflicts DOUBLE damage from all attacks.

Magic Items of Note: Nothing of note at this time.

Armor: Light armor: 25 M.D.C.; mainly for show.

Transportation: Usually walks.

Money: Not applicable.

Cybernetics & Bionics: None.

Symbiotes: None.

Lazarus Vespers

The man who calls himself Lazarus Vespers is an enigma. He is known to many people as many contradictory things, healer and destroyer, exorcist and summoner of demons, wizard and warrior, friend and enemy, courageous and cowardly, honest and yet mysterious.

In many instances, he will briefly join others in their fight against evil. He'll appear out of thin air to lend a hand and then disappear when the battle is done. He is infamous for arriving at the site of a major conflict and spirited away a handful of heroes to launch a small, pointed attack against a vital component of the enemy. This can be a strike against an enemy leader, dark priest, sorcerer, energy source or magic item. He is also known to provide the forces of good with warnings, clues and information. However, this has also led people to question how it is he knows so much about the Forces of Darkness and whether or not he is one of them. This concern is amplified by stories of how Vespers let the evil Queen Salome escape from his grasp and prevented others from pursuing her.

For the most part, Lazarus Vespers wanders the land, like a knight-errant, doing whatever he can to help and protect the innocent and asks for little more than food or a place to sleep. He has his own agenda for his is a one-man crusade against the evil that sweeps the land. Lazarus is a lone wolf by nature. He prefers to come and go as he pleases and not to have to answer to, protect, or rely on others. Although he respects many of the Champions of Light and his goals parallel theirs, he usually stays back in the shadows, working behind the scenes.

When he does associate with others, it is usually with small groups of warriors or adventurers. He has also befriended a number of wormspeakers, monks, and other practitioners of magic. He has met the legendary Confessor and has fought at his side on several occasions, but he would not consider him a friend. Lazarus finds the Confessor's intensity and ruthlessness as very disturbing even when directed against the Forces of Darkness. He recognizes the apok's obsession to destroy the Unholy and finds it too reminiscent of another person he once held dear and lost to her obsession (Salome). Consequently, he tries to keep his distance from the Confessor and most apok.

Politics and social position mean nothing to Lazarus. He is not impressed by kings or high priests. His vigilante attitude and independence makes him disregard most figures of authority and their laws. Thus, he works outside the law, associates with others of questionable character (such as the Confessor) and has ignored and defied the leaders of the Cathedral. Actions which have marked Lazarus Vesper as a dangerous rogue force and criminal.

Lazarus is haunted by the treacherous Queen Salome and their fates seem inexorably linked. In his youth, the two studied magic from the same college of wizards. During that time, Salome became a dear friend and confidante. But even then, Salome seemed to be driven by dangerous forces. Years later, they would meet again in a Splugorth prison. If not for him, Salome would have died, and together they managed to escape. This has haunted Lazarus Vespers ever since, for had he let her die, her torment would have ended and she would not have become the monster she has become. As a result, he has committed his life to righting her wrongs and foiling her schemes. It is a contest of wills and



skills that has taken its toll on both characters and is at best, a draw.

Lazarus has considered killing Salome many times and has had more than one opportunity to do so, but he could not. He remembers his friend the way she was in their youth and saw, firsthand, the horrors she suffered at the hands of the Splugorth. It was their torment that changed her for the worst. Now he must change her for the better — not destroy her.

Lazarus has convinced himself that there must be some good still left in Salome and he dreams that he can one day touch that goodness and bring it to the fore. He tells himself that Salome has had her opportunities to kill him, yet she has never delivered the death blow. She claims to hate him and yet does not send her assassins to destroy him, as she has so many other enemies. Lazarus tells himself that this alone is proof that Salome is not entirely lost to evil. That someday, somehow, he can touch the spark of humanity inside her and change her for the better. Lazarus Vespers is an intelligent man. Deep down he knows he is probably fooling himself. He knows that one day, he will have to face Salome in a duel to the death. When that time comes, only one will walk away to rejoin the living. He fears that one person will not be him — for he is not certain he can strike the killing blow.

Lazarus Vespers

Alignment: Scrupulous

Attributes: I.Q. 19, M.E. 20, M.A. 18, P.S. 14, P.P. 17, P.E. 20, P.B. 17, Spd 12.

Hit Points: 60, S.D.C.: 20 (he is not a mega-damage being).

P.P.E.: 188

O.C.C.: Ley line walker/spell caster

Level of Experience: 10th

Natural Abilities/Disposition: Intelligent and secretive. He is a good leader but avoids it.

Psionic Powers: Major psionic. Powers include: exorcism, psychic diagnosis, healing touch, telekinesis, object read, and mind block. **I.S.P.:** 80



Weapons & Magic: Wilk's laser pistol (concealed), one silver plated dagger, a blue-grey, lesser rune sword (5D6 M.D., adds +1 to ALL saving throws, indestructible, I.Q. of 11), one finder crystal and one light crystal.

Magic Items of Note: Two lesser energy cells (25 P.P.E each), 2D4 magic potions (G.M.'s choice),

Armor: None

Transportation: Usually walks.

Money: Not applicable.

Cybernetics & Bionics: None.

Symbiotes: None.

Dorsey Pentecost

At the age of 24, Dorsey Pentecost is the youngest Captain in the history of the Hospitallers. The fact that he is a captain, yet so young, speaks well of his abilities, especially since he has been busted back to corporal twice and had to work his way back up through the ranks. This is not to imply that Dorsey is a bad seed. Quite the contrary, he is an energetic and likable fellow. He is loved by the monks and the younger knights (who idolize him), and is respected by his elder knights as well. It's just that young Captain Dorsey has an uncanny knack for getting into trouble and somehow staying there. This is due in part to his inextinguishable zest for life and adventure. He is curious about everything and doesn't know how to take "no" for an answer. Thus, he often embarks on risky, even foolish ventures just to see what he might learn or where this adventure might carry him. He is bold, daring, impudent, resourceful and aggressive. All of this without the tiniest bit of conceit, arrogance or cruelty. Erin Tam's comment upon meeting this charming knight was that it was as if the young D'Artagnan had stepped out of the pages of the **Three Musketeers** and called himself Dorsey.

Captain Pentecost often plays the disinterested ne'er-do-well, but in fact, he's very knowledgeable about the Cathedral and the knights of both orders. He has also learned much about the lore of Wormwood and everything he can about the world called Earth. He is well versed in American slang and even knows key events of the last 50 years. His pride and joy is an ancient Harley Davidson motorcycle that has been passed on by his family from generation to generation. He would leap at the chance of visiting Earth, but has never had the opportunity.

Captain Pentecost is a rebel with a cause. He is dedicated to justice and honor. He lives by the letter of the Code of the Hospitallers. He fights for people from all walks of life, rich and poor, human and D-bee. He is a gentleman and a scholar who spends much of his time exchanging philosophy with the warrior monks and dares to call the loathsome apok, "friend." He is outspoken and points to injustice wherever he sees it. This has won him the animosity of the knights of the Temple, corrupt Cathedral authorities and his uncle; all of which brings embarrassment to his family.

Dorsey comes from the noble family of Pentecost. A family with a long, rich heritage of service to the Cathedral as Knights of the Order of the Temple and as priests of light. His Uncle, Matthew Pentecost, is one of the most renowned and powerful of the high priests. Some say he is the heir-apparent to take over as the head of the Cathedral. Thus, Dorsey's break from tradition and association with disreputable rabble like the monks and

Magic Knowledge: Ley line walker from another dimension.

He possesses all ley line walker powers plus many spells.

Spells of Note: Globe of daylight, cloud of smoke, chameleon, see the invisible, breathe without air, swim as the fish, armor of Ithan, charismatic aura, cure minor disorders, purification, water to wine, ley line transmission, memory bank, magic pigeon, tongues, magic net, energy bolt, ignite fire, fire ball, circle of flame, escape, time slip, constrain being, turn dead, negate magic, transferal, close rift, and open dimensional portal.

Combat Abilities: Basic

Attacks per Melee Round: Four by hand to hand or psionics, or two by magic.

Bonuses: +1 on initiative, +2 to strike, +2 to parry and dodge, +2 to pull punches, +2 to roll with impact and critical strike on an unmodified roll of 19 or 20. +7 to save vs magic, +3 to save vs psionic attack, +3 to save vs poison and disease, and +4 to save vs horror factor.

Skills of Note: All the usual skills from the line walker O.C.C., all at 98%

Standard Equipment: Standard.



apok, not to mention peasants and highly publicized exploits, is a black mark on a thousand years of tradition. His family has “arranged” to get Dorsey a commission with the knights of the Temple, but he has declined them all. Even Uncle Matthew’s advice (and subtle threats) has had no effect on the lad. He is a knight of the Hospital through and through.

Dorsey Pentecost — Knight of the Hospital O.C.C.

Alignment: Scrupulous

Attributes: I.Q. 15, M.E. 21, M.A. 23, P.S. 20, P.P. 22, P.E. 14, P.B. 19, Spd 28.

Hit Points/M.D.C.: 94

P.P.E.: 50

O.C.C.: Knight of the Hospital

Level of Experience: 7th

Natural Abilities: A natural leader, although still a bit too exuberant, reckless and undiplomatic. He has a curious mind, strong character and a charming personality.

Psionic Powers: None

Magic Knowledge: Only lore skills.

Combat Abilities: Martial artist and paired weapons (taught the basics by the monks, but no special mastery powers).

Attacks per Melee Round: Five (includes boxing and O.C.C. bonus).

Bonuses (include hand to hand and attribute bonuses): +1 on initiative, +6 to strike, +7 to parry and dodge, +3 to pull punches, +3 to roll with impact. +2 to save vs horror factor, +2 to save vs magic, +3 to save psionic attack, and +2 to save vs disease. 75% to evoke trust or intimidation and 45% to charm. Recognizes poisons, drugs and magic potions/slime 40% + 5% per level of experience. Meditation is the same as the priest.

Skills of Note: Horsemanship 59% (general animal riding skill), pilot motorcycle 94%, land navigation 80%, wilderness survival 75%, paramedic 90%, biology 70%, lore: demons & monsters 75%, lore: Wormwood +75%, math: basic 90%, American 98%, Demongogian 98%, Gobblely 98%, street-wise 50%, play the guitar 80%, dance 75%, boxing, W.P. targeting, W.P. knife, W.P. Sword, W.P. black powder TW pistol, W.P. energy pistol.

Standard Equipment: Travelling clothes, a set of dress clothes and dress body armor (medium, 40 M.D.C.), a pair of boots, a pair of gloves, a hat, sleeping bag, blanket, 2D4 small pouches, saddle-bag, 3 utility belts, first-aid kit (including scalpels, sutures and needles, bandages, etc.), six blood

worms, 40 worms of mending, 100 feet of rope (30.5 m; made from angel hair), a grappling hook, 6 resin spikes, and 4 weeks worth of food rations.

Weapons: Two pairs of silver plated throwing knives (4 total), silver cross, broadsword with a doubling crystal (inflicts 2D8 or 4D4 M.D.), a matching pair of techno-wizard black powder pistols (4D6 M.D. per shot; 200 ft/61 m range, payload: one shot each) and one TW black powder shotgun (6D6 M.D. per shot, 200 ft/61 m range, payload two shots).

Magic Items of Note: In addition to his TW modified guns and motorcycle, young Dorsey has a cat's eye bloodstone, a healing blood stone, and a lesser energy crystal with 25 P.P.E.

Knight Armor: Light armor: 25 M.D.C.

Transportation: Harley Davidson motorcycle (a family heirloom) and two back-up bikes (both TW modified to be powered by P.P.E. energy. 25 P.P.E. is equal to one tank of gasoline or about 200 miles/320 km).

Money: Not applicable. Most knights of the Hospital are highly respected and honored within the human society of Wormwood. They are given access to most buildings and homes, provided with a nice place to sleep, given food and drink, and treated to a great deal of attention and comfort.

Cybernetics & Bionics: None.

Symbiotes: None.

Prayers & Spells of Communion with Wormwood, The Living Planet

Notes:

1. ALL of these powers are available only to the Priests of Light. The dark priest, monk, and apok can only acquire some of these powers and may have other limitations or increased P.P.E. cost. Only the wormspeaker and dark priest are roughly comparable to the priest of light in his abilities over Wormwood.
2. Like magic spells, any of these powers can be cancelled any time by its creator before the duration time elapses.
3. The living planet is a mega-damage creature which means the walls of its buildings and other constructs are all mega-damage structures. A typical 10 foot (3 m) area of wall will have 50 M.D.C. — depleting that M.D.C. will temporarily create a hole roughly 10 feet (3 m) in diameter. However, the living planet will immediately begin to repair itself and seal that hole! The hole will reduce in diameter by one foot (0.3 m) a minute and be completely restored, with 50 M.D.C., in ten minutes. Even buildings that are completely destroyed will be rebuilt within a month. The average building has approximately 25,000 M.D.C. per story/per floor, so a small one story house will have roughly 25,000 M.D.C. while a 10 story tower or skyscraper will have 250,000 M.D.C.
4. Saving Throws: In domains completely controlled by the Forces of Evil, the land resists responding to the mental communication and will of the priests. This means that the corrupted living building or item gets to save vs the charac-

ter's magic. The spell caster must roll a 14 or higher to have Wormwood respond appropriately. **A failed roll** means P.P.E. is expended without results, but the character can try again. **If successful**, the magic works 100% and the land, building or item responds as it should. Evil characters have the same problem in lands where humans reign and good dominates.

5. Another priest, wormspeaker or the Host can try to reverse the workings of any spell, but it costs them two times as much P.P.E. and they must roll a 19 or higher to succeed.



List of Priestly Prayers & Spells

Close an Opening
Control Temperature
Create a Burial Place
Create a Fountain of Water
Create Life Force Cauldron
Create Magic Slime
Create an Opening
Create a Pillar
Create Shelter
Create Stairs
Create Tunnel
Create Wall
Create Worm Zombies
Destroy Life Force Cauldron
Heat Point
Hell Fire
Invisible to Magic Seeing
Life Fuel
Locate Places of Evil
Locate Food & Resources
Locate Home Town
Impervious to Symbiotes
Mold Structures
Open & Close Dimensional Rifts
Remove Symbiotes
Repel Symbiotes
Ride Giant Parasites
Summon and use Angel Hair
Summon Battle Saints & Orbs
Summon Edible Grubs
Summon Entities
Summon Flies
Summon and Command Parasites
Summon and use Spirits of Wormwood
Summon & Use Stones & Crystals
Summon & Use Symbiotes
Summon Wind



Control Temperature

Range: 30 feet (9 m) per level of experience
Duration: One hour per level of experience or one day at triple the P.P.E. cost.
Area Affected: 300 foot (90 m) radius per level of experience.

Time Required: Five minutes of prayer or concentration.
Saving Throw: In domains completely controlled by the Forces of Evil, the land resists and the spell caster must roll a 14 or higher to have Wormwood respond appropriately. A failed roll means P.P.E. is expended without result. Evil characters have the same problem in lands where they do not dominate.
P.P.E.: Four

The character can cause Wormwood to increase or decrease the temperature in a particular area by three degrees Fahrenheit per level of experience.

Create a Burial Place

Range: Five feet (1.5 m)
Duration: Permanent grave
Time Required: One minute of prayer or concentration.
Saving Throw: In domains completely controlled by the Forces of Evil, the land resists and the spell caster must roll a 14 or higher to have Wormwood respond appropriately. A failed roll means P.P.E. is expended without result. Evil characters have the same problem in lands where they do not dominate.
P.P.E.: Two

The character can cause Wormwood to spread open to create a shallow hole where a dead body can be placed. When the priest is finished saying a prayer over the body, the planet folds over the hole, covering the body(s) inside. The living planet then recycles the corpse by reducing it down to its chemical components. Thus, there is no chance for stench, pestilence or defiling of the grave. If so desired, the priest can also raise a small, two or three (0.6 or 0.9 m) foot pillar to mark the grave.

Create a Fountain of Water

Range: Five feet (1.5 m)
Duration: Two minutes (8 melee rounds) per level of experience.
Time Required: One minute (4 melee rounds) of prayer or concentration for a fountain, five minutes to create a pool.
Saving Throw: In domains completely controlled by the Forces of Evil, the land resists and the spell caster must roll a 14 or higher to have Wormwood respond appropriately. A failed roll means P.P.E. is expended without result. Evil characters have the same problem in lands where they do not dominate.
P.P.E.: Six for a small fountain or 24 to create a small, shallow pool of water (can hold three humans comfortably).
M.D.C.: Small fountains have a mega-damage structure of 10. Large ones have $2D4 \times 10$ M.D.C., pools $3D4 \times 10$ M.D.C.

The individual attuned to Wormwood can make a three foot tall mound appear out of the ground from which cool, clear drinking water bubbles forth. Additional P.P.E. and concentration can create a shallow pool of water suitable for drinking or bathing in.

Create Life Force Cauldron

Range: Touch
Duration: Permanent
Time Required: Ten minutes of concentration.
Saving Throw: The cauldron can only be created in domains completely controlled by the Forces of Evil. See limitations.
P.P.E.: 400 points.

Limitations: Only characters of an anarchist or evil alignment will even consider the creation of a life force cauldron. Wormwood resists the creation of the cauldron in any area not dominated and corrupted by the Forces of Evil. In evil places, the living planet is weak and the would-be creator needs only to roll a 9 or higher to make the cauldron.

Note: See the section on *symbiotic organisms* for complete details regarding life force cauldrons.

Life force cauldrons are used to create worm zombies, magic slime and other nightmarish creations of magic. The main reason it is NEVER created or used by characters of a good or even unprincipled alignment is that human sacrifices are needed to power it.

Create Magic Slime

Range: Ten feet (3 m) away from a life force cauldron.

Duration: The slime remains until used.

Time Required: Ten minutes of concentration.

Saving Throw: Not applicable.

P.P.E.: 50 points per every one vial of slime for potions; varies for slime of different kinds (see the section describing symbiotic organisms).

Limitations: Must have a life force cauldron to make the magic slime and only characters of an anarchist or evil alignment will consider making and using slime.

Note: See the sections on *symbiotic organisms* for complete details regarding slime and life force cauldrons.

Magic slime is created with a life force cauldron which is usually the source for all or most of the P.P.E. necessary for its creation. These cauldrons are found only in domains completely controlled by the Forces of Evil. The slime is used to create a variety of magic potions and ointments.

Create an Opening

Range: Five feet (1.5 m)

Duration: One minute (4 melee rounds) per level of experience.

Time Required: One melee (15 seconds) of prayer or concentration.

Saving Throw: In domains completely controlled by the Forces of Evil, the land resists and the spell caster must roll a 14 or higher to have Wormwood respond appropriately. A failed roll means P.P.E. is expended without result. Evil characters have the same problem in lands where they do not dominate.

P.P.E.: Three for portals as small as a peephole to as large as a window big enough for a human to crawl through. Six points for an opening the size of a door, or nine for an opening twice the size of a normal human-size door.

The spell caster can create an opening (hole, window, doorway) in a solid wall of a building. He simply prays or concentrates and asks Wormwood to temporarily restructure itself in a small area to create an opening. When the spell elapses or is cancelled, the wall closes back into a solid, single surface.

Close an Opening

Range: Five feet (1.5 m)

Duration: Two minutes (8 melee rounds) per level of experience.

Time Required: One melee (15 seconds) of prayer or concentration.

Saving Throw: In domains completely controlled by the Forces of Evil, the land resists and the spell caster must roll a 14 or higher to have Wormwood respond appropriately. A failed roll means P.P.E. is expended without result. Evil characters have the same problem in lands where they do not dominate.

P.P.E.: Three for a window size portal large enough for a human to crawl through, six for an opening the size of a door, or nine for an opening twice the size of a normal human-size door.

M.D.C.: A ten foot (3 m) diameter of wall has 50 M.D.C. points.

The spell caster can close an existing opening (hole, window, doorway), making it a solid part of the wall/building. The portal is completely sealed as if no opening had ever existed. To accomplish this feat, the character simply prays or concentrates and asks Wormwood to temporarily restructure itself to close the portal. When the spell elapses, the opening reappears. Add

100 P.P.E. points to close a door permanently. Note that only another priest, monk, apok or wormspeaker can reopen the door or create a new temporary opening. Anybody caught in a closing opening will be stuck, but not hurt, until someone who can manipulate structures can free him.

Create a Pillar

Range: Five feet (1.5 m) per level of experience.

Duration: One minute (4 melee rounds) per level of experience.

Time Required: One minute of prayer or concentration.

Saving Throw: In domains completely controlled by the Forces of Evil, the land resists and the spell caster must roll a 14 or higher to have Wormwood respond appropriately. A failed roll means P.P.E. is expended without result. Evil characters have the same problem in lands where they do not dominate.

P.P.E.: Two points per every five feet (1.5 m) up to a maximum of 50 feet (15.2 m), outdoors. A pillar made to grow indoors costs twice as much and stops at the ceiling. The diameter of the pillar is roughly equal to that of the average tree.

M.D.C.: The pillar is a mega-damage structure with 25 M.D.C. points per five feet (1.5 m).

A pillar with small branches for climbing rises from the ground. It can be climbed to get a better view of the surrounding area, provide some shade, and/or to serve as a perch to rest in above the ground and away from predators.

Create Shelter

Range: Five feet (1.5 m)

Duration: One hour per level of experience.

Time Required: Ten minutes of prayer or concentration.

Saving Throw: In domains completely controlled by the Forces of Evil, the land resists and the spell caster must roll a 14 or higher to have Wormwood respond appropriately. A failed roll means P.P.E. is expended without result. Evil characters have the same problem in lands where they do not dominate.

P.P.E.: 12 points for a temporary hut (lasts one hour per experience level of the creator) or 24 points for a more durable hut (lasts one day per level of experience). Add 100 P.P.E. to make the hut permanent (lasts years).

M.D.C.: The shelter is a mega-damage structure with 100 M.D.C. points.

The shelter simply swells out of the ground in the shape of a small bubble structure that resembles an igloo. It is only large enough to accommodate two or three human-size occupants comfortably and is difficult to see from a distance (it blends in with its surroundings). Furthermore, the hut maker can always sense the location of his creation as long as it exists.

Create Stairs

Range: Five feet (1.5 m) per level of experience.

Duration: Two minutes (8 melees) per level of experience.

Time Required: One melee (15 seconds) of prayer or concentration.

Saving Throw: In domains completely controlled by the Forces of Evil, the land resists and the spell caster must roll a 14 or higher to have Wormwood respond appropriately. A failed roll means P.P.E. is expended without result. Evil characters have the same problem in lands where they do not dominate.

P.P.E.: Four points per every five foot (1.5 m) length of stairs.

M.D.C.: Stairs are a mega-damage structure with 25 M.D.C. points per every five foot (1.5 m) length.

Through prayer or concentrates the character asks Wormwood to temporarily restructure itself to form a stairway. At first a mound will appear in the floor and begin to go up or down to form a ramp. A moment later the ramp reshapes into stairs. When the spell elapses, the stairs slip back into the floor. Add 100 P.P.E. points to make the stairs permanent. **Note:** The stairs spell can also be used to create a narrow bridge.

Create Tunnel

Range: Five feet (1.5 m) per level of experience.

Duration: Two minutes (8 melees) per level of experience.

Time Required: One melee (15 seconds) of prayer or concentration.

Saving Throw: In domains completely controlled by the Forces of Evil, the land resists and the spell caster must roll a 14 or higher to have Wormwood respond appropriately. A failed roll means P.P.E. is expended without result. Evil characters have the same problem in lands where they do not dominate.

P.P.E.: Five points per every five foot (1.5 m) length of tunnel.

Through prayer or concentration the character asks Wormwood to temporarily restructure itself to form a tunnel or series of tunnels underneath the ground. At first an indentation appears in the ground and begins to sink, creating an ever deepening tunnel. The tunnel's width is usually wide enough for a human to crawl through, but can be enlarged big enough for walking with a thought and 10 additional P.P.E. points. The direction of the tunnel is completely controlled by the spell caster, but he must be inside to do so. When the spell elapses, the tunnel closes up and disappears as if it never existed. Add 100 P.P.E. points to make the tunnel permanent.

Create Wall

Range: Five feet (1.5 m) per level of experience.

Duration: Two minutes (8 melees) per level of experience.

Time Required: One melee (15 seconds) of prayer or concentration.

Saving Throw: In domains completely controlled by the Forces of Evil, the land resists and the spell caster must roll a 14 or higher to have Wormwood respond appropriately. A failed roll means P.P.E. is expended without result. Evil characters have the same problem in lands where they do not dominate.

P.P.E.: 10 points per every 10 foot (3 m) section of wall. The wall is 10 feet (3 m) long by as high as 10 feet tall and about half a foot (0.15 m) thick. The length of the wall can be increased by 10 foot (3 m) increments per each additional 10 P.P.E. points. 100 P.P.E. per section makes the wall a permanent structure.

M.D.C.: A wall is a mega-damage structure with 50 M.D.C. points per every ten foot (3 m) section.

A solid wall grows from the ground of the living planet or floor of buildings. Like most structures created from/by Wormwood, the wall is attached to the ground and cannot be cut loose and physically carried to a different location. The creation of a wall is typically erected as a defensive barrier.



Create Worm Zombies

Range: Ten feet (3 m) away from a life force cauldron.

Duration: The monster exists until it is physically destroyed.

Time Required: Ten minutes of concentration.

Limitations: Must have a life force cauldron to make zombies and only characters of an anarchist or evil alignment will consider making these zombies.

Saving Throw: Not applicable.

P.P.E.: 250 points.

Note: See the sections on *Dark Minions* and *symbiotic organisms* for complete details regarding worm zombies and life force cauldrons.

The zombie is created with a life force cauldron which is usually the source for all or most of the P.P.E. necessary for its creation. These cauldrons are found only in domains completely controlled by the Forces of Evil.

Destroy Life Force Cauldron

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Time Required: One minute (4 melee rounds) of prayer or concentration.

Saving Throw: The cauldron can only be created in domains completely controlled by the Forces of Evil. As usual, the land fights against any magic leveled against it. The spell caster must roll a 14 or higher to have Wormwood respond appropriately. A failed roll means the P.P.E. is expended without result. A successful roll means the cauldron is destroyed and its store of P.P.E. is harmlessly dispelled.

P.P.E.: 100 points. The expenditure of 200 points means the spellcaster only has to roll a 7 and 300 points reduces the save to one point. The destroyer cannot use the cauldron's own P.P.E. against it.

Note: See the section on *symbiotic organisms* for complete details regarding life force cauldrons.

The priest or wormspeaker can safely release the mystic, life energy stored in the cauldron and destroy it. When destroyed, the dangerous pool is absorbed back into Wormwood as if it had never existed. This is a great ability because life force cauldrons are used by evil beings for human sacrifice and to create terrible monsters like the worm zombies.

Heat Point

Range: Two feet (0.6 m) per level of experience.

Duration: One minute per level of experience.

Area Affected: One foot (0.3 m) per level of experience.

Time Required: About half a melee round (7 seconds) of prayer or concentration.

Saving Throw: Not applicable.

P.P.E.: Two points.

The spell caster can super heat an area one foot in diameter in a matter of seconds. The area will glow red with heat and will burn anybody who touches (2D6 S.D.C.) it, or who passes his hand over it less than three feet (0.9 m) away. Combustible materials such as paper, cloth, dry grass or leaves, wood, human hair, animal fur and similar has a 1-50% chance of catching on fire; add 10% for each additional minute up to 100%. The heat point spell can also be used to light torches, start campfires, boil water, give a hot foot, and cauterize wounds.

Hell Fire

Range: Ten feet (0.6 m) per level of experience.

Duration: One melee round (15 seconds).

Area Affected: One foot (0.3 m) per level of experience. Height: five feet (1.5 m) plus one foot (0.3 m) per level of experience.

Time Required: One melee rounds (15 seconds) of prayer or concentration.

Saving Throw: Not applicable.

P.P.E.: 15 points.

This ability is roughly the same as the heat point only far more deadly and is used as a method of attack, defense and purification. Hell fire actually creates a pillar of intensely hot, magic flame. The size of the pillar depends on the experience level of its creator. The fire inflicts 4D6 M.D. to most things and 2D4 × 10 to supernatural monsters, including vampires, the host, dragons, and creatures of magic! There is also a 90% likelihood that combustible material will catch fire. The pillar is stationary and cannot be moved once it has been created, but is great for blocking entrances. It can also be used as a signal flare. **Note:** Hell fire does not burn buildings or harm the surface of the planet Wormwood.

Invisible to Magic Seeing

Range: Self

Duration: 15 minutes per level of experience.

Time Required: Two melee rounds (30 seconds) of concentration.

Saving Throw: Not applicable.

P.P.E.: 25

This magic makes the character invisible to all means of magic observation/tracking, including see the invisible, calling, and locate. Nor can he be found or observed by astral travelers or through the use of any kind of crystal ball! Furthermore, the character can sense when he is being watched by invisible creatures, astral travelers, magic or through a crystal ball. The moment he activates this spell, he disappears from the crystal ball/magic sight.

Life Fuel

Range: Self, or others by touch or prayer within 3 ft (0.9 m).

Duration: Instant and permanent

Time Required: Two melee rounds (30 seconds) of concentration.

Saving Throw: Not applicable.

P.P.E.: The amount of potential physic energy expended varies with the character's purpose.

Cleanse the Body: 15 P.P.E. to instantly negates poison and drugs. Damage or the effects of the chemicals are stopped at the moment of healing (previous damage remains). Alternately, this healing touch can be used to relieve the symptoms of disease; reduce all penalties and the duration of the sickness by half.

Cleanse the Spirit: 30 P.P.E. is expended to free victims of supernatural possession and mind control. Possessing entities are instantly forced out of the victim's body and must leave the area. Characters under psionic, vampiric or mystic mind control instantly get another chance to save vs psionic attacks/mind control and get a special +6 bonus to save (in addition to any other possible bonuses from attributes or magic items)! A failed roll means no change. A successful roll means they instantly regain their senses and will power.

Life Energy (self only): As much as 50 P.P.E. points can be willingly given to another priest, apok, wormspeaker or practitioner of magic to provide him with the mystic energy he needs to perform his magic. The available P.P.E. can be used to fuel magic spells, crystals, blood stones or open dimensional rifts. The character sacrificing his P.P.E. reserve temporarily loses that energy, but will recover the energy through rest, meditation or prayer.

Life Shield (self only): 5 P.P.E. per hour. The character can prevent his P.P.E. reserve from being stolen or unwillingly drained from him by symbiotes, psi-stalkers or any other means.

Restore Life: 20 P.P.E. restores 10 hit points and all S.D.C. of non-mega-damage creatures and 2D6 + 10 M.D.C. to mega-damage creatures, as well as magically heals wounds.

Locate Places of Evil

Range: Self

Duration: 20 minutes per level of experience.

Time Required: Two melee rounds (30 seconds) of prayer or concentration.

Saving Throw: Not applicable.

P.P.E.: Three points to sense the correct direction where one can locate crawling towers, cities, towns, or armed camps inhabited by supernatural monsters.

The character can sense the direction of places (cities, towns, lairs) in which a few very powerful supernatural monsters can be found or an entire city or armed camp of supernatural fiends can be located. He can also sense the direction and approximate distance of any crawling towers within a ten mile radius (per level of experience). This power enables the spell caster to find or avoid places inhabited by thousands of monsters or an extremely powerful monster like the Host or an alien intelligence. This ability cannot detect a small number of supernatural marauders nor mortal humans or D-Bees of evil alignment.

Locate Food & Resources

Range: Self

Duration: 20 minutes per level of experience

Time Required: Two melee rounds (30 seconds) of prayer or concentration.

Saving Throw: Not applicable.

P.P.E.: Three points to sense the correct direction where one can locate food caves, edible worms and grubs, food caches, angel hair, water, etc.

The character can sense the direction and approximate distance of the nearest food cave. He can also sense the direction and general area where food worms and grubs might be found and where food may be stored.

Similarly, the character can sense the direction and approximate distance to the nearest available source of water (fountain or pool), as well as mountains made of resin/mucus, bubbling resin pools, and angel hair. However, his senses may lead to a town or city where food caves, grubs, water and resources are commonplace. This particular ability does not include locating blood stones, crystals or symbiotes.

Locate Home Town

Range: Self

Duration: Constant

Time Required: Not applicable.

Saving Throw: Not applicable.

P.P.E.: Two points to sense the correct direction home. Automatically senses/recognizes home town without P.P.E. cost.

Characters attuned to Wormwood will automatically sense when they have returned to their home town regardless of how much it may have changed or whether the character is suffering from memory loss or insanity. Furthermore, the character can expend P.P.E. to determine the correct direction toward home. Home is the place where the character was either born or has spent several years (ten or more) of his life.

Impervious to Symbiotes

Range: Self

Duration: Constant

Time Required: Not applicable.

Saving Throw: Not applicable.

P.P.E.: Not applicable; automatic.

Note: Exclusive to the priests of light and apok.

The priest is impervious to the effects of ALL symbiotic organisms created from the Living Planet, including the foul designs manifested by the Forces of Darkness and the helpful Spirit of Wormwood. The priest is also impervious to magic

slime, parasites and worm zombies (they will not attack him/her). The life force battery and life force cauldron cannot drain his/her energy. Also see the remove and repel symbiotes spells.

The only exceptions are food grubs, angel hair, blood stones and crystals, which are not true symbiotes and can be used by the priest. Of course, the character is vulnerable to alien symbiotic organisms from other dimensions, such as those found in **Rifts World Book Two: Atlantis**.

Mold Structures

Range: Five feet (1.5 m)

Duration: 20 minutes per level of the spell caster or permanent.

Time Required: Five minutes of prayer or concentration per every five foot (1.5 m) radius.

Saving Throw: In domains completely controlled by the Forces of Evil, the land resists and the spell caster must roll a 14 or higher to have Wormwood respond appropriately. A failed roll means P.P.E. is expended without results. Evil characters have the same problem in lands where they do not dominate.

P.P.E.: 20 points per every five foot (1.5 m) radius of area transformed on a temporary basis. Add 100 points to make the changes permanent. Note that permanent remodeling of structures can be changed via this same spell by that character or another with the same power.

The character attuned to Wormwood can rearrange existing structures created by the living planet or shaped by another character. This ability enables the spell caster to change the look or configuration of an existing building, room, cave, tunnel, pillar, sculpture, fountain, etc., which is part of Wormwood. This includes reshaping rooms, creating new doors or windows, creating fountains, molding statues or ornamentation, styling furniture, adding additions to existing rooms or buildings and so on.

This power and 120 P.P.E. points can accelerate the normal growing/creation process of organic structures by five times.

Open & Close Dimensional Rifts

Same as the spells found in the **Rifts RPG** — close rift, page 189 and dimensional portal, page 190.

Remove Symbiotes

Range: Touch or up to ten feet (3 m)

Duration: Varies; see description.

Time Required: One minute (4 melee rounds) of prayer or concentration to remove symbiotic organisms.

Saving Throw: Even in domains completely controlled by the Forces of Evil, the symbiotes' resistance against this power is weak. The spell caster must roll a 10 or higher to make it release. A failed roll means P.P.E. is expended without results.

P.P.E.: 15 points remove each symbiotic organism, including magic slime and life force batteries.

The character can recognize symbiotes created by Wormwood (including those corrupted by the Forces of Darkness) and can remove them from others without harm to that person (no damage or side effects). The organism is harmless, disposed of by sending it back into Wormwood.

The priest can also use this power to safely free prisoners from life force batteries. In this case, the creature does not slither

away back into Wormwood, it waits until a new victim can be found. However, if a new source of energy cannot be found within a week, it shrivels up and dies. To make the life force battery merge back into Wormwood, the priest must expend 30 P.P.E. and make a successful saving throw against the evil magic (14 or higher).



Repel Symbiotes

Range: Touch or up to ten feet (3 m) per level of experience.

Duration: Varies; see description.

Time Required: Five seconds (counts as two melee actions) of prayer or concentration and a stern command to repel parasites.

Saving Throw: Even in domains completely controlled by the Forces of Evil, the symbiotes' resistance against this power is weak. The spell caster must roll a 7 or higher to make it flee the area. A failed roll means P.P.E. is expended without results.

P.P.E.: 7 points to repel parasites, 30 points to stop a crawling tower for a few days.

The character can recognize symbiotes created by Wormwood, especially those created by the Forces of Darkness. Evoking this spell with a short chant and concentration repels aggressive symbiotes, including parasites, life force batteries and worm zombies. The creatures are forced to stop, turn and leave the area without harming the spell caster or anybody near him. Two symbiotes/parasites can be affected per level of the character's experience. The parasite(s) will not return for 1D4 hours, but zombies and life force batteries can return in 1D4 minutes.

The character can even make the crawling towers slow their silent, undulating advance. The magic works only on one tower at a time and the tower gets a saving throw to ignore the command (the priest must roll a 14 or higher to make it stop). If the magic fails, the P.P.E. is spent, but the priest can try again. If successful, the tower will stop and not move for one day (24 hours) per experience level of the priest. A dark priest or the Host can try to reverse the spell but it costs them two times as much P.P.E. and they must roll a 19 or higher to succeed.

Note: Evil characters can repel the spirits of Wormwood, edible grubs and worms and make angel hair disappear before it falls to the ground (the hair is permanent once it hits the ground or is scooped up by humanoids). This spell does not affect battle saints, stones or crystals.

Ride Giant Parasites

Range: Touch or up to ten feet (3 m) per level of experience.

Duration: 15 minutes per level of experience (double for wormspeakers).

Time Required: Five seconds (counts as two melee actions) of prayer or concentration followed by a stern command.

Saving Throw: Even in domains completely controlled by the

Forces of Evil, the symbiotes' resistance against this power is weak. The spell caster must roll a 7 or higher to turn the monster into a tame and obedient riding animal. A failed roll means P.P.E. is expended without results.

P.P.E.: 10 points.

The spell caster can instantly turn an aggressive, giant parasite into a tame and obedient riding animal. The creature will obey only the person who has enchanted it and will allow others to climb on top of it only after the spell caster has mounted it first. The parasite can be used like a horse, pack animal or to pull a cart or wagon, but cannot be made to fight for any reason. Part of this spell is to make the animal docile.

Summon & Use Angel Hair

Range: The material falls within 20 feet (6 m) of the summoner.

Duration: The hair falls from the sky for one minute per level of experience. Enough material falls in one minute to make a full suit of clothes.

Time Required: Five minutes of prayer or concentration before the spell is cast and angel hair begins to fall.

Saving Throw: In domains completely controlled by the Forces of Evil it is difficult to summon angel hair. The spell caster must roll a 15 or higher to succeed. However, while a failed roll means no angel hair, the character only loses 5 P.P.E.; only if the summoning is successful is all the P.P.E. used up.

P.P.E.: 20 points

Just as the name of this spell suggests, the character is able to summon the material humans call angel hair. Fine strands of cotton-like fibers appear in thin air, about 50 feet (15.2 m) above the ground and gently falls to earth. The material can be used to make clothes of all kind, as well as rope and thread.

Summon Battle Saints & Orbs

Range: 10 feet (3 m) per level of experience.

Duration: The battle saint will remain active for 24 hours or until it is destroyed.

Time Required: Ten minutes of prayer or concentration.

Saving Throw: None, not even in domains completely controlled by the Forces of Evil.

Limitations: First a battle saint or orb must be located. The summoner must go to it and stand within range. The battle saint or orb will NOT respond to evil priests, evil summoners, dark priests or any of the Forces of Darkness. A priest of light can summon both but cannot pilot either. Apoks, monks, knights of the Temple, knights of the Hospital and master psionics can pilot both mechanisms.

P.P.E.: 190 points to summon a battle saint orb and 390 points to summon a battle saint.

This spell is not so much a summoning as it is an awakening. When a battle saint or battle saint orb is dormant, they turn into a small hill or part of a mountain. It doesn't have any special feature nor does it radiate unusual amounts of magic. One must know that the symbiotic giant is located in that area. The casual passerby will have no idea that he is walking on top of a battle saint. To awaken it, the spell caster must go to its resting place and work his magic. A good priest with sufficient P.P.E. can raise the giant from its place of rest, but must have some other good character pilot it. The wormspeaker can awaken and pilot the symbiotes.

The super-symbiote functions like a giant robot vehicle, except that the pilot is physically and mentally connected to it and the giant symbiote responds to his thoughts as quickly and automatically as the pilot's own body. See the section describing symbiotes for details.

Summon Edible Grubs

Range: Appear within 5 feet (1.5 m) of the summoner.

Duration: Instant.

Time Required: Five minutes of prayer or concentration.

Saving Throw: In domains completely controlled by the Forces of Evil it is difficult to summon edible grubs. The spell caster must roll a 15 or higher to succeed. However, while a failed roll means no grubs, the character only loses 5 P.P.E.; only if the summoning is successful is all the P.P.E. used up.

P.P.E.: 15 points summons enough edible critters to feed two human beings. 20 points feeds four, 25 points feeds six, 30 points feeds eight.

In response to this spell, the ground of Wormwood puckers and creates a small, bowl-size indentation. Inside the bowl are worms and grubs. Although they are alive and may be considered too gross to eat by alien visitors, they are actually very tasty and extremely nutritious. The creatures can be cooked or eaten raw.

Summon Entities

Range: Appear within 5 feet (1.5 m) of the summoner.

Duration: The entities will stay 24 hours per level of experience.

Time Required: Ten minutes of prayer or concentration.

Saving Throw: In domains completely controlled by the Forces of Evil it is actually easier to summon entities; roll 10 or higher. When using a life force cauldron the P.P.E. cost is double (provided by the cauldron) but the summoning never fails! In areas not dominated by evil the spell caster must roll a 15 or higher to succeed. A failed roll means no appearance of the entities, but the character only uses up half the P.P.E.

P.P.E.: 150 points summons 1D6 poltergeists or 1D4 haunting entities. 250 P.P.E. summons one syphon or tectonic entity. 300 P.P.E. summons one possessing entity (always evil).

In response to this spell, the air in front of the spell caster, or above the life force cauldron, begins to shimmer and for a brief two seconds, opens a tiny dimensional rift that releases one or more entities (the specific type can be designated). The lesser entities are more mischievous and troublesome than dangerous, but the syphon, tectonic and possessing entities are potentially lethal. See **Rifts Conversion Book One** for complete descriptions about entities.

Summon Flies

Range: 100 miles (160 km) per level of experience.

Duration: 30 minutes per level of experience.

Time Required: Ten minutes of prayer or concentration.

Saving Throw: None

P.P.E.: 50

Insects from other dimensions have adapted to life on Wormwood. Flies and other scavenging insects that feed on waste and carrion are the most common. This helps to keep the environment clean, but they can also be summoned by priests and wormspeakers with some interesting results.

This magic will cause 1000 flying insects (per each level of experience of the summoner) to amass in a gigantic, blinding cloud. The swarm covers a 100 foot (30.5 m) radius per level of the summoner.

Blinding cloud of flying insects: Thousands of flying insects fill the air as a massive living cloud. The swarm interferes with radar, creating false readings, and reduces visibility to about 10 feet (3 m). The bugs are also very distracting, noisy and annoying, covering or splattering themselves on windshields, flying into the eyes and so on. The insect swarm may also clog engines, air intake valves, vents, and joints of bots, borgs and vehicles, causing varying damage and problems, such as engines overheating, cutting off air supplies, etc.

Characters not protected inside body armor, a vehicle or completely covering their heads with a sack, cape or cloth of some kind, will be pelted and covered by the bugs. Even though most of the insects in this swarm are harmless, they will crawl in the ears and nose, fly into the mouth and eyes, get into food, and crawl under clothes. The overall sensation is disgusting and debilitating. **Penalties:** Characters caught in the cloud lose half of their melee actions, can barely see or hear, completely lose initiative, and all combat bonuses and speed are reduced by half.

Summon & Use Symbiotes

Range: Appear within 20 feet (6 m) of the summoner.

Duration: Permanent/until destroyed.

Time Required: 20 minutes of prayer or concentration.

Saving Throw: In domains completely controlled by the Forces of Evil, the land resists and the spell caster must roll a 14 or higher to have Wormwood respond appropriately. Evil characters have the same problem in lands where they do not dominate. A failed roll means no appearance of the symbiote, but the character only uses up half the P.P.E. Also note that sometimes Wormwood simply cannot respond (G.M.'s discretion).

P.P.E.: 100 points summons any type of worm (3D4 blood worms or 1D4 × 10 worms of mending). 300 P.P.E. to summon one star and claw, and 400 P.P.E. to summon one crawler.

Note: This power is not available to the Priest of Light who is impervious to symbiotes.

In response to this spell, the ground in front of the spell caster begins to move and a moment later, the symbiote pops out.

Summon & Command Parasites

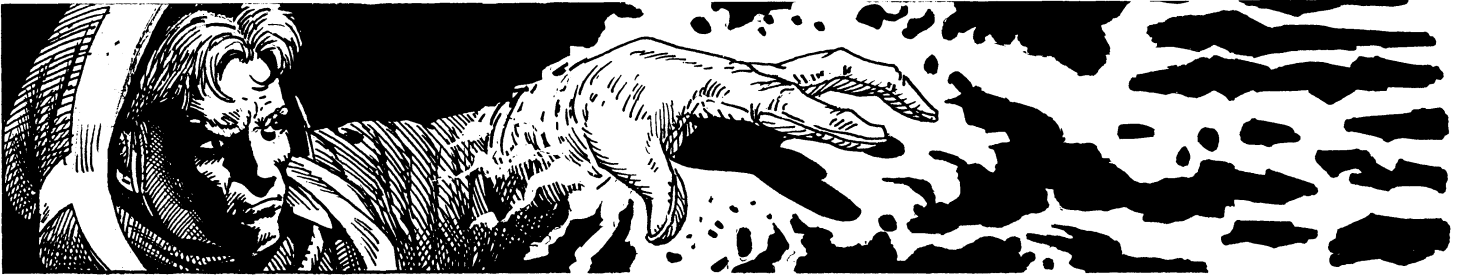
Range: Appear within 20 feet (6 m) of the summoner.

Duration: Will stay 24 hours per level of experience (double for wormspeakers).

Time Required: 20 minutes of prayer or concentration.

Saving Throw: In domains completely controlled by the Forces of Evil, it is actually easier to summon parasites; roll 10 or higher. When using a life force cauldron the P.P.E. cost is double (the extra energy provided by the cauldron), but the summoning never fails! In areas not dominated by evil, the spell caster must roll a 14 or higher to succeed. A failed roll means no appearance of the parasites, but the character only uses up half the P.P.E.

P.P.E.: 100 points summons 1D4 lesser parasites like ticks and beetles. 270 P.P.E. to summon one of the larger, dangerous types like the monster worms, flailer, leaper or battle wagon and 450 P.P.E. to summon the giant Battler parasite.



In response to this spell, the ground in front of the spell caster begins to move and a mound of earth swells up from the ground. A moment later, the parasite(s) appears and the mound shrinks back into the ground.

The parasite will only obey the commands of the character who summoned it and will even let that person ride on its back. Parasites are aggressive and combative by nature so they make ideal guards and attack animals. See the section describing symbiotes for details regarding the different types of parasites.

Summon & Use Spirits of Wormwood

Range: 10 feet per level of experience.

Duration: The symbiotic spirit remains for 3D4 hours. The duration is always random.

Time Required: Ten minutes of prayer or concentration.

Saving Throw: None, not even in domains completely controlled by the Forces of Evil. If the spirit is available it will come.

Limitations: It will only link and offer its powers to characters of a good alignment (including unprincipled if nobody nicer is available). Once connected to a character it cannot be made to let go until its random duration has elapsed or its host body is slain.

P.P.E.: 190 points to summon a spirit of Wormwood. However, frequently the spirit is not available from the Living Planet and cannot come (G.M.'s discretion). Under this circumstance, NO P.P.E. points are expended. Mystic energy is only used up if a spirit appears.

The character can summon the wispy creatures known as the Spirits of Wormwood and sometimes referred to by common folk as angels. In reality, the symbiotic spirit is an ectoplasmic manifestation that temporarily bonds with the priest or fighter to give him superhuman powers and insight. See the section describing symbiotes for details.

Summon & Use Stones & Crystals

Range: Appear within 20 feet (6 m) of the summoner.

Duration: Permanent until destroyed.

Time Required: 20 minutes of prayer or concentration.

Saving Throw: To successfully summon a magic crystal or stone, the character must roll an unmodified 15 or higher. When using a life force cauldron the P.P.E. cost is double (usually the extra energy is provided by the cauldron) and the success roll is a mere 8 or higher! A failed roll means no appearance of the item and the character still uses up all the P.P.E. except for those from his own personal reserve!

P.P.E.: A crystal ball requires 600 P.P.E. and permanently burns up 2D6 points of the character's P.P.E. base. Control Crystal needs 450 P.P.E. points and permanently burns up 1D6 points from the character's P.P.E. base. Stones and crystals that

store large amounts of magic energy or provide special powers cost 350 P.P.E. each and permanently burn up 1D4 points from the character's P.P.E. base. The average lesser blood stone or crystals are 150 P.P.E. each and permanently burns up one point from the character's permanent P.P.E. base.

In response to this spell, the ground in front of the spell caster begins to move and a pillar swells up from the earth. A moment later a pod buds at the top to reveal one large (the most powerful) stone or crystal as desired. At the base of the small pillar the summoner can also summon 1D4 lesser stones or crystals. Alternatively, the spell caster can summon 1D4 + 1 lesser stones or crystals. Note that all these items are a part of the Living Planet and in each case, their summoning/creation permanently destroys a small amount of the spell caster's personal P.P.E. base.

Summon Wind

Range/area of effect: 1000 foot (305 m) radius per level of experience.

Duration: 15 minutes per level of experience

Time Required: Five minutes of prayer or concentration followed by a stern command.

Saving Throw: Not applicable.

P.P.E.: 60 points.

The spell caster can summon an unnatural wind to sweep the area. The speed and force of the wind is 7 mph (11 km) per level of experience and can be completely controlled by the wind maker. The summoner of the wind can also control and change the direction it blows.

Windstorms gusting at 50 mph (80 km) or higher will force characters moving against the wind to travel at half their normal speed, sound travels half as far, visibility is reduced by 25% from flying dust and debris, flying skills and stunts have a penalty of -40% and small or light items will be blown away. Winds of 80 mph (128.7 km) or greater makes travel and flying impossible! Small, light items are swept away in an instant, human-size to giant characters are knocked to the ground and pushed 1D4 x 100 yards/meters every time they stand up. Visibility is reduced to about 20 feet (6 m)!



Symbiotic Organisms of Wormwood

Symbiotic Organisms are typically parasitic creatures that attach themselves to a host body. The organism feeds on the host body, but at the same time provides some service (bonuses, special abilities, etc.) to that body. On Wormwood, all indigenous symbiotic organisms are created by the Living Planet. However, the more monstrous types have been designed by the Forces of Darkness.

All the creatures on Wormwood, including humans and symbiotes, are mega-damage creatures. In another dimension where mystic energy is weak (like 20th Century Earth or the Palladium World), they become S.D.C. creatures. In this particular instance, the symbiote's M.D.C. translates into equivalent S.D.C. (i.e.: 40 M.D.C. equals 40 S.D.C.). This is due in part because symbiotic organisms are a living extension of Wormwood and cannot survive away from the planet. If symbiotes are taken to another dimension/world, they offer no mystic or psionic powers and die within 1D6 hours. The organisms shrivel up, fall off and turn into dust. After about six hours even stones and crystals created by Wormwood begin to crumble and disintegrate into powder.

Although the symbiotic organisms quickly perish when removed from the living planet, they can be used by any human and most D-bees, especially humanoids, who visit Wormwood. However, Wormwood symbiotes do not work on supernatural beings or creatures of magic (dragons). A typical human character such as a freelancer can have as many as four symbiotes and may also use a weapon or device that contains Wormwood bloodstones or crystals. The only exceptions to this rule are the **Wormspeaker**, who can use all the symbiotic worms and have as many as five other organisms, plus use stones and crystals; and the **symbiotic warrior**.

Symbiotes are usually summoned by priests or wormspeakers for use by other people. However, they are sometimes encountered in the wild (GM's discretion). Using symbiotes from other worlds has severely damaging, even deadly, consequences. However, most of the symbiotes created by Wormwood are designed to help its human inhabitants and have few or minimal side-effects. The organisms redesigned and mutated by the Forces of Darkness are the most dangerous.

In most cases, the union between humanoid and symbiote is permanent. The only way to remove the organism is with the aid of a priest or wormspeaker or to kill it. The safest way to remove the things is to get a priest or wormspeaker to magically remove it. They can do so with incredible ease and without pain or damage to the host body (see *remove symbiotes* in the priest's spell section). The only other ways to remove a symbiote is to either kill the organism or kill the host body. Slaying a symbiotic organism without damaging the host body is virtually impossible. For every one point of damage inflicted on the symbiote (which can regenerate quickly), two points are inflicted on the host body, plus there is agonizing pain. After the creature has been removed, all the powers it once provided are gone, but the penalties (reduced by half) remain. **Note:** The bonuses and penalties from two or more symbiotic organisms are accumulative.

Note: Also see **Rifts World Book Two: Atlantis** for other types of more dangerous symbiotic organisms.

Symbiotic Organisms

Battle Saint
Battle Saint Orb
Spirit of Wormwood

Claws

Booster Claw
Claw Feet
Combat Claw
Eye Claw

Crawlers

Brain Sucker
Chest Wrap
Crown
Half Mask
Medallion Heart
Medallion Skull
Necklace
Spider

Stars

Glimmerstar
Mindstar
Magicstar

Worms

Worms of Armor
Worms of Blood
Worms of Mending
Worms of Power
Worms of Seeing
Worms of Speech
Worms of Spirit

Evil Symbiotic Organisms

Life Force Batteries
Life Force Cauldron
Debilitation Slime
Null Slime
Restoration Slime
Slime Potions
Slime Ointments
Stasis Slime

Parasites

Battler
Tick
Beetle
Monster Worm
Tangle Worm
Krikton Flailer
Krikton Leaper
Krikton Battle Wagon

Blood Stones

Greater Stones

Bio-Booster Stone
Bio-Field Stone
Battle Stone
Eye Stone
Healing Stone
Psi-Booster Stone

Lesser Stones

Cat's Eye
Mini-Bio-Booster Stone
Mini-Healing Stone
Protection Stone
Pure Stone
Spirit Stone

Magic Crystals

Greater Crystals

Control Gem
Crystal Ball
Energy Cells (90 to 180 P.P.E.)
Eye of Wormwood
Heart of Wormwood
Life Essence Crystal
Magic Booster Crystal
Spell Gem of Destruction
Spell Gem of Dimensions
Spell Gem of Illusion
Spell Gem of Magic
Spell Gem of Protection

Lesser Crystals

Energy Cells (10 to 50 P.P.E.)
Lesser Spell Gems
Finder Crystal
Light Crystal
Shadow Crystal
Spell Gem Blank



RA. PETERZEN
KEVIN SIEMBEDA - 1993

Battle Saints

One might consider the Battle Saint to be a giant, organic, combat robot. It requires one pilot who physically joins/attaches to the creature and directs its every movement. Typically, only the apok, knights of the Temple or Hospital (not freelancers or other O.C.C.s), or monks are capable of piloting battle saints. Priests of Light can summon the giant war machine but cannot pilot them.

The act of piloting the skyscraper-size juggernauts requires concentration, focus, will power and initiative. Everything the automaton sees and feels is made aware to the pilot. Attacks per melee round are equal to those of the pilot plus three additional. The giant, organic robot has an M.D.C. equal to the hit points or M.D.C. of its pilot times 20. Thus, a pilot with 32 hit points/M.D.C. instills the Battle Saint with 640 mega-damage capacity. A pilot with 60 hit points instills 1200 mega-damage points. The only characters from other worlds who can pilot the giants are humans who have major or master psionics (mind melter), cyber-knights and True Atlanteans. If the pilot is a non-mega-damage human, his equivalent in hit points (not S.D.C. points) provides the giant with equivalent M.D.C. points. **Note:** Only humans can pilot a battle saint! Human-like beings, including elves, dwarves, simvans, humans turned into vampires, and similar beings cannot operate one. However, they can be passengers inside the robot (as many as two dozen people can be accommodated).

Pilot and passengers are usually contained in the octagonal shaped head. There are two huge window-like openings on the front and back of the head. While passengers can watch the action from these openings, the enemy can send flying attackers through the windows to slay the pilot. Consequently, it is prudent to have at least two to four defenders/passengers inside the head to protect the pilot. The pilot cannot defend himself without immobilizing the giant battle saint.

When all the M.D.C. is depleted, the battle saint drops to its knees and gently falls over, protecting the pilot and passengers from getting hurt. It immediately begins to fade into the ground and completely turns into a hill or part of a mountain within 1D4 minutes. A battle saint that is destroyed in combat cannot be awakened again for one week, but when it is, it will be back to full power.

If the Battle Saint is not destroyed, it can be used without rest for a maximum of 24 hours. After 24 hours of activity (even just standing around), the giant machine must be rested for 24 hours and cannot be summoned again until that rest time has been filled to the minute. Note that the battle saint must have a full 24 hours of rest to regain even one point of lost M.D.C. or one hour of fuel. However, the priest can send the war machine back to rest before its fuel capacity is exhausted and raise it every few hours as needed until the maximum 24 hours of use expires. Wise pilots will allow the giant to rest whenever a battle is over so that it can be reawakened as needed. Basically, the battle saint has a 24 hour fuel capacity.

Regardless of how the giants are used, they are effectively indestructible. Since the battle saints (and orbs) cannot be destroyed or controlled by evil, the Forces of Darkness have built armed camps around several locations where they are known to rest. They do so to prevent the powerful giants from being used by the Champions of Light.

There are only 12 Battle Saints known to exist. Most are said to lay quietly inside a mountain or under a hill until they are needed. On occasion, a Battle Saint will rise out of the ground without warning, but usually they are awakened by the prayers of a priest.

Class: Magic symbiotic war machine.

Crew: One pilot (knight of the Cathedral, monk or apok). The pilot compartment is located inside the hollow head. There is also space for 24 passengers.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head (1) — equal to half the main body.

Hands (2) — equal to 10% of the main body.

Arms (2) — equal to 25% of the main body.

Legs (2) — equal to 25% of the main body.

Main Body — equal to the pilot's hit points/M.D.C. \times 20.

* Depleting the main body will shut the symbiote down and cause it to slip back into the ground.

Statistical Data

Height: 100 to 200 feet (30.5 to 61 m)

Width: 25 feet (7.6 m)

Weight: 2D4 \times 10,000 tons

Speed: 3D6 \times 10

Leap: 100 feet (30.5 m) high or lengthwise.

Supernatural Physical Strength: 60

Mega-Damage:

Restrained Punch — 1D6 M.D.

Full Strength Punch or Kick — 1D6 \times 10 M.D.

Power Punch — 2D6 \times 10 M.D.

Judo Style Body Throw — 5D6 \times 10 M.D.

Note: Inflicts Double damage to supernatural monsters and creatures of magic such as dragons.

Other Attributes of the Battle Saint: I.Q.: Not applicable, M.A.:

Not applicable, M.E.: Not applicable. P.P. 2D6 + 10. P.B.

3D6 + 12. **Note:** Battle Saints are land vehicles and cannot fly.

Abilities of Note: The machine-like symbiote does not fatigue and it is impervious to poisons, drugs, gases, normal fire, cold, S.D.C. weapons, possession, mind control, illusions and ordinary weapons. Mega-damage weapons, energy attacks and magic inflict full damage. The pilot may be susceptible to psionic and other types of attacks.

Magic Powers of Note: Each of the following can be performed four times per 24 hours of activity. All are equal to a 12th level spell of the same name.

Call Lightning

Heat Point

Hell Fire

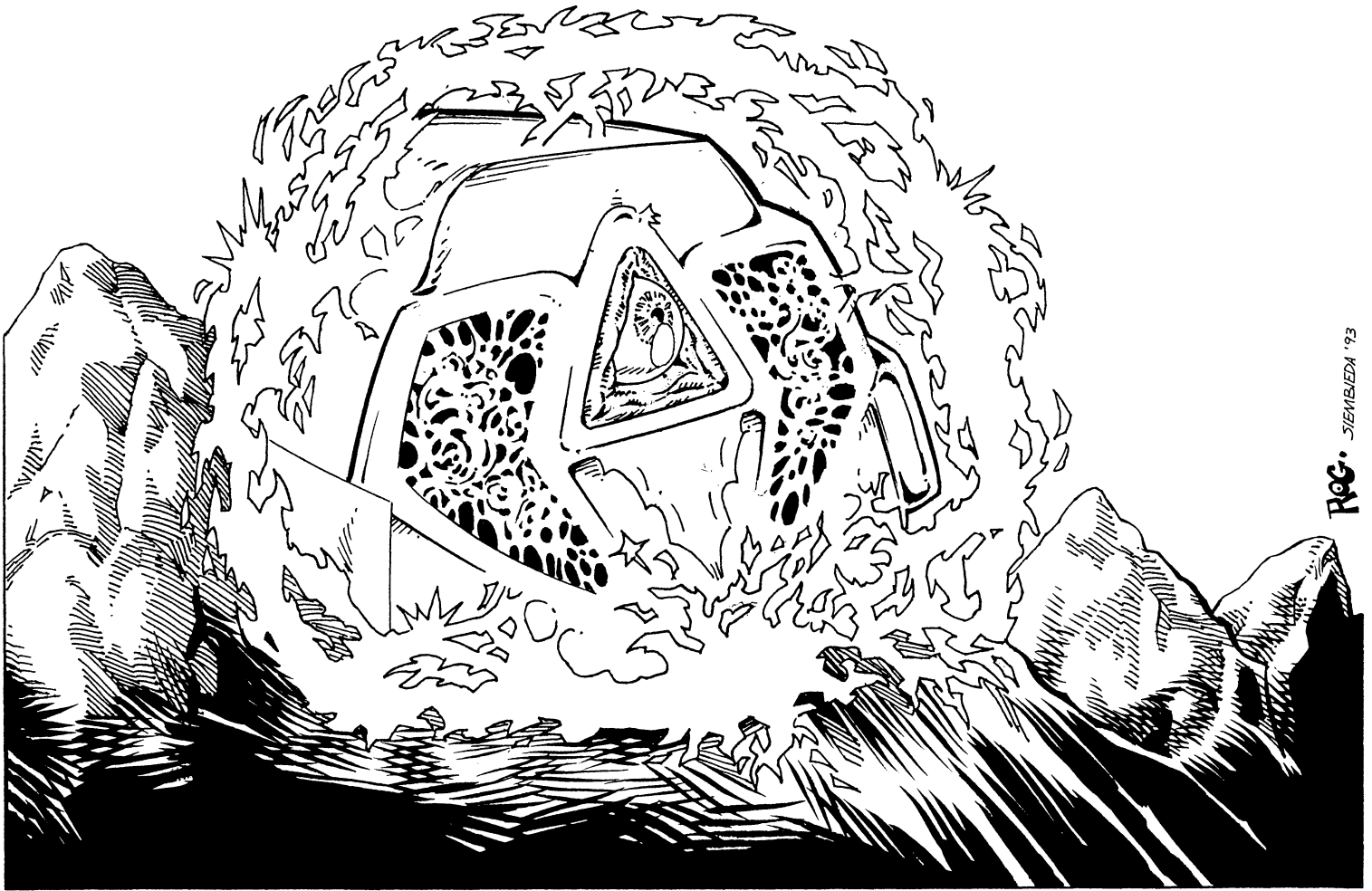
Invisibility (self & occupants)

Levitate

Breathe Without Air (all occupants)

Close Rift

Note: The Forces of Darkness or any character of an evil alignment are incapable of summoning, using or corrupting a battle saint.



Battle Saint Orb

Orbs appear to be the dismembered heads of battle saints. In reality, they are another type of powerful living device generated by Wormwood to fight the plague of evil monsters. Legends suggest there are 32 orbs, but the locations of only 20 are known.

The orbs have many of the same limitations as the battle saint and can only be piloted by the apok, knights of the temple or hospital and monks (not freelancers or other O.C.C.s). Priests of Light can summon the giant war machines but cannot pilot them. The act of piloting the orb requires concentration, focus, and will power. Everything the orb sees and feels is made aware to the pilot. Attacks per melee round are equal to those of the pilot plus one additional. The giant, organic robot has an M.D.C. equal to the hit points or M.D.C. of its pilot times 10. Thus a pilot with 32 hit points/M.D.C. instills the battle saint orb with 320 mega-damage capacity. A pilot with 60 hit points instills 600 mega-damage points.

When all its M.D.C. is depleted, the orb drops to the ground and immediately begins to fade into it. The orb turns into a small hill or part of a mountain within 1D4 minutes. A battle saint orb that is destroyed in combat cannot be awakened again for one week, but when it is, it will be back to full power.

If the battle saint orb is not destroyed, it can be used without rest for a maximum of 48 hours. After 48 hours of activity (even just hanging around), the symbiote must be rested for 24 hours and cannot be summoned again until that rest time has been filled to the minute. Note that the battle orb must have a full 24

hours of rest to regain even one point of lost M.D.C. or one hour of fuel. However, the priest can send the war machine back to rest before its fuel capacity is exhausted and raise it every few hours as needed, until the maximum 48 hours of use expires. Basically, the battle saint orb has a 48 hour fuel capacity.

Pilot and passengers are contained in the octagonal shaped orb. There are two huge window-like openings on the front and back of the head. While passengers can watch the action from these openings, the enemy can send flying attackers through the windows to slay the pilot. Consequently, it is prudent to have at least two to four defenders/passengers inside the head to protect the pilot. The pilot cannot defend himself without immobilizing the orb.

Class: Magic symbiotic war machine.

Crew: One pilot (knight of the Cathedral, monk or apok). The pilot compartment is located inside the hollow orb. There is also space for 12 passengers.

M.D.C. by Location:

Main Body — equal to the pilot's hit points/M.D.C. × 10.

* Depleting the main body will shut the symbiote down and cause it to slip back into the ground.

Statistical Data

Height: 12 to 20 feet (3.6 to 6 m)

Width: 12 to 20 feet (3.6 to 6 m)

Weight: 1D4 × 10 tons

Speed: 4D4 × 10 flying; maximum altitude is 5000 feet (1534 m).

Leap: Not applicable.

Supernatural Physical Strength: Not applicable

Mega-Damage:

Restrained Ram — 2D6 M.D.

Full Strength Ram — 1D6 × 10 M.D.

Note: Inflicts Double damage to supernatural monsters and creatures of magic such as dragons.

Other Attributes of the Battle Saint Orb: I.Q.: Not applicable, P.P.: Not applicable, M.A.: Not applicable, M.E.: Not applicable. P.B. 2D6+10.

Abilities of Note: The machine-like symbiote does not fatigue and it is impervious to poisons, drugs, gases, normal fire, cold, S.D.C. weapons, possession, mind control, illusions and ordinary weapons. Mega-damage weapons, energy attacks and magic inflict full damage. The pilot may be susceptible to psionic and other types of attacks.

Magic Powers of Note: Each of the following can be performed five times per 24 hours of activity. All are equal to a 7th level spell of the same name.

Breathe Without Air (all occupants)

Create Opening (in Wormwood buildings)

Call Lightning

Dispel Magic Barriers

Energy Disruption

Fire Ball

Heat Point

Hell Fire

Invisibility (self & occupants)

Negate Magic

Protection Circle: Simple (all occupants inside)

Tongues (all occupants)

Note: The Forces of Darkness or any character of an evil alignment are incapable of summoning, using or corrupting a battle saint orb. Although called an “orb,” it is actually an octagonal shaped item.

Spirits of Wormwood

A Spirit of Wormwood appears to be more like a shimmering white mist than a solid physical body. The shape is vaguely humanoid with wispy streaming ribbons or tentacle-like shapes protruding from the body. Even the wings appear to be a mass of streamers or tentacles blowing in the wind. Its white, misty appearance and its wispy energy wings protruding from its back have inspired some peasants to call them angels. This belief is perpetuated by the fact that the spirits can rarely be summoned and may simply appear during times of trouble. Although the spirits of Wormwood appear only to help the forces of good, they are far from being angels.

All spirits of Wormwood are the creation of the living planet. They consist of an organic substance similar to ectoplasm (something most physical psychics will be quick to notice).

They have no or little apparent intelligence, but appear only to characters of good alignment and cannot be used or altered by the Forces of Darkness. Unlike most semi-permanent symbiotic organisms with greater physical substance, these wispy creatures of light fade into a white mist and disappear after 3D4 hours. Like all symbiotes, the spirits of Wormwood provide their host bodies with special powers for as long as they are attached.

A spirit of Wormwood attaches itself by wrapping its ectoplasmic tentacles around the host body — only the ribbons of the wings continue to flutter and furl in the wind. Once attached, it cannot be removed, dispelled or disguised, but will magically disappear after three to twelve hours. Also note that the symbiote only attaches to willing recipients of a good alignment (principled, scrupulous or unprincipled only).

Powers: The following powers and abilities are instilled to the host character. Only one spirit of Wormwood can be used by a character at any one time. All psionic/sensing powers are equal in strength and duration to a 6th level psychic.

1. Fly: maximum speed 50 mph (80 km), maximum altitude 2000 feet (610 m).
2. Semi-impervious to energy, including magic energy attacks; do half damage.
3. The character is surrounded by an energy field that provides an additional 40 M.D.C. points.
4. +3 to save vs horror factor.
5. Sense evil: Identical to the psionic power.
6. Sense magic: Identical to the psionic power.
7. Sixth Sense: Identical to the psionic power.
8. Presence Sense: Identical the psionic power.
9. Clairvoyance: Identical the psionic power.
10. While the spirit is attached, the wearer is impervious to other symbiotes, possession and mind control.
11. Intuitive knowledge about Wormwood: The spirit's greatest power is the knowledge it imparts regarding the surrounding area. The character linked to the spirit will instinctively know the exact location of crawling towers and the direction they are headed. He'll also know the location of demon cities, armies, the Hosts, the Unholy or major supernatural forces within a 200 mile radius (320 km). The spirit can also take the character to any haven for good people, such as secret hiding places, temples, food caves, or fountains, as well as any location on Wormwood known to the character (via flight).

A spirit of Wormwood: The symbiote has the following properties.

1. One can be summoned by priests of light, a wormspeaker, or shifter, but may elect to link with a character other than the person who summoned it.
2. Spirits of Wormwood are likely to appear spontaneously during a major crisis, especially when the Forces of Darkness are about to attack a human population center. In fact, the very appearance of the spirit serves as a warning that danger or an attack from supernatural monsters is imminent. **Note:** Game Masters control the availability of these symbiotes. Typically one or two appear (never more than four; 1D4), and often no spirits appear even during the most devastating crisis. It is possible that the Living Planet is limited to the total number of spirits it can create. If so, their creation may be limited to the amount of magic energy available to the planet.
3. All physical attacks, including energy, do no damage to the spirit; they pass right through it.
4. The spirit has no intelligence or mind of its own so it cannot be affected by magic or psionic attacks on the mind such

as illusions, empathic transmission, fear, and similar. This also means it cannot attack or take action on its own. It simply provides the host body with psychic and supernatural powers.

5. It cannot link to creatures of an anarchist or evil alignment. Evil creatures who touch it before it is linked to a good character suffer $1D6 \times 10$ M.D. and cause the spirit to disappear. However, once linked to a host body, evil beings cannot hurt it, nor does touching it inflict any damage or cause it to disappear. If the host body is slain the spirit disappears, but only after it instills a +10% bonus to save vs coma/death.
6. It disappears after 3D4 hours.

Note: There are no penalties for using a spirit of Wormwood, battle saint or battle saint orb, except becoming a more prominent target for the enemy.

Claws

Like most symbiotic organisms, once the creature becomes attached it is difficult to remove. All claws have 40 M.D.C. points and can bio-regenerate $1D4 \times 10$ points every melee (draining its host body of one P.P.E. point), but die within 1D6 hours if removed from Wormwood.

Booster Claw

The claw is always attached to the face around one of the character's eyes. The evil Salome has such a creature.

Powers & Bonuses: Enables the host body to see the invisible (the eye around the claw turns a solid red or black color). Increases M.D.C./hit points, P.P.E. and I.S.P. (if applicable) by 50%, and increases spell strength by one level (i.e.: a fourth level character casts a spell equal to 5th level experience)!

Penalties: Reduce P.B. by 20%. The character comes to rely more heavily on magic, psionics and natural abilities rather than on skills and equipment, resulting in a -10% skill penalty. Psychologically, the character becomes more cocky and arrogant. Evil and selfish ones may become power hungry.

Combat Claw

The symbiotic claw is placed on top of the character's hand and fingers where it adheres.

Powers & Bonuses: Provides that hand/arm with supernatural strength, inflicts an additional 1D6 M.D., plus damage from supernatural P.S., and provides one additional attack/action per melee round.

Penalties: Reduce P.B. by one point and skill performance by -5%, because the character has difficulty concentrating on anything other than combat; the character loves fighting and competition. Only one claw can be worn per pair of hands (right or left).

Claw Feet

Similar in application to the combat claw. A pair of these claws are attached to the tops of the feet.

Powers & Bonuses: Increases running speed by 25%, adds six feet (1.8 m) to leaps, +10% to climb and balance skills, plus inflicts an additional 1D6 M.D. damage from kicks.

Penalties: Reduce overall agility (P.P.) by one point, and skill

performance by -5%. Furthermore, the character finds himself preferring the open spaces and wilderness where he/she can run and climb; dislikes confining buildings and crowded cities.



Eye Claw

This ugly symbiote has a small, flat, circular body about the size of a silver dollar. Three tentacle-like stalks protrude from the tiny body. At the end of each stalk is a claw that holds what appears to be an eye ball. Each stalk can extend to about a foot (0.3 m) long and move independently of each other. This enables each eye to see in a different direction at the same time. Everything the symbiote sees, its host body sees. It is usually attached to the middle of the forehead or at the base of the neck.

Powers & Bonuses: See the invisible, see aura (same as the psionic power), keen color vision, see in three directions at once, +2 on initiative, and cannot be surprised by sneak or back attacks.

Penalties: Reduce P.B. by 25%. The character also has trouble sleeping (never more than six hours), notices everything around it and tends to be jumpy/on edge.

Crawlers

Symbiotes known as "crawlers" get their name from the fact that most look like insects or animals, complete with legs and eyes. Like most symbiotic organisms, once the creature becomes attached it is difficult to remove. All crawlers have 50 M.D.C. points and can bio-regenerate $1D4 \times 10$ points every melee (draining its host body of one P.P.E. point), but die within 1D6 hours if removed from Wormwood.

Brain Sucker

The organism attaches to the top of the head and resembles a salamander with tentacles instead of legs. Three tentacles protrude from each side. The body is thick and flat, ending in a tail. It also has a thick, flat head and a pair of tiny eyes.

Powers & Bonuses: The wearer is completely impervious to psionic attack, magic illusions and mind control of all kinds. Furthermore, the critter enables the character to see the invisible and provides nightvision (100 feet/30.5 m).

Penalties: Reduce I.Q. by 25% and the performance of all skills is -25%.

Chest Wrap

The organism resembles an insect with a long body, head, pair of eyes, antennae and six long legs. When attached to a humanoid, the body of the creature rests in the center of the chest. The two front legs reach up and around the neck or

shoulders, while the four remaining legs wrap around the rib cage. The evil Salome wears such a creature.

Powers & Bonuses: The wearer gets an additional 80 M.D.C. and damage done to that additional M.D.C. is repaired at a rate of 10 points an hour. Furthermore the character is resistant to fire and heat (but magic fire and plasma weapons inflict full damage).

Penalties: Reduces the character's P.B. and M.A. by one point.

Crown

This symbiotic organism almost looks like a strange plant. It ranges in color from yellow to green to turquoise and has a dozen or two long stem-like tentacles that stick straight up or sweep slightly back. Six thicker, shorter tentacles protrude from the side of the tentacle clump and are used as legs to crawl around. When a host body is found, the creature attaches itself to the top of the head and is worn like a headdress of feathers or crown of spikes.

Powers & Bonuses: Impervious to fire and heat (even magic fire and plasma weapons inflict only half damage), impervious to disease, impervious to magic sicknesses (including curses), provides nightvision 1000 feet (305 m), resistance to poison/drugs (+2 to save and the drug is only half as potent or damaging), and gives the wearer bio-regeneration powers: 2D6 M.D.C./hit points per melee round.

Penalties: Reduces the character's P.P.E. base by one-third.

Half Mask

The symbiotic mask is one of the few crawlers that doesn't resemble an animal, but looks like a half moon fragment of metal plate or shell. However, before it attaches to the host body, it can crawl around on a hundred tiny legs located on the opposite side of the plate. It adheres to the side of a human face and encircles one eye (the 100 tiny legs burrowing into the flesh). That eye takes on the appearance of an eyeball inside the skull of a skeleton — no eyelids, lashes or brow.

Powers & Bonuses: Increases the character's M.D.C./hit points by 50% and creates a permanent and constant mind block. This mind block is so powerful that it even prevents psychics from seeing the aura or sensing anything (good, evil, magic, health, experience level, feelings, thoughts, etc.) about the wearer of the mask! Furthermore, the character is impervious to empathic and telepathic communication and attacks, hypnotic suggestions, and illusions. Penalties: Reduce P.B. by 25%. The most obvious penalty is that the character, while protected from psionic attack, is also closed to helpful psionics, including empathic and telepathic communication and warnings. Furthermore, any psychic sensitive powers the character may have had are completely obliterated as long as the mask is worn. Last, the face is horribly scarred even when the mask is removed by a priest; the P.B. penalty is permanent.

Medallion Heart

A heart shaped beetle or crab-looking thing about the size of a softball. It attaches to the chest just over the heart.

Powers & Bonuses: Increases P.S. attribute by five points, the character never fatigues, and is +20% to save vs coma/death.

Penalties: Reduces the character's speed by 20%.

Medallion Skull

A skull or death's head shaped thing with three legs protruding from each side. It attaches to the chest, shoulder or back.

Powers & Bonuses: The wearer is impervious to life or energy draining of any kind, including spell attacks, P.P.E. vampires, regular vampires, other symbiotes, life force batteries and life force caldrons.

Penalties: Reduces the character's M.A. by 20%.

Necklace

At first glance, this organism looks like an ornate gold necklace with ruby red stones evenly spaced along its length. Upon closer inspection, the observer will notice legs protruding from it and the rubies are large red eyes. The centipede-like symbiote is metallic gold in color and covered in hard plate armor, helping to give it that artificial jewelry look. It completely encircles the neck.

Powers & Bonuses: The wearer can understand and speak all languages, is impervious to poisons and drugs, impervious to the vampire's bite and powers, and is +2 to save vs disease and magic potions.

Penalties: The ability to taste food is reduced by 25% and makes the voice sound a bit hoarse.

Spider

A small black orb about the size of quarter, with six long, thin legs protruding from the round body. The organism can be attached anywhere on the face or neck.

Powers & Bonuses: The wearer is impervious to poisons and toxins of all kinds, and +2 to save vs magic potions and slime. The character's bite secretes a poison that burns his victims and inflicts 1D6 points of additional damage.

Penalties: Reduce the character's P.B. by 20% and M.A. by one point.

Stars

Star symbiotes are creatures that resemble an Earth starfish. All have five tentacles that are thickest at the bulb of the body and narrower the further they go toward the tips. Like most symbiotic organisms, once the creature becomes attached it is difficult to remove. All stars have 30 M.D.C. points and can bio-regenerate 20 points every melee (draining its host body of one P.P.E. point), but die within 1D6 hours if removed from Wormwood.

Glimmerstar

The organism is small and extremely flat, flexible and fits in the palm of the hand. It is a semi-transparent, sparkling crystal-like structure. A glimmerstar can be worn on the palms of one or both hands.

Powers: Creates a glimmering wall of mystic light that looks like it's made up of a hundred star-shaped sparkles. The light repels animated dead, vampires, shadow beasts and all creatures who live or thrive in darkness. The character can also use the wall of glimmering light as a signal. Furthermore, he can see

in bright light, is impervious to the blinding flash spell, and can harmlessly deflect laser beams (same as a parry; a successful parry means no damage. A failed roll means the laser hits and does damage). The character can create the glimmering lights as often as twice per melee round (each counts as one melee action).

Penalties: Darkness makes the character nervous, plus the character has poor vision in the dark (about half as good as normal).

Mindstar

The organism is around the size of a human hand to twice that size and attaches on the top of the head. It can be a variety of blue and violet colors.

Powers: Empathy, empathic transmission, telepathy, mind block, and ectoplasm. I.S.P.: The character's M.E. $\times 5$.

Penalties: Makes the host a bit absentminded, -1 on initiative and -5% on all skills. It also makes him/her receptive to hypnotic suggestion; -2 to save.

Magicstar

This star is small and can be attached anywhere on the head, neck or spine. Only one magicstar can be worn by a single character. It is silver in color and covered in crystal scales that sparkle like hundreds of tiny diamonds.

Powers: Sense locations of P.P.E. crystals and stones, life force batteries, life force cauldrons, food caves, water fountains, dimensional rifts, and places of mystic power; range: 100 miles. It can also sense the presence of the Unholy and his Host within a one mile (1.6 km) area. Furthermore, the star is a P.P.E. receptacle that contains a random amount of $1D6 \times 10$ P.P.E. points. This mystic energy can be used only by the host character! The $1D6 \times 10$ P.P.E. is available once every hour.

Penalties: The magicstar gets this P.P.E. by drawing on ambient energy released by the Living Planet and from those slain. It also draws energy from other living creatures around it. This means other characters who regularly associate with the character, i.e. the player character group, will ALWAYS be 10% below their normal P.P.E. level. This can spell trouble for practitioners of magic.

Worms

There are a number of symbiotic organisms that resemble worms. They have no eyes or limbs and have long, segmented bodies. All small worms have 10 M.D.C. points while most large ones have 30 M.D.C.; all can bio-regenerate 10 points every melee (draining its host body of one P.P.E. point), but die within 1D6 hours if removed from Wormwood.

Note: The typical wormspeaker has one of each worm symbiote attached to his body/mouth — a disgusting sight; reduce the character's P.B. by 50%.

Worms of Armor

Large, thick worms coil themselves snugly, but not too tightly, around the upper body (chest and waist) and parts of the arms and legs. They are surprisingly light (20 lbs/9 kg).

Powers: The worms serve as mega-damage body armor, provid-

ing 60 M.D.C. points of protection and can regenerate damage at a rate of 10 M.D.C. per melee round (15 seconds). When all the M.D.C. points of the worms are destroyed, the symbiotes fall off and disappear into the ground; absorbed back into the body of the Living Planet.

Penalties: -10% to prowl, acrobatic and/or gymnastic skills and -5% to climb.

Worms of Blood

Blood worms are tiny, thin, red worms.

Powers: Swallowing three worms alive, will magically negate poison, stop internal bleeding and heal the cause of internal bleeding. Placing three inside a cut or wound will immediately stop bleeding and heal the wound ten times faster than normal (completely healed, with little scarring to worm-speakers, within 3D4 minutes).

Penalties: None.

Note: Typically six or nine are found or summoned at any one time.

Worms of Mending

These creatures are tiny worms that resemble little white pieces of thread, one inch long.

Powers: When ten or more are poured into an open cut, gash or wound, they magically begin to seal, cleanse and heal the wound. Bleeding stops in less than a minute, pain is reduced by half, any decaying flesh and germs are destroyed (infection is impossible). The cuts begins to close and heal immediately and in less than ten minutes (2D4 minutes), the wound is completely closed, pain is almost gone, and there is no scarring!

Penalties: None.

Note: Typically twenty are found or summoned at any one time.

Worms of Power

This is a large grey worm attached to the tongue or the inside of the mouth.

Powers: Spell magic. Each spell can be cast as often as four times a day unless noted otherwise. Each is equal to a fifth level spell caster. Spells include: Energy bolt, energy field, energy disruption, impervious to energy and negate magic barriers.

Penalties: Reduce P.B. by one point.

Worms of Seeing

This is a large, pulsating, white worm attached to the tongue, inside the mouth or on the neck.

Powers: Spell magic. Each spell can be cast as often as four times a day unless noted otherwise. Each is equal to a seventh level spell caster. Spells include: See aura, eyes of Thoth, eyes of the wolf, locate (once a day) and oracle (once a day). The character can also sense the approach of the Unholy, his Host and the presence of alien intelligences, but cannot pinpoint their time of arrival, direction of attack, total numbers or their purpose.

Bonus: $+1$ to save vs mind control and illusions.

Penalties: Reduce P.B. by one point.

Worms of Speech

One thick, flat, grey worm that attaches itself to the tongue and enables the character to understand and speak (not read) all

languages.

Powers: Perpetual spell magic that is available as often as needed include tongues, calling, and commune with spirits.

Penalties: Reduce P.B. by one point.

Worms of Spirit

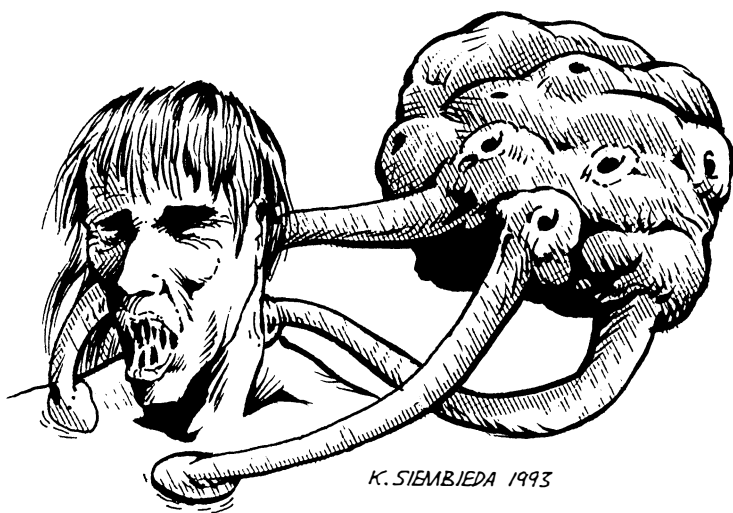
This is a large, thin purple worm attached to the tongue or the inside of the mouth.

Powers: Spell magic. Each spell can be cast as often as four times a day. Each is equal to a fifth level spell caster. Spells include: Turn dead, repel animals, constrain being, exorcism, water to wine, remove curse.

Penalties: Reduce P.B. by one point.

Corrupted or Evil Symbiotes

In the territories dominated by the Unholy and his dark minions, the land that is Wormwood has been corrupted and changed. Like a cancer, the body is made to turn against itself and create dangerous and destructive elements. These corrupted forces appear on Wormwood as the tumorous crawling towers, malignant pillars, deadly parasites and terrible symbiotes that feed on humans and syphon away P.P.E. life energy.



Human Life Force Batteries

The life force batteries are just one such creation of evil. The symbiotic organism appears like a giant, fleshy sack with three tentacles. Each tentacle attaches to a human (or humanoid D-bee) host. This foul union makes the human weak, draining him of his P.P.E. energy and life's blood. The monster never takes enough blood to kill its host, only enough to keep him docile. The Unholy prefers to call these symbiotes his "soul batteries" because the name evokes a far greater sense of horror, however, these symbiotic organisms have no effect on the human spirit or soul. In fact, many characters imprisoned by these horrible creatures have a strong will to live and long for the day that they can escape and strike back at the evil that has enslaved them.

The threat of being "hooked" to a life force battery is used to keep the civilian populace in check. Indeed, the vast majority of the people hooked to life force batteries are heroes, freedom fighters and those who dared to defy the rule of the Unholy. Such a dreary life of imprisonment is considered by most as a fate worse than death. The Forces of Darkness have long lines of humans and D-bees chained to benches and attached to life force batteries that are reminiscent of Roman slave galleys. These prisoners are given the simplest tasks to perform while their P.P.E. is drained from them and stored in the symbiote.

The stored energy can be accessed by the Unholy, the Host, dark priests and evil sorcerers. The P.P.E. is used to power the horrible war machines of darkness and to give the priests and mages mystic energy to work their magic. This energy is also used to help maintain the evil ones' control over parasites and to open dimensional rifts.



Life Force Battery Stats

Description: A typical life force battery is roughly the size of a human, although its shape is that of a big blob with three tentacles. The tentacles have a four to five foot reach (1.2 to 1.5 m).

Attributes of Note: P.S. 18, Spd. 3D4.

M.D.C.: 1D4 × 10 points

Notes: When a life force battery is slain, there is a release of damaging P.P.E. that washes over a 20 foot (6 m) area and does 2D6 M.D. to everything in that wave of damage. The victim is released but weak. The character will have half his or her normal number of melee actions/attacks, plus speed and all bonuses are also half. Some may be so weak that they will need help walking. These same penalties apply while attached to the symbiote.

Life Force Cauldrons

The life force cauldron or "soul vat" as the Unholy calls it, is another terrible symbiotic creation from Wormwood and a powerful force of magic. The cauldron is grown out of the living planet in a similar way to a freshwater fountain, only the water is thick and foul smelling. To power the cauldron, living beings (humans and D-bees) are bound, weighted and tossed into the vat where they drown. At the moment of death, a character's P.P.E. is doubled and normally dissipates. However, in this case, the energy is absorbed and stored in the foul cauldron. That energy is then used by the dark priests and the host to summon entities and to create worm zombies, demon beast guards, parasites, and magic slime. The bones of the dead sink into the floor of the cauldron. Later, they are used to create worm zombies.

Life Force Cauldron Stats:

Size: Typically circular in shape and six to ten feet (1.8 to 3 m) in diameter.

Depth: 10 to 20 feet (3 to 6 m) deep.

M.D.C. of the cauldron itself: 300 M.D.C. and regenerates damage within one minute similar to the walls of the living buildings. Only a priest or wormspeaker can destroy it.

Limitations: Only characters of an anarchist or evil alignment will even consider the creation of a life force cauldron. Wormwood resists the creation of the cauldron in any area not dominated and corrupted by the Forces of Evil.

P.P.E. needed to create the cauldron: 300 points to create; see the creation spell in the priest section.

P.P.E. needed to create monsters: Magic slime: 50 or more, parasites: 150, worm zombies 250, demon beast guards: 250, life force batteries: 300.

Maximum Storage Capability of the Cauldron: 2000 P.P.E. points, gained from its victims.

Uses and Powers of the Cauldron:

- Create magic slime, slime potions and ointments
- Create parasites
- Create worm zombies
- Create demon beast guards
- Create life force batteries
- Summon entities

Magic Slime

Magic slime is created only from life force cauldrons and is used to create magic potions and ointments. Most of the potions are debilitating or controlling. They are used against prisoners made to drink the stuff. Few of the potions instill the drinker with beneficial powers. Fifty P.P.E. points are needed to create one vial of magic slime that works as one of the following magic potions. The creator of the slime can dictate the exact type of magic desired. All are equal in strength to a 10th level spell and affect the person who drinks the slime (it tastes bad too):

Available Potions (see Rifts RPG for descriptions):

- Breathe Without Air:** Same as the 3rd level spell.
- Compulsion:** Same as the 6th level spell.
- Death Trance:** Same as the 1st level spell.
- Domination:** Same as the 5th level spell.
- Fear:** Same as the 2nd level spell.
- Heal:** Same as the 5th level spell.
- Invisibility (simple):** Same as the 3rd level spell.
- Mute:** Same as the 9th level spell.
- Negate Toxins:** Same as the 3rd level spell.
- Reduce Self:** Same as the 6th level spell.
- Sickness:** Same as the 8th level spell.
- Sleep:** Same as the 5th level spell.
- Tongues:** Same as the 6th level spell.
- Trance:** Same as the 4th level spell.
- Words of Truth:** Same as the 6th level spell.

Ointments (see Rifts RPG for descriptions): Ointments are a salve that is applied to all or part of the body for mystic results. The magic always conjures just enough ointment as needed, whether it covers a small area or the entire body. Costs 50 P.P.E. per each.

Agony: Same as the 7th level spell; applied to part of the body.

Befuddle: Same as the 2nd level spell; applied to the temples.

Blind: Same as the 4th level spell; applied to the eyes.

Eyes of Thoth: Same as the 6th level spell; put on the eyes.

Eyes of the Wolf: Same as the 8th level spell; put on eyes.

Fear: Same as the 2nd level spell; applied over the heart.

Heal: Same as the 5th level spell; applied to the wound.

Mask of Deceit: Same as the 6th level spell; applied to the face.

Mute: Same as the 9th level spell; applied to the throat.

Resist Fire: Same as the 3rd level spell; applied to the body.

Stone to Flesh: Same as the 8th level spell; applied to the body.

Debilitation Slime

Enough slime is generated to cover an entire human-size creature at a P.P.E. cost of 90 points. This slime makes the character sluggish and disoriented. The victim covered in slime has trouble concentrating: -25% on the performance of all skills. The character is weak and sluggish. While covered in slime, his P.S., P.P., spd and attacks per melee round are reduced by half. He also fatigues twice as fast as normal.

Null Slime

Enough slime is generated to cover the character or item in question, up to twice the size of a human. Whatever is covered in null slime is impervious to all magic and, if magic himself, rendered powerless. Thus, a dark priest or dragon covered in null slime cannot cast magic prayers or spells, nor use any other magical powers. Likewise, a rune weapon, magic stones/crystals, talismans, amulets, etc., that are covered in slime are powerless and cannot inflict mega-damage, cast magic, provide bonuses or be used in any way.

Furthermore, this slime is sticky and will take 3D4 melee rounds to remove it. Only the priest or wormspeaker may be able to remove it instantly, using the power of *remove symbiotes*.

Restoration Slime

Enough slime is generated to cover an entire human-size creature at a P.P.E. cost of 1000 points. This slime restores all lost hit points/S.D.C./mega-damage, heals all wounds without scarring, and regenerates damaged organs and lost limbs within four hours!

Stasis Slime

Enough slime is generated to cover an entire human-size creature at a P.P.E. cost of 110 points. This slime slows down the character's metabolism and puts him into a trance-like slumber. The character is then dumped into a life force cauldron. In this instance, the character preserved in slime is unharmed, asleep at the bottom of the pool. To be awakened, the character must be retrieved and the slime removed. The revived person is in perfect health, at full strength and ability, and suffers only from a feeling of being incredibly hungry. Food and other perishables can also be preserved in this fashion. People and perishables can be preserved in slime for one decade per level of the cauldron maker. If the cauldron is destroyed (see the power of the priest), any prisoner and articles preserved in slime at its bottom magically appear and the slime oozes off, reviving them in a matter of seconds.

Note: Typically, air fish are used to retrieve items inside the cauldron. 3D4 air fish are also usually assigned to guard life force cauldrons.

Shock Parasites

Originally, the planet Wormwood created parasites as a means of self-defense against invaders that attacked its body. They were also created as scavengers to wander the land eating garbage and carrion. Most were insect or worm-like in appearance and none were ever a threat to humans. Never! That all changed when the Unholy and his Host began to take over.

Through their own magic and abilities the Host have turned the parasites into ravaging monsters. All are simple minded and aggressive predators with a lust for human blood. They eat their entire prey; flesh, blood, and bones. Most enjoy hunting and killing and will slay any creature they encounter or who attacks them, before feasting. Some, like the Battler and Krikton Flailer, have low human-like intelligence and enjoy fighting, torturing and killing for pleasure. Many are controlled and used by the minions of darkness as guards, attack animals and even as riding animals. Others are set loose into the world to scavenge or hunt. They eat carrion and prey on humans and humanoids. Although created through Wormwood, these parasites are shaped by evil and magic and cannot be reclaimed or controlled by the Living Planet.



Battler Parasite

The battler parasite is a giant, hideous monster that looks like it is part dog and part insect. It has a large armor-plated head with four crystalline eyes and insect like pinchers on the side of its tooth filled mouth. Its general body shape and spiked, prehensile tail are reminiscent of a canine, but the vile creature can also stand on its hind legs like a bear. The four-fingered claws on the front legs are reasonably articulated hands that can hold and grasp. The slashing tail is used like a whip or spiked ball and chain. The body is heavily armor plated and covered with spikes and spines. Readers can see this thing in action against a battle saint in the comic strip on pages 12 and 13.

Class: Wormwood organism: Battler Parasite.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head (1) — 200
Eyes (4) — 50 each
Pinchers (1 pair) — 40
Hands/Claws (2) — 60 each
Front Legs/Arms (2) — 150 each
Hind Legs (2) — 200 each
Prehensile Tail (1) — 60
Main Body — 600

* Depleting the main body will kill the parasite and cause it to slip back into the ground.

Statistical Data

Height: 50 feet (15.2 m) standing on all fours and 60 feet (18.3 m) long, not including the tail which is another 50 feet (15.2 m). 90 to 100 feet (27.4 to 30.5 m) tall standing on its hind legs.

Width: 40 feet (7.6 m)

Weight: 1200 to 2000 tons

Speed: 132 (90 mph/148 km)

Leap: 200 feet (61 m) high or lengthwise.

Supernatural Physical Strength: 50

Mega-Damage:

Restrained Tap — 1D6 × 10 S.D.C.

Restrained Punch — 1D6 M.D.

Full Strength Punch or Claw Swipe — 6D6 M.D.

Power Punch — 2D4 × 10 M.D.

Tail Strike — 6D6 M.D.

Pinchers — 4D6 M.D.

Bite — 5D6 M.D.

Judo Style Body Throw — 5D6 M.D.

Pounce Attack: Inflicts 2D4 × 10 M.D. and has a 1-85% likelihood of pinning an opponent who is 20 feet (6 m) or smaller and 1-60% likelihood of pinning it if 21 to 40 feet (6.3 to 12 m). The pinned victim cannot move or make any physical attacks (magic and psionic are possible) and can continue to be bitten by the deadly battler parasite. A pounce attack counts as two melee attacks.

Number of Attacks per Melee Round: Six by bite, pincher, claws, or tail.

Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +7 to strike, +5 to parry and dodge, and +2 to roll with impact, and +6 to save vs the priest's magic to repel, control, and summon parasites.

Horror Factor: 18

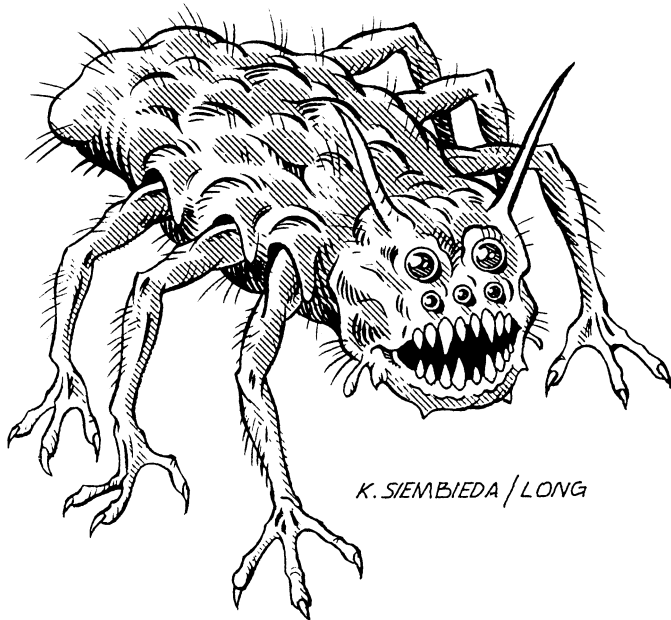
Other Attributes of Note: M.E., M.A., and P.E.: Not applicable, I.Q.: 2D4 + 4 (and cunning), P.P.: 22, P.B. 4. **Note:** Battlers cannot fly.

Abilities of Note: The monstrous parasite does not fatigue, is impervious to horror factor (completely fearless), is impervious to poisons, drugs, gases, normal fire, cold, possession, mind control, illusions and ordinary S.D.C. weapons. Mega-damage weapons, energy attacks, magic and psionics inflict full damage.

Magic Powers of Note: None.

Psionic Powers: None

Note: One rarely encounters more than one or two of these monsters.



Tick Parasite

Ticks have large oval bodies covered in a sort of lumpy flesh (see comic strip, page 11 and top of page 14). The six legs are comparatively short and thin. The creature's mouth is large and filled with large teeth and a pair of fangs.

Class: Wormwood organism: Tick Parasite.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head (1) — 50

Eyes (4) — 10 each

Pinchers (1 pair) — 20

Hands/Claws (6) — 10 each

Legs (6) — 20 each

Main Body — 60

* Depleting the main body will kill the parasite and cause it to slip back into the ground.

Statistical Data

Height: Four feet (1.2 m) standing on all fours and 7 feet (2.1 m) long, 7 to 8 feet (2.1 to 2.4 m) tall standing on its hind legs.

Width: Four feet (1.2 m)

Weight: 800 pounds (360 kg)

Speed: 44 (30 mph/48 km)

Leap: 20 feet (6 m) high or lengthwise.

Supernatural Physical Strength: 28

Mega-Damage:

Restrained Punch — 5D6 S.D.C.

Full Strength Punch or Claw Swipe — 3D6 M.D.

Power Punch — 6D6 M.D.

Pinchers — 2D6 M.D.

Bite — 4D6 M.D.

Pounce Attack: Inflicts 2D4 M.D. and has a 1-45% chance of pinning an opponent who is 10 feet (6 m) or smaller. The pinned victim cannot move or make any physical attacks (magic and psionic are possible) and can continue to be bitten by the parasite. A pounce attack counts as two melee attacks.

Number of Attacks per Melee Round: Three by bite or claws.

Bonuses: +1 on initiative, +5 to strike, +2 to parry and dodge, and +1 to roll with impact.

Horror Factor: 9

Other Attributes of Note: I.Q., M.E., M.A., and P.E.: Not applicable, P.P.: 22, P.B. 2. **Note:** Ticks cannot fly.

Abilities of Note: The parasite does not fatigue, is impervious to horror factor (completely fearless), is impervious to poisons, drugs, gases, normal fire, cold, possession, mind control, illusions and ordinary S.D.C. weapons. Mega-damage weapons, energy attacks, magic and psionics inflict full damage. They are also excellent climbers 90/85%, and can walk on all surfaces, walls, ceilings, pillars, etc., at full speed.

Magic Powers of Note: None.

Psionic Powers: None

Note: Typically travel in packs of 1D4 + 2.

Beetle Parasite

The beetle parasite has the body of the tick and the head of the battler and larger pinchers. Its six legs are comparatively short and thin. The creature's mouth is large and filled with large teeth and a pair of fangs, but its powerful mandibles can cut a man in half!

Class: Wormwood organism: Beetle Parasite.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head (1) — 150

Eyes (4) — 10 each

Large Pinchers (1 pair) — 40

Hands/Claws (6) — 20 each

Legs (6) — 30 each

Main Body — 90

* Depleting the main body will kill the parasite and cause it to slip back into the ground.

Statistical Data

Height: Five feet (1.5 m) standing on all fours and 9 feet (2.7 m) long, 12 to 15 feet (3.6 to 4.6 m) tall standing on its hind legs.

Width: Five feet (1.5 m)

Weight: 1200 pounds (540 kg)

Speed: 44 (30 mph/48 km)

Leap: 20 feet (6 m) high or lengthwise.

Supernatural Physical Strength: 31

Mega-Damage:

Restrained Punch — 5D6 S.D.C.

Full Strength Punch or Claw Swipe — 4D6 M.D.

Power Punch — 1D4 × 10 M.D.

Mandibles/Pinchers — 6D6 M.D.

Bite — 4D6 M.D.

Pounce Attack: Inflicts 2D4 M.D. and has a 1-55% likelihood of pinning an opponent who is 10 feet (6 m) or smaller. The pinned victim cannot move or make any physical attacks (magic and psionic are possible) and can continue to be bitten by the parasite. A pounce attack counts as two melee attacks.

Number of Attacks per Melee Round: Three by bite or claws.

Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +4 to strike, parry and dodge, and +1 to roll with impact.

Horror Factor: 13

Other Attributes of Note: I.Q., M.E., M.A., and P.E.: Not applicable, P.P.: 22, P.B. 2. **Note:** These Beetles cannot fly.

Abilities of Note: The parasite does not fatigue, is impervious to horror factor (completely fearless), is impervious to poisons, drugs, gases, normal fire, cold, possession, mind control, illusions and ordinary S.D.C. weapons. Mega-damage weapons, energy attacks, magic and psionics inflict full damage. They are also excellent climbers 90/85%, but cannot walk on walls and ceilings.

Magic Powers of Note: None.

Psionic Powers: None.

Note: Typically hunts alone.



Monster Worm Parasite

The monster worm is a horrible giant worm that snakes silently along the ground. The body is long and slender like a worm, with lumpy flesh. Its maw is huge and filled with teeth the length of short swords and large enough to swallow a man whole! It also has two pair of pinchers (see comic strip page 15; bottom corner).

Class: Wormwood organism: Monster Worm Parasite.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head (1) — 75

Eyes (2; on the top of its head) — 10 each

Large Pinchers (2 pair) — 40 each

Main Body — 150

* Depleting the main body will kill the parasite and cause it to slip back into the ground.

Statistical Data

Height: Not applicable; slithers along the ground. The mouth can open to five feet wide (1.5 m).

Length: 15 to 30 feet (4.6 to 9 m) long

Width: Four feet (1.2 m) in diameter

Weight: 2 to 8 tons

Speed: 27 (18 1/2 mph/29.7 km)

Leap: Not applicable.

Supernatural Physical Strength: 34

Mega-Damage:

Full Strength Head Butt or Tail Strike — 4D6 M.D.

Power Strike — 1D4 × 10 M.D.

Pinchers — 3D6 M.D.

Bite — 6D6 M.D.

Pounce/lunge Attack: Inflicts 1D6 M.D. and has a 1-40% chance of knocking its prey off its feet. The victim loses initiative and one melee action/attack. It does not coil around or crush its prey.

Number of Attacks per Melee Round: Three by bite or swat.

Bonuses: +4 on initiative, +4 to strike, and +2 to parry and dodge.

Horror Factor: 15

Other Attributes of Note: I.Q., M.E., M.A., and P.E.: Not applicable, P.P.: 20, P.B. 1. **Note:** These creatures cannot fly.

Abilities of Note: Prowl 50%, swim 80%, track by smell 50%, track by blood scent 75%, and bio-regenerate 2D6 × 10 M.D.C. once every six hours.

Furthermore, the parasite does not fatigue, is impervious to horror factor (completely fearless), is impervious to poisons, drugs, gases, normal fire, cold, possession, mind control, illusions and ordinary S.D.C. weapons. Mega-damage weapons, energy attacks, magic and psionics inflict full damage. They are also fair climbers 50/45%, but cannot crawl on walls and ceilings.

Magic Powers of Note: None.

Psionic Powers: None

Note: Typically hunts alone. One rarely encounters more than one or two of these monsters at a time.

Tangle Worm Parasite

The tangle worm has a long worm-like body and an ugly turtle-like head with a tooth filled mouth. Behind the head are two long tentacles used to entangle, pin, hold and bring its prey to its powerful jaws. Like the monster worm parasite, its body is long and slender with lumpy flesh (see comic strip, page 17; under the boot of and around the Confessor).

Class: Wormwood organism: Tangle Worm Parasite.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head (1) — 40

Eyes (2; on the top of its head) — 6 each

Tentacles (2) — 40 each

Main Body — 100

* Depleting the main body will kill the parasite and cause it to slip back into the ground.

Statistical Data

Height: Not applicable; slithers along the ground.

Length: The body is 12 to 20 feet (3.6 to 6 m) long, and the tentacles are 15 to 20 feet long (4.6 to 6 m).

Width: Two feet (0.6 m) in diameter

Weight: 800 to 1000 pounds (360 to 450 kg)

Speed: 22 (15 mph/24 km)

Leap: Not applicable.

Supernatural Physical Strength: 26

Mega-Damage:

Full Strength Head Butt or Tail Strike — 3D6 M.D.

Tentacle Strike — 2D6 M.D.

Power Strike (tentacle or tail strike) — 6D6 M.D.

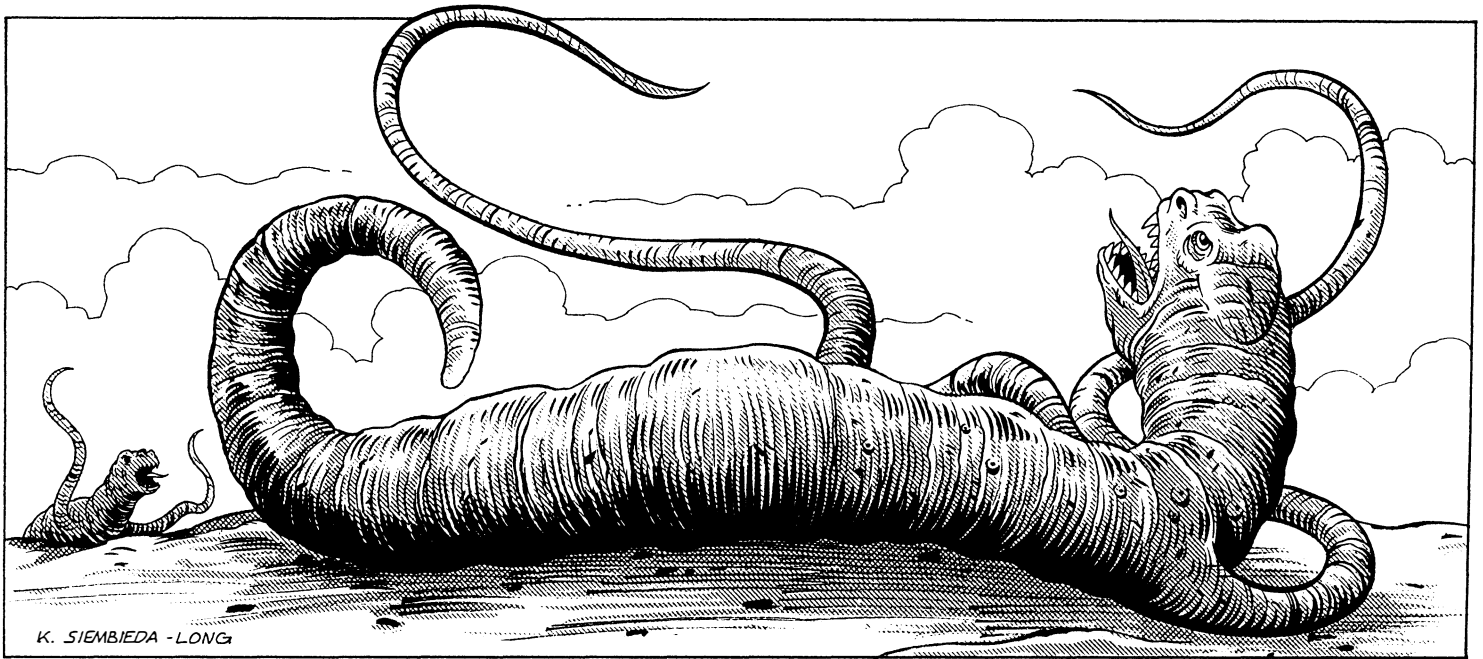
Bite — 3D6 M.D.

Entangle/pin attack: Inflicts no damage but has a 1-50% chance of entangling and pinning an opponent who is 10 feet (6 m) tall or smaller. The pinned victim cannot move or make any physical attacks (magic and psionic are possible) and can be pulled to the biting maw and be continually bitten by the parasite. Even if the entangling attack fails to pin its prey, the character loses one melee action/attack as he/she fights off or dodges the flailing tentacles. Entangling attack counts as one melee attack.

Number of Attacks per Melee Round: Three by bite, swat or entangle.

Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +5 to strike, parry and dodge.

Horror Factor: 14



Other Attributes of Note: I.Q., M.E., M.A., and P.E.: Not applicable, P.P.: 22, P.B. 1. **Note:** These creatures cannot fly.

Abilities of Note: Prowl 40%, swim 60%, track by smell 50%, track by blood scent 75%, and bio-regenerate 1D6 × 10 M.D.C. once every six hours.

Furthermore, the parasite does not fatigue, is impervious to horror factor (completely fearless), is impervious to poisons, drugs, gases, normal fire, cold, possession, mind control, illusions and ordinary S.D.C. weapons. Mega-damage weapons, energy attacks, magic and psionics inflict full damage. They are also good climbers 70/65%, but cannot crawl on walls and ceilings.

Magic Powers of Note: None.

Psionic Powers: None.

Note: Typically hunts in groups of 1D4 + 1. One rarely encounters more than six or seven of these monsters at a time.

Krikton Flailer

This is one of the nefarious Lord Krikton's parasitic monsters. They are roughly human-size and have a low human intelligence. This intelligence allows them to use weapons and devices, but they still operate on instinct and predatory blood lust more than anything else.

The flailer is a monster that looks like part worm and part insect. This creature has a monstrous, shaggy head with four eyes and two pairs of mandibles. Its body is long and serpent-like with a prehensile tail and four spindly, insect-like legs. Its two arms are equally long and can be used to help it run and climb.

Class: Wormwood organism: Krikton Flailer Parasite.

M.D.C. by Location:

- Head (1) — 100
- Eyes (4) — 10 each
- Large Pinchers (2 pair) — 30 each
- Hands/Claws (6) — 20 each
- Arms (2) — 40 each
- Legs (4) — 50 each
- Tail Section — 60
- Main Body — 120

* Depleting the main body will kill the parasite and cause it to slip back into the ground.

Statistical Data

Height: Six feet (1.8 m) standing on all fours and 15 to 20 feet (4.6 to 6 m) long from head to tail tip. 10 feet (3 m) tall standing fully erect, resting on its tail section like a king cobra ready to strike.

Width: Four feet (1.2 m)

Weight: 1200 pounds (540 kg)

Speed: 33 (22 1/2 mph/36 km)

Leap: 20 feet (6 m) high or lengthwise.

Supernatural Physical Strength: 31

Mega-Damage:

Restrained Punch — 5D6 S.D.C.

Full Strength Punch or Claw Swipe — 4D6 M.D.

Power Punch — 1D4 × 10 M.D.

Mandibles/Pinchers — 6D6 M.D.

Bite — 4D6 M.D.

Tail Whip — 3D6 M.D.

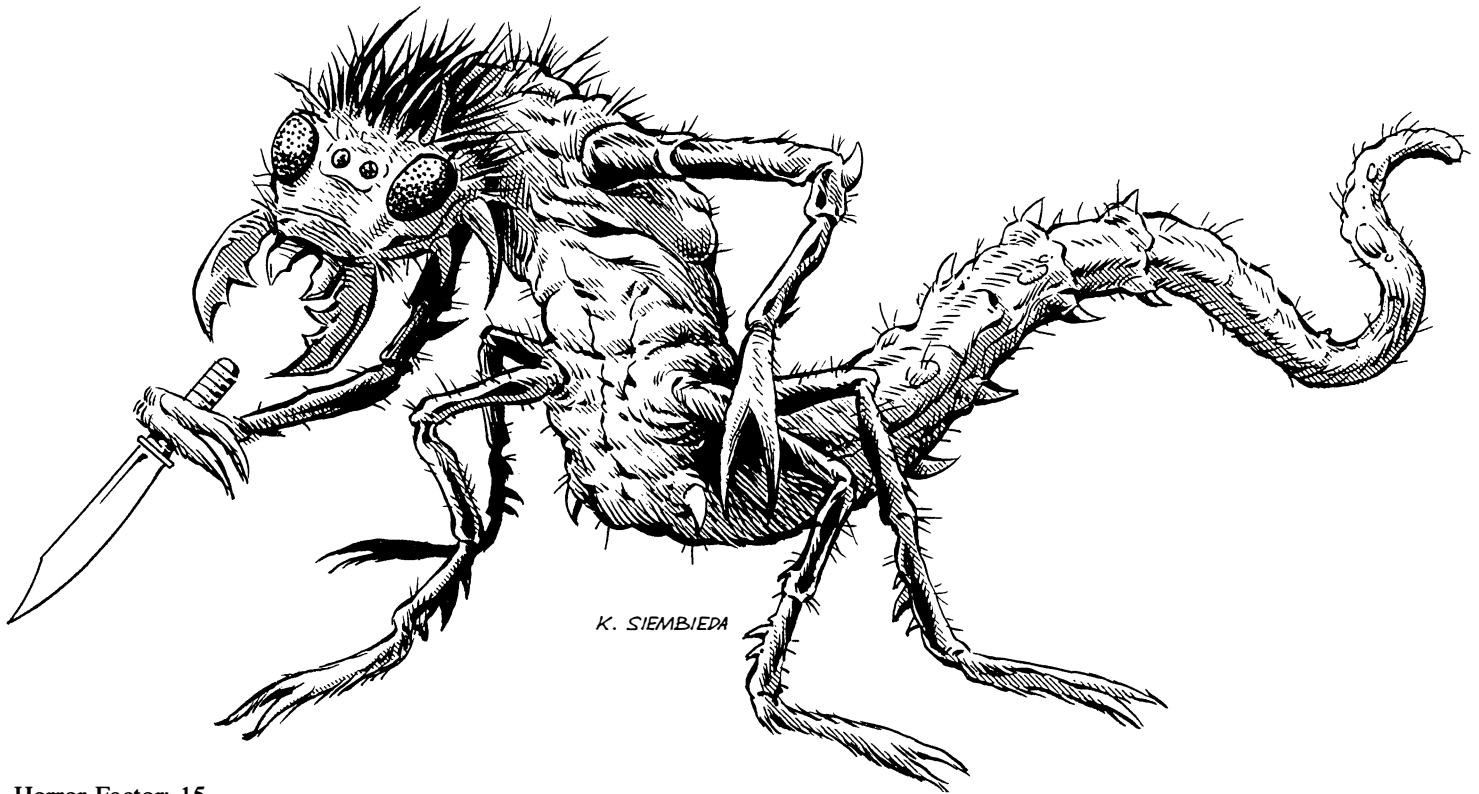
Strangle/Crush with Tail — 2D6 M.D. per each melee attack.

Pounce Attack: Inflicts 2D4 M.D. and has a 1-55% likelihood of pinning an opponent who is 10 feet (6 m) or smaller. The pinned victim cannot move or make any physical attacks (magic and psionic are possible) and can continue to be bitten by the parasite. A pounce attack counts as two melee attacks.

Entangle/Pin Attack with Tail: Inflicts no damage but has a 1-35% chance of entangling and pinning an opponent who is 10 feet (6 m) tall or smaller. The pinned victim cannot move or make any physical attacks (magic and psionic are possible) and can be pulled to the biting maw and be continually bitten by the parasite. Even if the entangling attack fails to pin its prey, the flailer can hold onto the character's leg, arm or torso to prevent him from escaping or dodging. Entangling attack counts as one melee attack.

Number of Attacks per Melee Round: Five total: Four by punch/claw/weapon, bite or tail whip, plus one by entanglement.

Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +6 to strike, +4 to parry and dodge, +2 to roll with impact, +3 to save vs magic, +4 to save vs the priest's magic to repel, control and summon parasites.



Horror Factor: 15

Other Attributes of Note: M.E., M.A., and P.E.: Not applicable, I.Q.: 2D4+2, P.P.: 3D4+10, P.B. 2. **Note:** The flailer cannot fly.

Abilities of Note: Prowl 40%, swim 70%, track by smell 50%, track by blood scent 75%, track by sight 40%, and bio-regenerate 1D6 × 10 M.D.C. once every six hours.

Furthermore, the parasite does not fatigue, is impervious to horror factor (completely fearless), is impervious to poisons, drugs, gases, normal fire, cold, S.D.C. weapons, possession, mind control, illusions and ordinary S.D.C. weapons. Mega-damage weapons, energy attacks, magic and psionics inflict full damage. They are also good climbers 70/65%, but cannot walk on walls and ceilings.

Magic Powers of Note: None.

Psionic Powers: None.

Note: Typically hunts and travel in pairs.

Eyes (4) — 10 each

Large Pinchers (1 pair) — 80

Hands/Claws (6) — 40 each

Arms (2) — 100 each

Legs (4) — 250 each

Main Body — 300

* Depleting the main body will kill the parasite and cause it to slip back into the ground.

Statistical Data

Height: 12 feet (3.6 m) tall and 12 feet (3.6 m) long in its usual hunched position. 20 feet (6 m) tall standing fully erect. Nine feet (2.7 m) crouched on all fours (usually getting ready to leap).

Width: Four or five feet (1.2 or 1.5 m)

Weight: Four to six tons

Speed: Running/loping 58 (40 mph/64 km) or an astonishing 110 (75 mph/120 km) leaping at full speed!

Leap: 100 feet (30.5 m) high or lengthwise.

Supernatural Physical Strength: 40

Mega-Damage:

Restrained Punch — 6D6 S.D.C.

Full Strength Punch — 5D6 M.D.

Power Punch — 1D6 × 10 M.D.

Kick — 1D6 × 10 M.D.

Mandibles/Pinchers — 5D6 M.D.

Bite — 4D6 M.D.

Head Butt — 2D6 M.D.

Stomp — 2D6 M.D.

Pounce Attack: Inflicts 2D4 M.D. and has a 1-65% chance of knocking its opponent off its feet. The victim loses initiative and one melee action/attack. Plus the leaper has a 1-50% chance of pinning an opponent who is 10 feet (6 m) or smaller. The pinned victim cannot move or make any physical attacks (magic and psionic are possible) and can continue to be bitten by the parasite. A pounce attack counts as two melee attacks.

Krikton Leaper

The Krikton leaper is one of Lord Krikton's most frightening looking parasitic monsters. They are huge, insect looking fiends that might be best described as demonic preying mantises. They are easily four or five times the size and bulk of a human, have a huge armored head and mandibles and four tiny eyes located at each side of the head. The arms are thin but very powerful. The hind legs are comparatively thick and larger, made for leaping. Frequently, one or two sky riders or other demonic minions ride on the back of the monster. This parasite is a deadly fighter and scavenger. Its intelligence is below human, but high for an animal. They are very obedient and easy to train and ride.

Class: Wormwood organism: Krikton Leaper Parasite.

M.D.C. by Location:

Head (1) — 250

Number of Attacks per Melee Round: Five by punch/claw, bite or kick.

Bonuses: +3 on initiative, +6 to strike, +5 to parry and dodge, +2 to roll with impact, +2 to save vs magic, +3 to save vs the priest's magic to repel, control and summon parasites.

Horror Factor: 17

Other Attributes of Note: I.Q., M.E., M.A., and P.E.: Not applicable, P.P.: 3D4 + 10, P.B. 2. **Note:** The leaper cannot fly.

Abilities of Note: Prowl 25%, swim 50%, track by smell 60%, track by blood scent 75%, and bio-regenerate 1D6 × 10 M.D.C. once every hour.

Furthermore, the parasite does not fatigue, is impervious to horror factor (completely fearless), is impervious to poisons, drugs, gases, normal fire, cold, possession, mind control, illusions and ordinary S.D.C. weapons. Mega-damage weapons, energy attacks, magic and psionics inflict full damage. They are also good climbers 70/65%, but cannot walk on walls and ceilings.

Magic Powers of Note: None.

Psionic Powers: None.

Note: Typically hunts and travel in pairs.



Krikton Battle Wagon

Don't let its name deceive you, the Krikton battle wagon is not an inanimate object but a towering monster parasite. It is called a battle wagon because of its incredible size, bulk and armor. It is also the most unusual of the current parasite designs. Its feet have retractable round balls on the bottoms, enabling the creature to roll along as if using giant in-line skates (Roller-Blades®). This enables the creature to reach impressive speeds for a parasite that size. When the terrain is too rough, the balls are retracted into the feet and it walks (half its roller speed). All battle wagons have only three legs, so they always move in an up and down or loping motion.

The head is huge and heavily armored, like the rest of its body. Frequently, a techno-wizard weapon or energy gun is mounted on top of the head. One rider sits behind the head, but as many as three additional human-size passengers can fit between its large shoulders. Battle wagons used as riding animals are frequently painted or their armored hide etched with different designs and colors.

Class: Wormwood organism: Krikton Battle Wagon Parasite.

M.D.C. by Location:

- Head (1) — 250
- Eyes (2; side) — 20 each
- Ball Feet (3 pair) — 100 each
- Legs (3) — 250 each

Leg Shoulders/Rear Armor Plating — 400

Main Body — 500

* Depleting the main body will kill the parasite and cause it to slip back into the ground.

Statistical Data

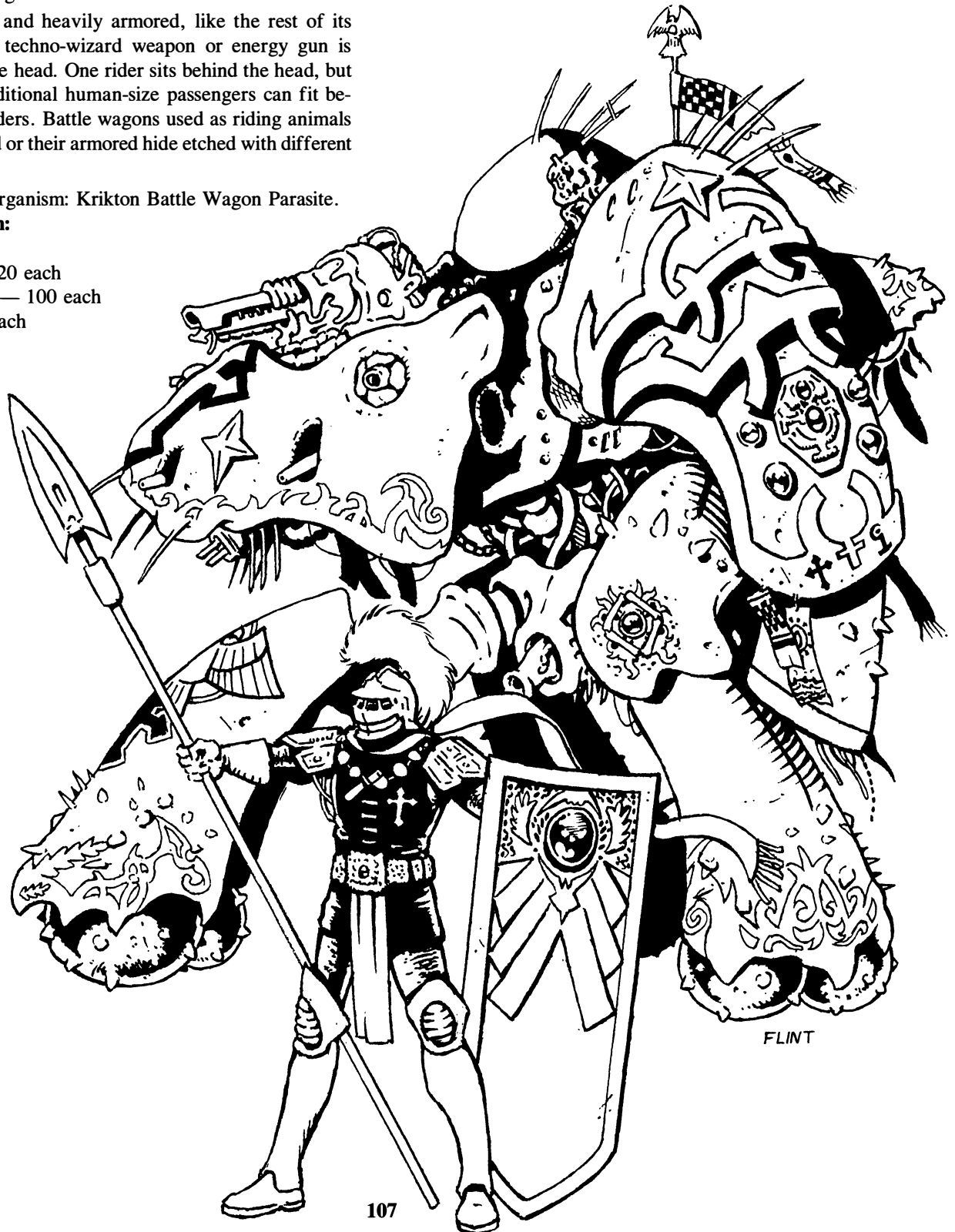
Height: 15 to 18 feet (4.6 to 5.5 m) tall and 12 feet (3.6 m) long in its usual hunched position.

Width: Ten feet (3 m)

Weight: 20 to 25 tons

Speed: Running/loping 44 (30 mph/48 km) or an amazing 88 (60 mph/96 km) skating on its ball feet at full speed!

Leap: 40 feet (12 m) high or lengthwise.



Supernatural Physical Strength: 50

Mega-Damage:

Restrained Punch — 1D6 × 10 S.D.C.

Full Strength Punch — 6D6 M.D.

Power Punch — 2D4 × 10 M.D.

Kick — 1D6 × 10 M.D.

Bite — 4D6 M.D.

Head Butt — 2D6 M.D.

Stomp — 2D6 M.D.

Ram Attack: Inflicts 4D6 M.D. and has a 1-65% chance of knocking its opponent off its feet. The victim loses initiative and one melee action/attack. A ram attack counts as two melee actions.

Special Attack: Spine Throws (4): The Krikton battle wagon has four hollow spines that look like gun barrels sticking out of slots in its armored head. These are natural weapons that fire sharp spines the size of a sword blade.

Damage: 3D6 M.D. per each spine, Range: 500 feet (153 m).
Rate of Fire: One at a time or in a volley of 2, 3, or 4 fired at once at the same target. A volley counts as one melee attack regardless of how many spines are fired. **Payload:** Each of the four spine throwers can fire once per melee round up to 12 times. The spines can be regenerated every hour.

Number of Attacks per Melee Round: Four by head butt, punches, kick or bite. Each firing of one spine or a volley of spines counts as one melee action.

Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +6 to strike, +2 to parry, +4 to dodge, +1 to roll with impact, +5 to save vs magic, +2 to save vs the priest's magic to repel, control and summon parasites.

Horror Factor: 17

Other Attributes of Note: I.Q., M.E., M.A., and P.E.: Not applicable, P.P.: 3D4+10, P.B. 2. **Note:** The battle wagon cannot fly.

Abilities of Note: Prowl 25%, swim 50%, track by smell 60%, track by blood scent 75%, and bio-regenerate 1D6 × 10 M.D.C. once every hour.

Furthermore, the parasite does not fatigue, is impervious to horror factor (completely fearless), is impervious to poisons, drugs, gases, normal fire, cold, possession, mind control, illusions and ordinary S.D.C. weapons. Mega-damage weapons, energy attacks, magic and psionics inflict full damage.

Magic Powers of Note: None.

Psionic Powers: None.

Note: Typically hunts and travels in pairs.



Crawling Towers

Crawling towers, like most of the buildings on Wormwood, are a part of the Living Planet and therefore, a symbiotic organism. They have all the same basic properties of the other Wormwood buildings plus one incredible other feature, they can move! When the armies of the Forces of Evil advance, their cities follow them! When a human city is conquered, a crawling tower or two may join its skyline.

Crawling towers are typically ugly, frightening structures with spikes, horns, fangs, warts and tumorous appendages.

Speed: Typically a high priest of darkness, demon lord or one of the Host directs the tower's course. The speed at which a tower moves is about 10 miles per hour (16 km). It does not sprout feet and legs, but moves in a sort of undulating, wave motion, like a hand moving under a blanket.

M.D.C.: A ten foot (3 m) diameter of wall has 50 M.D.C. points. A tower will typically have about 6000 M.D.C. per story and they average 8 to 12 stories high, sometimes two times larger.

Blood Stones & Magic Crystals

Blood stones and magic crystals are created by Wormwood and are an extension of the Living Planet. There are a variety of different stones that can be used for various purposes, usually by priests, techno-wizards, sorcerers and demons. They are a natural resource that can be used for good or evil. They do not have an awareness, intelligence or alignment.

Magic stones and crystals are occasionally found in the wild, usually in areas that are NOT inhabited by the Forces of Darkness or can be summoned by priests and wormspeakers. Both blood stones and magic crystals grow in a plant-like pillar from the ground. The pillar is typically three to six feet tall (0.9 to 1.8 m). At the top is a bud or pod that contains one powerful, greater stone or crystal. At the base of the pillar are 1D4 lesser stones or crystals. A priest or wormspeaker can open the pod with a touch and a prayer or pluck a lesser stone from the base like picking a flower. All others must force the pod open (inflict 20 M.D.) and pry the lesser stones from the pillar (inflict 8 M.D.) or have a strength of 50 or greater to remove them.

A blood stone or magic crystal can often be used as a loose stone held in the hand and carried in a pocket, but most are typically placed in crowns, helmets, jewelry, wands, scepters, weapons, armor and devices. Several of the same or different stones or crystals may be built into the same object, but each of the stones' powers are usually drawn upon individually and one at a time. Several of the same stones do not offer accumulative bonuses or abilities, but may offer additional P.P.E. and opportunities to use those powers. For example: The bio-booster stone offers several powers. The use of each drains some of the stone's P.P.E. points. When all the P.P.E. is gone, the stone is out of power for 24 hours. However, if there was a second bio-booster stone, the character could then turn to it and use its P.P.E. and powers.

Note: Remember, blood stones and magic crystals created from Wormwood cannot survive away from the planet. If taken off world, the item becomes immediately powerless and after six hours disintegrates into powder.

Blood Stones

The powers of blood stones seems to lie in the augmentation or manipulation of the human body and living tissue. Crystals on the other hand, deal with the channeling, manipulation and storage of energy.

All blood stones are perfectly smooth, blood red, and semi-transparent. They can be flat or completely round like a ball and come in a variety of shapes: spherical like a globe, ovoid or egg-shaped, circular or oval, but flat like a disk, and teardrop shaped. Blood stones are never faceted like the crystals nor cut in sharp angles. The smallest is about the size of a robin's egg, while the largest is the size of an ostrich egg or soccer ball. The very large stones are extremely rare and the most powerful (double the usual amount of P.P.E. and duration of magic). The more common sizes range from the size of a chicken egg or golf ball to a baseball. Blood stones are fairly uncommon, especially

the largest, and they are more common than crystals by three to one.



Greater Blood Stones

Battle Stone

A deep blood red, tear shaped stone with a lighter red image of a skull/death's head in its center.

Powers: Doubles the amount of normal damage to any weapon it is built into and turns it into a magic weapon. When placed in body armor it magically doubles the amount of its M.D.C.! Only one stone can be used per weapon or armor. Multiple battle stones do NOT continue to increase the damage or M.D.C. potential of that item.

Duration: Permanent as long as the stone is part of the weapon. Turns back into an ordinary weapon the moment the stone is removed.

Note: This is considered a greater stone.

Bio-Booster Stone

This is a burgundy colored stone that is usually oval in shape. It has a permanent P.P.E. base of 60 points that cannot be siphoned by practitioners of magic or priests.

Powers: Increases one of the character's physical attributes. Each attribute booster must be activated individually. Each activation counts as one of the character's melee round attacks. The magical increase disappears the instant the character does not have the stone in his possession.

Boost P.S. by 50%: P.P.E. cost: 10
Boost P.P. by 50%: P.P.E. cost: 20
Boost P.E. by 50%: P.P.E. cost: 20
Boost P.B. by 50%: P.P.E. cost: 30
Boost Spd by 50%: P.P.E. cost: 10
Boost Hit Points/M.D.C. by 50%: P.P.E. cost: 10

Duration: One hour unless otherwise noted.

Note: This is considered a greater stone.

Bio-Field Stone

A crimson stone with light red or orange star specks inside it. The stone has a P.P.E. base of 60 points and completely regenerates its P.P.E. at the end of 24 hours. Each time one of its powers are used, some of its P.P.E. is temporarily expended. When all its energy is gone, its powers cannot be used until it regenerates 24 hours later.

Powers: The character must touch or hold the stone or the object the stone is set into in order to evoke its protection.

Impervious to disease, radiation or airborne toxins: P.P.E. cost: 10.

Impervious to fatigue: P.P.E. cost: 10; Does not tire. Duration is six hours.

Impervious to fire, heat and cold: P.P.E. cost: 10. Magic fire and plasma energy do full damage.

Impervious to poisons and drugs: P.P.E. cost: 10.

Protection from animals and insects: P.P.E. cost: 10. Both animals and insects leave this character alone and will go away unless there is another alluring target nearby, in which case it will go after him.

Protection from parasites: P.P.E. cost: 15. The parasite will not pester or attack this character, but will assault those around him.

Protection from evil spirits: P.P.E. cost: 30. Impervious to possession of any kind and +2 to save vs mind control and magic illusions.

Duration: One hour unless otherwise noted.

Note: This is considered a greater stone.

Eye Stone

This is a crimson stone with a darker red circle in its center like an iris and pupil. It is the size and shape of a human eye. One of the organic eyes is removed and the eye shaped blood stone put in its place directly in the eye socket. Its powers are in effect at all times.

Powers: Nightvision 1000 feet (305 m), see the invisible, see aura (same as the psionic power), see in the infrared spectrum of light and has keen, hawk-like color vision and adds a +5% bonus to the following skills: tracking, hunting, detect concealment, detect ambush, carpentry, picking locks, forgery, and art. The wearer is also +1 on initiative and +1 to parry and dodge.

Duration: Its powers are in effect at all times as long as it is worn by the character using it.

Penalties: Reduce P.B. and M.E. attributes by one point. These reduced attributes can only be restored if the eye stone is replaced with an attractive cybernetic eye.

Note: This is considered a greater stone.

Healing Stone

This stone can be any of the smaller sizes and is a very deep, semi-opaque blood red. The stone has a P.P.E. base of 60 points and completely regenerates its P.P.E. at the end of 24 hours. Each time one of its powers is used, some of its P.P.E. is temporarily expended. When all its energy is gone its powers cannot be used until it regenerates 24 hours later.

Powers: In each case, the injured character must touch or hold the stone.

Heal wounds: P.P.E. cost: 10. Restores 4D6 hit points or M.D.C. if a mega-damage creature and leaves no scarring.

Heal burns: P.P.E. cost: 10. First the pain is soothed, next the burns heal, 2D6 hit points are restored and there is minimal scarring.

Negate poison: P.P.E. cost: 10. Instantly negates poisons, toxins or drugs, purifies the blood and restores 1D6 hit points.

Cure illness: P.P.E. cost: 15 points. Reduces the symptoms and penalties of disease by half, dispels ordinary headaches and nausea, and the character recuperates two times faster than normal. It will also instantly negate magic illness (but not curses).

Stasis trance: P.P.E. Cost: 5 points. This helps to put the character in a deep meditative and healing trance. It slows the metabolism so that respiration, heart rate, blood flow, blood pressure and so on, are barely discernable. This can be used to slow the spread/speed of poison, chemicals or disease in the bloodstream, to conserve on air, to appear to be in a coma or even dead and to rest and heal (heals at normal rate). Duration: As long as the character desires up to four hours.

Duration: Instant effect.

Note: This is considered a greater stone.

Psi-Booster Stone

This is a crimson colored stone with a lighter colored star burst in the center.

Powers: Increases the wearer/user's psionic powers (if applicable). Specifically, it increases the amount of I.S.P., psionic strength, range and duration by 50%. It also increases the character's P.P.E., M.E. and M.A. by 25%.

Duration: Its powers are in effect at all times as long as it is held or worn by the character.

Note: This is considered a greater stone.

Lesser Blood Stones

Cat's Eye Stone

This blood stone is round like a marble, is reddish orange with a dark red, narrow strip in its center making it resemble a cat's eye.

Power (pick ONE): Nightvision 200 feet (61 m) or see the invisible (200 ft/61 m range).

Duration: Its powers are in effect at all times as long as it is held or worn by the character using it.

Mini-Bio-Booster

It looks like a tiny version of the larger bio-booster stone. Its permanent P.P.E. base is 30 points and cannot be syphoned by practitioners of magic or priests.

Power: It has the magic property of increasing any ONE (pick one and do not change it) physical attribute as listed under the greater bio-booster stone. How often that one power can be used depends on the P.P.E. cost.

Duration: All abilities last for one hour.

Mini-Healing Stone

It looks like a tiny version of the greater healing stone. Its permanent P.P.E. base is 30 points and cannot be syphoned by practitioners of magic or priests.

Power: It has the magic property of any ONE (pick one and do not change it) of the healing powers as listed under the greater healing stone. How often that one power can be used depends on the P.P.E. cost.

Duration: Instant effect.

Protection Stone

Small, round crimson stones, but flat like a disk. It has a permanent P.P.E. base of 30 points that cannot be syphoned by practitioners of magic or priests.

Power: It has the magic property of any ONE (pick one and do not change it) of the bio-field powers as listed under the greater bio-field stone. How often that one power can be used depends on the P.P.E. cost.

Duration: One hour.

Pure Stone

A small teardrop shaped stone that is a transparent red with a clear, diamond shaped center.

Power: Purify any water or drink it is placed into. Plus the user has a bonus of +1 to save vs poison and disease.

Duration: Instant effect. The bonus is in place as long as the stone is in the character's possession.

Spirit Stone

A small, round, violet colored stone with a pink star burst in the center.

Power: The character is impervious to negative emotions transmitted via magic or psionics, including magic fear, despair and empathic transmission.

Duration: Its powers are in effect at all times as long as it is held or worn by the character using it.

Magic Crystals —————

Most magic crystals are multi-faceted stones, like a diamond, and can be clear or any shade of white, blue, yellow or green. Smooth crystal spheres of any size are a rarity and usually clear, white or light blue. Magic crystals are generally larger than blood stones and range from the size of a baseball to that of a soccer ball. Magic crystals are also frequently referred to as "gems."

Control Gem

Super rare! Amplifies the power of magic summonings and control by increasing the duration of control, range, and the number of beings one can control by five times! This crystal

also offers its owner the following magic spells (a total of eight spells can be cast per 24 hours in any combination or repetition):

- Calling
- Constrain Beings
- Commune with Spirits
- Control/Enslave Entities
- Compulsion
- Domination
- Animate and Control Dead
- Summon & Control Animals
- Summon & Control Flies/Insects
- Summon Entities
- Summon Parasites
- Trance

As if this were not enough, the powerful crystal can work like a crystal ball, except it can only observe the creature(s) summoned and under the character's control. It can even follow the summoned and/or controlled creatures through a rift and into another dimension. This extremely rare crystal ball is coveted by shifters, summoners and dark priests.

Crystal Ball

Like so many things on the Living Planet, the crystal grows from the ground and is held in a claw-like pedestal. The crystal ball itself is a completely smooth crystal orb about the size of a soccer ball; 110 M.D.C. points.

Powers & Bonuses: Placing 20 P.P.E. into the crystal activates it for 30 minutes. An additional 20 P.P.E. adds another 30 minutes of observation time. Once activated, the crystal functions like a satellite link camera and can transmit images from around the world. The only limitation is that the observer can only see places on Wormwood he or she is familiar with. The exact location can be changed like switching channels on a television set. Furthermore, the crystal can see into other dimensions, provided that an active dimensional rift connects it to Wormwood and the observer has visited that dimension. There is no sound, only image. Still this is a very formidable device.

The vantage point of viewing starts from a bird's eye perspective, but the image can be adjusted like a camera to zoom in for a close-up on one individual or object. The observer can also follow a particular character into areas he has never before visited, but the moment he focuses on something other than that person (like an object in the room or another character) he will lose track of him. Although others can watch the images in the crystal ball, only the activator can control the camera-like focusing and direction.

Penalties: The observer loses track of time; 30 minutes seems like five. Also he or she is so absorbed with looking at the crystal that they are easily caught off guard; -4 on initiative.

Note: The crystal must be kept in its claw pedestal to function. One without the other has no power. Replacing a lost or stolen crystal ball with a new crystal will create a working mechanism. An extremely rare greater crystal.

Energy Cell Crystals

Energy crystals contain mystic energy which can be drawn upon by priests, practitioners of magic, and techno-wizard devices (bio-wizardry too, if the Splugorth should discover these stones). All regenerate their P.P.E. over a matter of hours: half in 12 hours and all in 24 hours. Wormwood techno-wizards use

these crystals to power magic devices and to replace the fuel systems of energy weapons, motorcycles, hovercycles, machines and vehicles.

Lesser Crystal Cells:

Robin to Chicken egg size: 10 P.P.E.

Baseball size: 25 P.P.E.

Grapefruit size: 50 P.P.E.

Greater Crystal Cells (rare):

Bowling ball size: 90 P.P.E.

Soccer ball size: 140 P.P.E.

Basketball size: 180 P.P.E.

Note: Most are pure white in color, like a perfect diamond.

Life Essence Crystals

A diamond shaped power crystal that can serve as a receptacle of a life essence! Basically, the life essence of a character, including his/her awareness, intelligence, emotions and personality, can be transferred from his/her body and placed inside the crystal and preserved for centuries. Only one life force can be placed inside a single gem.

The life essence inside the crystal has no awareness of space or time unless *grounded* to reality. This can be done in one of two ways. **The first** way is by another living person holding the crystal and concentrating on making communication. The essence inside the crystal can psionically link (but not control) the person holding the crystal. This link enables the essence to see and hear everything that person sees and hears (but not feel, smell, taste or read his thoughts). The character inside the crystal can make suggestions, observations, remarks and conversation, but only the person holding the crystal can hear him. To respond, that person must speak aloud so that the life essence inside the crystal can hear him. Through the link, the life essence now experiences real time and space relations, but as an observer and not a true participant. The essence inside the crystal cannot use psionics, cast spells, possess the person holding crystal, or impart any of his skills or knowledge. It's like watching a television, you can see and hear the events but cannot effect them.

To establish and maintain a communication link with the crystal essence, a person *must* be physically touching the crystal; i.e. holding it in his hand or wearing it strapped tightly to his body. Placing the crystal in a pocket, pouch, or locket that is worn on the body, but separated from it, cannot sustain the link and communication is instantly broken. The same applies if the crystal is dropped or put aside somewhere. When communications is broken the trapped life essence returns to a sort of timeless limbo inside the crystal.

The second way to bring the crystal's life essence back to the physical plane is to find it a new physical body. The most common solution is to imbed the crystal into the body of a golem, zombie, worm zombie, mummy, robot, techno-wizard robot, a mindless clone, mindless cyborg or similar body (magic or mechanical). This gives the life essence in the crystal a physical body that is not really alive and which is not already occupied by another life force. An unlikely alternative is to find a body that is an empty shell, where the body lives but the mind is gone; brain dead). In all of these cases the crystal is inserted into the forehead of the body. With a body, all five senses engage and the character is as alert and aware as any human.

If the body is destroyed the life essence loses contact with the world and returns to the limbo inside the crystal. If the crystal is destroyed, the character inside it dies.

Statistical Data:

Life Essence Transferral: This is a simple process. You need a living person (animal not applicable) and a life essence crystal. Unwilling participants must be rendered unconscious and a 25 minute ritual performed. Willing subjects need only concentrate on leaving their body (like astral projection) and entering the crystal. The process takes about 15 minutes and mages who have done it before can do so in five.

M.D.C. of the Crystal: 1000 points and regenerates as much as 200 points per every 12 hours. If destroyed, the life essence inside dies.

Mental Attributes: Unchanged. The character retains the mental faculties, skills, O.C.C., knowledge, memories, psionic powers, and I.S.P. he held in the past.

Physical Attributes & M.D.C.: Completely dependent on the new body. If the body is a zombie, then the character has all the physical abilities of a zombie. If the body is a robot, then he has the physical abilities of the robot (programmed skills are not applicable). Basically, the mind of an intelligent humanoid can be instilled in an artificial body like a robot. That mind then commands that artificial body.

P.P.E.: 4D6 when the body is inorganic (golem, robot, etc.) or dead (zombie, mummy, etc.), but 2D4 × 10 when inside another living being (cannot enter an insect or animal body).

Skills & Abilities: Without a body under its control, the character cannot use or improve his skills, nor gain experience points. He is simply an observer, as if watching television and/or talking on the telephone. O.C.C. skills and experience increases only when the crystal essence has a physical body of his own.

The following are the usual reasons for such a transferral:

1. To preserve the life essence of a character whose body is dying and cannot be saved. The plan is usually to find him or her a new body at a later date.
2. To temporarily leave one's body to be placed inside the crystal and the crystal is in turn placed in the forehead of a powerful robot, golem, zombie or similar creature to be controlled by a human mind. The plan is usually to return the mind/life essence back to its original body in a day or two. **Note:** The original body remains alive as a mindless shell. It can survive without life support for 1D6 + 6 days. With modern medical life support and nutrition, it can be kept alive for 1D4 years. To return to its original body, the crystal need only be touched to any part of its flesh and he/she is back. If the body is stolen or dies, the character is in trouble and may be stuck in the artificial body forever.
3. Punishment for a crime. Such a terrible punishment will typically be the act of a powerful dark priest or other minion of evil. In this case, the body is likely to be destroyed (perhaps even before the eyes of the life essence inside the crystal via a link). Or it may be possessed by a supernatural monster/entity.
4. Blackmail. Under this circumstance the original body may be hidden and kept alive for the purpose of blackmail; do this for us and we'll restore you.
5. A stupid experiment or accident. In this case, the character and his assistants may not know how to transfer his life

essence back into his body (may see an expert like a wormspeaker).

Note: This is considered a greater crystal.

The Eye of Wormwood

A sparkling golden yellow gem that gives its owner the power to cast spells of communion with Wormwood, like a priest or wormspeaker. A rarity.

Powers: It offers its owner a total of eight spells per 24 hours which can be cast in any combination or repetition. Available spells are:

- Close an Opening
- Create a Fountain of Water
- Create an Opening
- Create Stairs
- Hell Fire
- Locate Places of Evil
- Locate Food & Resources
- Locate Home Town

Duration: Same as the spell at 6th level potency.

Spell Strength: Equal to a 6th level wormspeaker.

Note: This is a greater crystal.

The Heart of Wormwood

A large, sparkling golden yellow gem that gives its owner the power to cast spells of communion with Wormwood, like a priest or wormspeaker. A rarity.

Powers: It offers its owner a total of eight spells per 24 hours which can be cast in any combination or repetition. Available spells are:

- Control Temperature
- Create Shelter
- Destroy Life Force Cauldron
- Heat Point
- Hell Fire
- Invisible to Magic Seeing
- Life Fuel
- Locate Places of Evil
- Summon Edible Grubs

Duration: Same as the spell at 6th level potency.

Spell Strength: Equal to a 6th level wormspeaker.

Note: This is a greater crystal.

Magic Booster Crystal

This is a sparkling, many faceted, light blue crystal.

Powers: Doubles the duration time and range of magic spells. It also increases the character's P.P.E. and P.E. by 25%.

Duration: Its doubling effect is "on" at all times and happens automatically whenever a spell is cast. Of course, the crystal must be held or worn by the character using it.

Note: This is a greater crystal.

Spell Gem of Destruction

This is a deep blue, almost black, diamond-like gem that gives its owner the power to cast magic spells.

Powers: It offers its owner a total of eight spells per 24 hours which can be cast in any combination or repetition. Available spells are:

- Fuel Flame
- Fire Bolt
- Fire Ball
- Circle of Flame
- Call Lightning
- Life Drain
- Negate Magic
- Paralysis: Lesser

Duration: Same as the spell at 6th level potency.

Spell Strength: Equal to a 6th level wizard.

Note: This is a greater crystal.

Spell Gem of Dimensions

This is a crystal blue gem that gives its owner the power to cast magic spells that alters space and time.

Powers: It offers its owner eight spells and the necessary P.P.E to work their magic at no cost to the user. A total of eight spells can be cast per 24 hours. They can be cast in any combination or repetition. Available spells are:

- Invisibility (self)
- Close Rift
- Dimensional Portal/Rift
- Time Slip
- Time Hole
- Teleport: Lesser
- Teleport: Superior
- Mystic Portal

Duration: Same as the spell at 6th level potency.

Spell Strength: Equal to a 6th level wizard.

Note: This is a greater crystal.

Spell Gem of Illusion

This is a green crystal that gives its owner the power to cast spells of illusion.

Powers: It offers its owner eight spells and the necessary P.P.E to work their magic at no cost to the user. A total of eight spells can be cast per 24 hours. They can be cast in any combination or repetition. Available spells are:

- Apparition
- Concealment
- Fool's Gold
- Hallucination
- Horrorful Illusion
- Mask of Deceit
- Multiple Image
- Wisps of Confusion

Duration: Same as the spell at 6th level potency.

Spell Strength: Equal to a 6th level wizard.

Note: This is a greater crystal.

Spell Gem of Magic

This is a white crystal with a deep blue diamond shape at its core. It gives its owner the power to cast spells that are of mystical significance.

Powers: It offers its owner eight spells and the necessary P.P.E to work their magic at no cost to the user. A total of eight spells can be cast per 24 hours. They can be cast in any combination or repetition. Available spells are:

Anti-Magic Cloud
Dispel Magic Barriers
Eyes of Thoth
Magic Pigeon
Metamorphosis: Mist
Negate Magic
Tongues
Sense Magic

Duration: Same as the spell at 6th level potency.

Spell Strength: Equal to a 6th level wizard.

Note: This is a greater crystal.

Spell Gem of Protection

This is an amber colored crystal that gives its owner certain mystic protection.

Powers: It offers its owner a total of eight spells and the necessary P.P.E. to work their magic at no cost to the user. A total of eight spells can be cast per 24 hours. They can be cast in any combination or repetition desired. Available spells are:

Armor of Ithan
Escape
Impervious to Energy
Impervious to Fire
Impervious to Poison
Negate Magic
Repel Animals
Sanctum

Duration: Same as the spell at 6th level potency.

Spell Strength: Equal to a 6th level wizard.

Note: This is a greater crystal.

Lesser Magic Crystals

Energy Cell Crystals

See the description under greater crystals.

Lesser Spell Gems

These smaller, less powerful spell gems are usually white or green in color. Like the greater gems, these crystals give its owner the power to cast spell magic.

Powers: It offers its owner a total of two spells and the necessary P.P.E. to work its magic at no cost to the user. The two spells can be selected from any of the first and second level spells found in the **Rifts RPG**, listed on pages 166 and 167. Typically the type of spells is completely random (G.M. makes the selection). Once selected, the spells cannot be changed. A total of two spells can be cast per 24 hours. Each spell can be different or the same spell cast twice.

Duration: Same as the spell at 2nd level potency.

Spell Strength: Equal to a 2nd level wizard.

Light Crystal

A light yellow crystal with a lot of sparkle.

Powers: It can cast each of the following spells two times per 24 hours without P.P.E. cost to the user:

Blinding Flash
Globe of Daylight
Ignite Fire

Duration: Same as the spell at 2nd level potency.

Spell Strength: Equal to a 2nd level wizard.

Finder Crystal

A small, sparkling, golden yellow colored crystal. It is one of the few magic gems with spells of communion with Wormwood.

Powers: It can cast each of the following spells two times per 24 hours without P.P.E. cost to the user:

Locate Places of Evil
Locate Food & Resources
Locate Home Town
Create an Opening

Duration: Same as the spell at 2nd level potency.

Spell Strength: Equal to a 2nd level wizard.

Shadow Crystal

A dusky blue-grey colored crystal with a little sparkle.

Powers: It can cast each of the following spells two times per 24 hours without P.P.E. cost to the user:

Chameleon
Invisibility
Shadow Meld

Duration: Same as the spell at 2nd level potency.

Spell Strength: Equal to a 2nd level wizard.

Spell Gem Blank

This is a pure, clear crystal similar to the lesser spell gem, only it is blank, waiting to have two spells placed inside it!

Powers: The gem works exactly like the lesser spell gem except that the character who finds it is the person who gives it its magic. That character must be a practitioner of magic or know one who is willing to work with him. The spell caster gives the blank gem its spells by casting that spell on the crystal. The spell is absorbed by the gem, encoding it with that power. This being the case, the strength of the spell is equal to that of the spell caster and magic spells can include those found in the **Rifts RPG**, temporal magic, elemental magic or communion with Wormwood magic. Each spell can be cast twice per 24 hours.

Duration: Same as the spell caster who gave it its magic.

Spell Strength: Equal to the spell caster who gave it its magic.

Note: Two spells total. Once the spells are placed they cannot be changed. This gem is considered a lesser crystal.



The Forces of Darkness



The humans of Wormwood call the Unholy and all the minions of darkness, “demons.” Indeed, most are supernatural monsters of the most vile nature. However, many are simply monstrous life forms (by human standards) from alien dimensions. Regardless of the so-called “demons” true nature, supernatural, magic or mortal, they are ALL black-hearted fiends dedicated to evil. Many are cannibals. All are deplorably rude, lewd, vicious, hate-filled and sadistic. They are children of chaos, sorrow and madness — harbingers of doom. From the standpoint of humans and most good creatures they are definitely “demonic” monsters.

The creatures who have pledged allegiance to the Forces of Darkness are expected to show unwavering loyalty and absolute respect to the Unholy and other demon lords. The minions are expected to obey the laws, edicts and commands of the Unholy, the Host, governors and warlords. Failure to do so can mean severe punishment, torture, public execution, being hooked to a life force battery, or thrown into a life force cauldron. However, the demon hordes are given a reasonable amount of freedom.

Demonic governors maintain some modicum of order over the demon hordes and rule over the humans with an iron fist. The demons are especially quick to hunt down and punish freedom fighters, outspoken free-thinkers, champions of Light and members of The Cathedral. Their methods are brutal and merciless. They will beat or torture a suspect to extract the information they want. If the suspect should prove to be innocent (or cannot be made to confess), they discard him like a piece of garbage, to live or die — whichever the fates decree. There is seldom an apology or recompense made for any suffering or loss inflicted on innocent people. Under some circumstances, demon lords may make a gesture of amends, by punishing or even slaying the perpetrator(s). This is a rarity only done to appease or impress other dignitaries, demon lords, or to quiet public outcry. Justice is a mockery among the Armies of Darkness. There is seldom anything that even resembles a trial and the words of the Unholy and his Host are the law. Fear is the weapon used to control his demonic minions and human slaves. Punishment for disloyalty and treachery is quick and extreme.

Cruelty and depravity are encouraged among this unholy army. The demons have little regard for life of any kind. Most enjoy acts of violence, turmoil and war, even when their own life is at risk. To them, life and death is an exciting game. Truth be told, if the humans were exterminated, they'd miss the challenge of wits and contests of physical strength and prowess. Furthermore, the Forces of Darkness need (and want) human slaves and worshipers.

Humans are generally considered to be the lowest of the low and regarded as cannon fodder and playthings. The only exceptions are Dark Priests or other *recognized* servants, spies, and warriors who have proven their loyalty. Peasants and communities known to hate or oppose the Unholy are constant targets of abuse. Specific human cities will be targeted for harassment and are fundamentally free zones where any mischievous demon can wreak havoc. In such cases, the demon hordes may do as they please to the residents. They can hunt and feed on them, possess innocent victims, destroy property, engage in kidnapping, acts of terrorism, robbery, torture and murder (but no wholesale slaughter or mass destruction unless given permission).

Forces of Darkness

The Hierarchy Within Monster Society

Ruling Powers & High Society

The Unholy — Supreme Ruler

Lesion — High Lord (Second in Command)

The Host

Dark Priests

Warlords

Governors

Greater Supernatural Allies

Ancient Dragons

Lower Class

Temporal Raiders

Adult Dragons

Powerful Creatures of Magic

Entrancers

Morphworms

Shades

Rumblers

Sky Riders

Ram-Rats

Demon Goblins

Demon Hound Riders

Lowest Class

Lesser Supernatural Beings

Young Dragons

Air Fish

Beast Guards Type One: Canine

Beast Guards Type Two: Armored

D-Bees

Humans

All others

Typical Demonic Guards

1 or 2 Beast Guards (either type) or Ram-rats

2 Air Fish or Demon Goblins or more Beast Guards or Lesser Parasites

2 to 4 Worm Zombies or Demon Hounds

Elite or Special Demonic Guards

1 Entrancer or Morphworm or other supernatural monster

1 Rumbler or Shade

2 Air Fish or Beast Guards (either or both types)

2 to 4 Demon Hounds and Riders, or Krikton Flailers or Leaper

Typical Demonic Reconnaissance Squad

1 Entrancer, Shade or Morphworm

2 to 4 Demon Hounds and Riders

2 to 4 Air Fish or Canine Beast Guards

Typical Demonic Commando Squad

1 Priest of Darkness

1 Shade or Morphworm

2 Beast Guards: Type One Canine

2 Beast Guards: Type Two Armored

2 to 4 other minions

Elite Seek and Destroy Squad

1 Priest of Darkness

1 Shade or Morphworm

1 Rumbler or Dragon or other supernatural monster

1 Entrancer or Temporal Wizard/Warrior

2 Beast Guards (either type) or Ram-rats

2 to 4 Sky Riders riding Feathered Serpents.

Monster Assault Force

1 Battler Parasite or 2 Krikton Leapers with Riders

2 other lesser Parasites (ticks, beetles, worms)

2 to 4 Sky Riders on flying monsters

4 Worm Zombies

4 Air Fish or Demon Goblins or Beast Guards

Flying Assault Force

1 Dragon or other supernatural monster

2 to 4 Sky Riders riding Feathered Serpents

2 to 6 Sky Riders riding Skelter Bats

Typical Demonic Infantry Force

1 Priest of Darkness

1 Entrancer or Temporal Wizard/Warrior

2 Shades or Rumblers

4 Beast Guards (either or both types) or Ram-rats

4 to 6 Demon Hounds and Riders or other supernatural monster

4 to 6 Krikton Leapers and Riders

4 to 6 Sky Riders riding Feathered Serpents or Skelter Bats

4 to 6 Worm Zombies or Demon Goblins

Typical Demonic Heavy Assault Force

1 Priest of Darkness or Demon Lord

2 Shades or Rumblers or Wizard

4 to 6 Beast Guards or Demon Goblins

4 to 6 Krikton Leapers and Riders

4 to 6 Krikton Flailers

4 to 6 Krikton Battle Wagons and Riders

4 to 6 Sky Riders on Feathered Serpents



Dark Priests

Non-Player Villain

The dark priest villain can be human or D-bee. Most are greedy, power hungry fools. They are men and women who have become willing slaves and accomplices to the Forces of Darkness and traitors to humanity. These evil and self-serving people obey and follow the Unholy and his Host with absolute loyalty. Those who are closest to their demonic lords practically worship them and obey their commands without question or hesitation. Others are more insidious and conniving. They care little about the Host, but gladly serve them as a means to their own ends, usually the acquisition of power, wealth and/or glory. Some are just malicious bullies and tormentors who like to hurt and belittle others to feel good or to feel strong. As a minion of darkness, they are given ample opportunities to enjoy themselves.

The dark priest's reward for obedience is power over his fellow humans, D-bees and lesser demons. Next to the Host and demon lords they are the power that rules Wormwood. In many regards, dark priests are the evil twins of the priests of light. Everything that the good priests and heroes love and honor, the dark priests hate and destroy. They are an example of how the power of Wormwood and its creations can be used to enslave, hurt and destroy. They are the corruptors and ravagers that help the forces of evil to keep their hold over the people and spread their evil influence. They can command armies of men, parasites, and demons, summon monsters and produce foul magic.

The dark priests love corruption and mayhem of every kind. They delight in subversively undermining the forces of good and turning people against one another. They actively take part in the ruination of people, places and causes by trying to corrupt and turn priests and heroes to the ways of darkness. Those they cannot turn, they try to discredit or destroy by utilizing assassins, thieves, criminals, spies, traitors, monsters and magic. When they are in a malicious or playful mood, they engage in tactics designed to torment or break the champion. This is accomplished through false accusations, lies, rumors, sabotage and blackmail. A few masters of persuasion and betrayal have even corrupted the hearts of a few highly placed priests of the Cathedral and knights of the Temple. They also have a few spies among the Champions of Light and at many of the human dominated cities.

They draw their power and inspiration from the horrible supernatural beings they serve. The traditional vestments of the dark priest is a red robe trimmed in black and gold. They cover their faces with the infamous matching red, spiked hood with its white eyes surrounded by black. Beneath the pointed hood is usually (70%) the face of a human. His teeth often filed into points in homage to his inhuman masters. They frequently wear simpler, hooded black or red robes when travelling. Their face and head is covered in a tight fitting cloth or leather hood that makes them look like demonic scarecrows.

Abilities for the Dark Priest Non-Player Character

1. **Alignment:** Must be anarchist or evil. Approximately 15% are anarchist, 35% miscreant, 35% diabolic and 15% aberrant.
2. **P.P.E.:** Permanent Base: $1D4 \times 10 + 40$, plus an additional 2D6 P.P.E. per level of experience. Additional mystic energy can be drawn from magic crystals, stones, life force batteries, life force cauldrons, other priests (if given freely) and blood sacrifice. Unlike the practitioners of magic from **Rifts**, they cannot draw energy from other beings, except by blood sacrifice or when offered it from other priests. Furthermore, there are no ley lines from which ambient energy can be tapped (however, some subterranean caves are places of power and work like ley lines). P.P.E. is normally restored at a rate of four points for every hour of rest.
3. **Meditation:** The ability to focus one's thought in prayer is a necessity of life for the priest. Without it they cannot use their magic powers. Meditation and prayer also enables the character to regain spent P.P.E. at a rate of ten points per hour. Meditation restores physical damage two times faster than ordinary people.
4. **+30 M.D.C.** (S.D.C. in non-magic rich environments); remember, all native humans of Wormwood have adapted to the energies of the Living Planet and are mega-damage creatures in P.P.E. rich environments such as Wormwood and Rifts Earth. Roll 1D6 per each level of experience to determine the M.D.C./hit points. Body armor can also be worn for additional protection. **Note:** Human visitors from Earth or the Palladium world will be considered weak and delicate S.D.C. beings.
5. **O.C.C. Bonuses:** +4 to save vs horror factor and +4 to save vs supernatural and psionic possession.
6. **Communion with Wormwood (magic powers):** The priest starts with the following powers over Wormwood.
 - Close an Opening
 - Create a Burial Place
 - Create a Fountain of Water
 - Create Life Force Cauldron
 - Create Magic Slime
 - Create an Opening
 - Create Worm Zombies
 - Mold Structures
 - Ride Giant Parasites
 - Summon and Command Parasites
 - Summon FliesThe character selects one additional ability at levels one, two, four, and six. Two additional spells at levels three, five and seven, and one for each subsequent level of experience.
7. **The Power of the Unholy (Special):** The dark priest willingly allows himself to be possessed by the Unholy or one of the Host. This turns him into a powerful warlord with supernatural strength (P.S. 40) and unnatural powers. Apply the following when possessed:
 1. +300 M.D.C./hit points.
 2. Increase P.S. to 40.



3. Bonuses: +1 on all saving throws.
4. See the invisible.
5. Possesses ALL the communion with Wormwood spells known by the Host.

The duration of the possession is unlimited (hours, days, or months), but seldom lasts for more than a few days at a time. The Host prefers their own giant bodies over those of a puny human. **Note:** While the monster possesses the dark priest, his own body lays dormant in a deep coma-like state. It is typically hidden in a safe place and guarded by several powerful and loyal beings (demon lords, high priests, dragons, etc.) with a half dozen Krikton flailers and leapers as the first line of defense. The Host can sense when his natural body is under attack and can return to it in 1D4 minutes. When the priest is released from possession, all of his abilities return to normal.

The Dark Priest NPC Villain

Typical Attributes: Average to high I.Q., M.A., and/or M.E. attributes. Frequently (60%), dark priests are not physically strong or capable and have average to low P.S., P.P., P.E. and Spd. Physical beauty can range from 3 to 30. **Note:** Reduce skill bonuses by half if the character's I.Q. is six or less.

O.C.C. Skills:

- Lore: Monsters & Demons (+20%)
- Lore: Wormwood (25% +5% per level; includes the history, legends and world information presented in this book).
- Language: American (+30%)

- Language: Demongogian (at 98%)
- Language: Gobblely (at 90%)
- Literacy: American (+20%)
- Math: Basic (+20%)
- Biology (+10%, ideal for torture)
- Prowl (+5%)
- W.P. Knife
- W.P. two of choice
- Hand to Hand: Basic

The basic combat skill can be increased to expert at the cost of one "other" skill or hand to hand: assassin or martial arts at a cost of two "other" skills.

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select six "other" skills from any of the available categories; plus one additional skill at levels three, six, nine and twelve. **Note:** Available skills may include "off-world" skills such as botany, chemistry, computer operation and piloting tech-vehicles.

- Communication: Any
- Domestic: Any
- Electrical: None
- Espionage: Any (+5%)
- Mechanical: None
- Medical: First aid or paramedic (+10%).
- Military: None
- Physical: Any except acrobatics, gymnastics, wrestling and boxing
- Pilot: Any, except power armor, robots, tanks, and spaceships.
- Pilot Related: None
- Rogue: Any (+10%)
- Science: Any (+10%)
- Technical: Any (+15%)
- W.P.: Any
- Wilderness: Any

Secondary Skills: The character gets to select four secondary skills from those listed. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantage of the bonus listed in the parentheses. All secondary skills start at the base skill level.

Standard Equipment: Two hooded robes for travelling, one ceremonial robe, a pair of boots, a pair of gloves, a hat, first-aid kit, sleeping bag, blanket, 1D4 small pouches, one medium size sack, backpack or satchel, utility belt, 50 feet of rope (15 m; made from angel hair), and 1D4 weeks of food rations.

Weapons: Ceremonial dagger and/or short sword, silver plated knife or sword, picks and scalpels for torture, and a choice of two or three weapons of choice.

Magic Weapons/items: Choice of four different magic slime potions, 1D4 + 1 magic slime ointments, and one lesser blood stone of choice (may be part of a scepter, staff or jewelry).

Armor: Most dark priests tend to wear symbiotic organisms as armor or light artificial armor. Resin chain mail or light armor provides 40 M.D.C. with no prowling penalty. The character can also wear armor from Rifts Earth. Note that there are dozens of different styles of armor.

Transportation: Half ride parasites or other monstrous animals. The rest walk or use magic.

Money: The dark priest demands respect (or else) and expects to be treated like a priest of light (or better) within the human society of Wormwood. They demand to be given access to

all buildings, homes and facilities, be given the nicest places to sleep, the best food and drink, and to be treated like a king. Those who innocently fail to fall at their feet and rush to respond to their every need, or who fall short, are belittled, threatened, abused, beaten, or otherwise tormented. Those who are blatantly defiant, disrespectful or deliberately unhelpful are beaten, tortured, used in terrible experiments, sentenced to life connected to a life force battery, condemned to the arena or as a slave, or used in blood sacrifice (or sacrificed in the life force cauldron).

Dark priests and most evil and selfish beings judge themselves, and others, by their wealth, degree of power and by how feared they are. The most powerful and respected priests among the demon hordes are the most feared and powerful. Consequently, they often amass fortunes of gold, silver, gems, magic, and high tech trinkets. High level priests of darkness (9th level and higher) will have $4D6 \times 100,000$ credits worth of valuables.

Cybernetics & Bionics: Virtually non-existent on Wormwood, except for what other-dimensional visitors bring with them. Dark priests seldom use cybernetics because it interferes with their magic, but will definitely consider bio-wizardry if they discover it.

Symbiotes: None to start, but as many as four can be acquired over the years (but not before level three). However, dark priests often use symbiotic organisms for torturing humans, rewarding minions and as elements in their schemes. Those stationed at any large demon city will have access to at least one life force cauldron and rows of life force batteries. Note however, that the availability of these two incredible resources are monitored and restricted. Young priests (low levels 1-4) may not be allowed to use them at all and will have to wait for when they are available. Furthermore, the priest is required to *replenish* the life force cauldron as quickly as possible.

Most dark priests will have reasonable access to magic slime (to make potions and ointments), lesser parasites such as ticks and worms, and can earn rewards in the way of symbiotic organisms, parasites, magic slime, blood stones, crystals, magic items and access to the life force cauldron.

Minions: At third level, the dark priest is assigned his choice of two beast guards (either or both types), or three air fish or demon goblins, to assist and protect him. He is also given two tick parasites to guard his home. **Note:** Medium to high level priests will have another two to four beast guards, air fish or demon goblins and one or two Krikton flailers or leapers added to their minions.

Levels of Experience: Non-player characters can be whatever level the Game Master needs, desires or feels is appropriate. The average dark priest is third to fifth level. Medium level priests range from sixth to ninth level, while high priests are tenth level or higher. The young priest is first and second level and commonly encountered in cities and training expeditions. The novice is a priest in training and knows only two spells and has no other powers, symbiotes or access to magic facilities. They are seldom found outside of the city and frequently assist medium and high level priests of darkness.

Note: Medium to high level priests will have $1D4$ symbiotic organisms, a scepter or weapon with $1D4$ different lesser blood stones or magic crystals and one greater stone, $3D4$ magic slime potions and ointments (all can be different or many the same)

and easy access to life force cauldrons and batteries, guards and other facilities. They may also be asked to lead armies and special assault teams.

Dark Minions

Monster Races & NPC Villains

Air Fish R.C.C.

Beast Guards Type One R.C.C.

Beast Guards Type Two R.C.C.

Demon Goblin R.C.C.

Demon Hounds (animal, a.k.a. kr'talpa)

Demon Hound Riders R.C.C. (a.k.a. br'talb)

Entrancer R.C.C.

Feathered Serpents (animal)

Morphworms R.C.C.

Ram-Rat R.C.C.

Rumbler R.C.C. (aka Rathos)

Shades R.C.C.

Skelter Bats (animal)

Sky Riders R.C.C. (aka skr'lyr)

Temporal Raiders R.C.C.

Worm Zombies



Air Fish R.C.C.

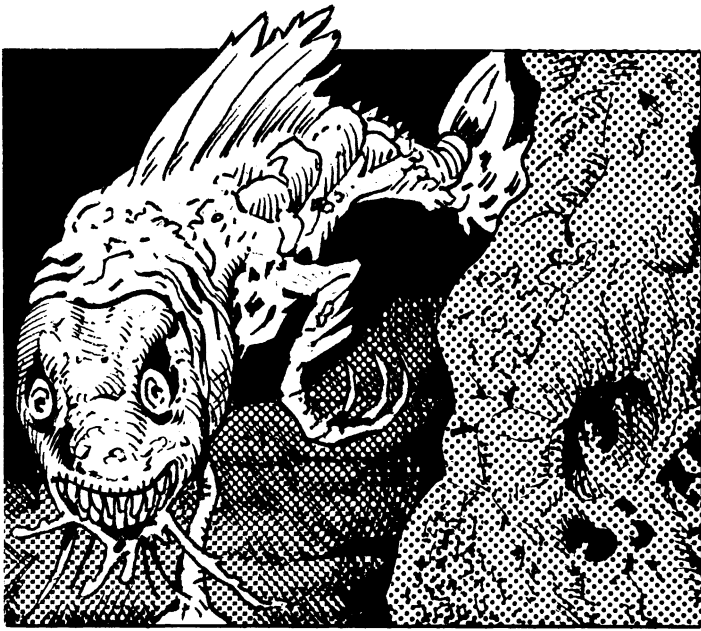
Air fish are horrible, meat-eating predators from some hell-spawned dimension known to the Unholy. Humans might think of them as piranha that swim through the air! They are not terribly strong, but are fast, agile and hunt in packs. Air fish are notoriously aggressive and mean.

In the wild, they rove the land in packs of $1D4 \times 10$ and will attack an animal twenty times their size. However, if the animal or group of animals proves to be too difficult or deadly an opponent, the air fish will flee and search for different prey. They are scavengers as well as hunters and will gladly feast on carrion. Since they do have a human intelligence, the little monsters work well as a group and can be surprisingly resourceful and cunning. Often the pack will divide into smaller groups of two or three. Then, while one group distracts the prey, the others sneak around the sides or back, outflanking the poor creature(s) and cutting off any avenue of escape.

On Wormwood they are the willing servants of evil. They are used by the minions of darkness like loyal attack dogs and are dispatched to hunt escaped prisoners, escort and protect people, and to guard places and valuables. The horrible monsters can also be used to administer brutal and maiming torture, favoring cutting, bloodletting and the biting off of body parts. They can also be sent out as a reconnaissance or seek and destroy team.

Note: Not available as a player character. This is an NPC villain.

Alignment: Always evil, usually diabolic or miscreant.



Attributes: I.Q.: 2D4+2, M.E.: 2D4+2, M.A.: 2D4, P.S.: 2D6+6, P.P.: 2D6+6, P.E.: 2D6+6, P.B.: 1D4, Spd.: 3D6+12 crawling or causally swimming through the air, but can dart like a bullet for short bursts, at a speed of $1D4 \times 10 + 100$. The burst lasts a maximum of six seconds and can be done once every melee (15 seconds). **Note:** P.S. and P.E. are considered to be supernatural.

Size: Three to five feet (0.9 to 1.5 m) long, fish shaped, 50 to 100 pounds (22 to 45 kg).

M.D.C.: $1D6 \times 10$

Hit Points (in an S.D.C. environment): $1D6 \times 10$, plus $1D6 \times 10$ S.D.C.

Horror Factor: 10

P.P.E.: 5D6 and radiates of evil magic.

Experience Level: Not applicable.

Average Life Span: 60 years.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 90 ft (27.4 m), see the invisible, resistant to cold (does half damage), impervious to poison and disease, bio-regenerate 10 M.D.C. every four hours, regenerate lost limbs/tail/fins within four days, track by smell 40%, track the scent of blood 80%, leap 10 feet (3 m) high or 15 feet (4.6 m) lengthwise (add five feet/1.5 m from a running start) and swim in water 90%. Most notably they float, paddle and glide through the air as if they were fish in water! Maximum altitude is 1000 feet (305 m). Also see the speed attribute description.

Psionic Powers: Minor psionic; 6D6 I.S.P.; powers are limited to presence sense, sense evil, sense magic, and telepathy.

Magic Knowledge: None.

Combat: Three attacks per melee round

Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +3 to strike, +2 to parry, +6 to dodge, automatic dodge (can dodge instead of parry without losing an attack/melee action), +2 to roll with impact, critical strike on the unmodified roll of 19 or 20. +1 to save vs all magic, +2 to save vs psionic attack, and +8 to save vs horror factor. Damage: Varies with P.S. attribute. These are in addition to attribute bonuses.

Damage: Bite: 2D6 M.D., tail slap 1D6 M.D., claws add 1D6 M.D. to supernatural P.S., body block/ram does 1D6 M.D. and has a 40% chance of knocking an opponent off his feet (loses initiative and one melee action).

Vulnerabilities/Penalties: Magic energy and weapons inflict double damage!

R.C.C. Skills: Track animals & humanoids 65%, wilderness survival 90%, land navigation 85%, climb 80%/70%, W.P. knife, and one W.P. of choice. The character can also speak Gobbely at 75% and uses telepathy to communicate with most others.

Special vehicle: None, swims through the air.

Weapons: Typically none, uses its claws and teeth. A sword or other bladed weapon is sometimes used and the creature can pick up and use any fallen weapon, but without any weapon proficiency.

Body Armor: None, mega-damage creature.

Alliances & Allies: Sworn to the Unholy and the Forces of Darkness.

Beast Guards R.C.C.

All *beast guards* were once human. They are evil men and women who craved revenge, power or superhuman strength so badly that they were willing to sell their souls to get it. It is usually the weak, crippled and hate filled who seek such a loathsome trade. To become a *beast guard*, the character must swear eternal allegiance to the Unholy and the Forces of Darkness by means of a blood pact. In exchange, the Host transforms them into monstrous warriors dedicated to evil.

The transformation not only gives them superhuman strength, prowess and speed, but also turns the lost soul into a mega-damage creature resistant to magic and fearsome in combat. The transformation and nature of their pact also makes it impossible for any *beast guard* to raise a hand against the Unholy or any of the Host. No matter how desperately the character may wish to lash out at his demonic masters, he cannot. The best the character can do is refuse to obey a direct order, but such an act of rebellion is severely punished. However, this sort of conflict is a rarity, because the *beast guards* are evil, savage animals who enjoy their new life. Even when they were human, their inner spirit had become twisted and embittered. The demonic transformation has only made the exterior of their body reflect the inner monster once locked within.

There are two types of *beast guardsmen*, the canine type and the armored type. An equal number of the creatures are created, but there are 15% more armored types in service among the minions, because the armored type is less reckless than the canine. Both are animalistic brutes who love battle, bloodletting, and feed on the flesh of their enemies. Any glimmer of compassion is a trick to save themselves or to get close enough to hurt somebody. The canine tends to be in a constant state of hyper-activity, while the armored guard is more stoic.

It is interesting to note that the Host consider *beast guards* as cannon fodder. They are ranked among the lowliest of the demon minions and are seldom given magic or special weapons unless they have proven themselves to be superior warriors.

Type One Guardsman: Canine

The canine *beast guard* is a muscular demon with a head that resembles a wolf's. The body is covered in red, tan, or brown fur. The eyes have no apparent iris or pupil and glow an eerie green color. Tusks protrude from the long canine snout, and



large jagged teeth show from the upper lip. Where one might expect ears, are a pair of thick horns which are used to gore and head butt opponents. Tiny ear holes are located beneath the horns, concealed under the fur. The shoulders are covered in feathers the same color as the fur. The hands are large, with dagger-like claws.

The monster is always on the prowl and ready for action. When forced to wait for anything, they become bored and agitated. The canine is happiest when hunting, tracking, or engaged in battle. During combat they are wild, mad dogs, killing, maiming and torturing any who challenge them. They prefer to use tooth and claw rather than rely on weapons, but some do use blade weapons; particularly wicked looking knives, swords, and vibro-blades.

Note: Not available as a player character. This is an NPC villain.
Alignment: Always evil, usually diabolic or miscreant.
Attributes (existing characters roll all new stats when transformed): I.Q.: 2D6, M.E.: 2D6+8, M.A.: 2D6, P.S.: 2D6+24, P.P.: 2D6+12, P.E.: 1D6+16, P.B.: 2D6, Spd.:

3D4×10. **Note:** P.S. and P.E. are considered to be supernatural.
Size: Six to seven feet tall (1.8 to 2.1 m) humanoid, 300 to 450 pounds (135 to 202.5 kg; all muscle).

M.D.C.: 3D4×10

Hit Points (in an S.D.C. environment): 1D6×10, plus 2D4×10 S.D.C.

Horror Factor: 13

P.P.E.: 6D6 and radiates of evil magic.

Experience Level: Equal to a knight; 30% are third level, 30% are 5th level, 30% are 7th level and 10% are 9th level or higher.

Average Life Span: 60 years (but could live to be 160 years old if they weren't so wild and reckless).

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 90 ft (27.4 m), see the invisible, resistant to fire, cold and poison (does half damage), track by smell 51%, track the scent of blood 78%, recognize a specific scent 32%, leap 15 feet (4.6 m) high or 20 feet (6 m) lengthwise (double from a running start).

Psionic Powers: None.

Magic Knowledge: None.

Combat: Five attacks per melee round (add one at levels five and nine).

Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +3 to strike, +3 to parry, +2 to dodge, automatic dodge (can dodge instead of parry without losing an attack/melee action), +2 to roll/pull punch, kick attack, critical strike from sneak attacks, critical strike on the unmodified roll of 18, 19 or 20. +2 to save vs all magic and +5 to save vs horror factor. Damage: Varies with P.S. attribute. These are in addition to attribute bonuses.

Damage: Bite: 2D6 M.D., head butt: 2D4 M.D.. Claws add 2D6 M.D. to the normal supernatural P.S. punches or kicks; see supernatural P.S.

Vulnerabilities/Penalties: Weapons made of silver, the wood of the Millennium Tree, and rune weapons do double damage!

R.C.C. Skills (these replace old skills): Dance, sing, hunt, trap and skin animals/humanoids, wilderness survival, land navigation (+15%), palming, climb, swim and W.P. sword, all at fifth level proficiency. The character can also speak Demongogian and Gobblely at 75%, and American at 98%.

Special vehicle: None, typically travels on foot. May be transported by means of a large animal, crawling tower, vehicle or magic.

Weapons: Typically none, uses its claws and teeth. A sword or other blade weapon is sometimes used and the creature can pick up and use any fallen weapon, but without any weapon proficiency.

Body Armor: Most prefer not to wear confining armor, but can if they like. Half plate or chain mail provides 40 M.D.C.; the canine never wears full plate (100 M.D.C.).

Alliances & Allies: Sworn to the Unholy and the Forces of Darkness.

Type Two Guardsman: Armored

The type two guard is dramatically different than the canine type in both appearance and disposition. This creature has a thick, rough hide and natural armor plates. The head is round and somewhat turtle-like. The skull is crowned with hard, lumpy scales and bony protrusions. The eyes are tiny black slits. The mouth is beak-like, but hard and capable of giving a vicious bite. The body is completely hairless. The skin color varies from red or pink to a light grey. Three heavy plates cover each shoulder and protects the neck and upper arm. The forearm has a natural armor that resembles a gauntlet with a cluster of bony spines protruding from the elbows. The lower legs have a similar boot-shaped armored sheathing with a cluster of spikes running along the sides and backs of the legs. These spines are used for defense and combat. The hands have four, thick fingers and a thumb, but are more like claws with razors for fingernails. The lower abdomen is protected by more natural plates.

The armored guard is a bit more intelligent and cunning than his canine brother and dramatically less frenetic and wild. Their calm and casual (fearless) demeanor and slower movements may lead some observers to believe them to be less bloodthirsty or more merciful than the canine. They are wrong. Dead wrong. This demon is just as savage and cruel as the canine, he is simply a calculating, cold-blooded killer.

Note: Not available as a player character. This is an NPC villain.

Alignment: Always evil, usually diabolic or miscreant.

Attributes (the transformation provides all new stats): I.Q.: 3D4+2, M.E.: 3D4+4, M.A.: 2D4+2, P.S.: 2D6+30, P.P.: 1D6+14, P.E.: 1D6+16, P.B.: 4, Spd.: 2D6+10. **Note:** P.S. and P.E. are considered to be supernatural.

Size: Seven to eight feet tall (2.1 to 2.4 m), humanoid, 500 to 600 pounds (225 to 270 kg; all muscle and armor).

M.D.C.: 1D4×100+50

Hit Points (in an S.D.C. environment): 2D4×10, plus 1D4×100 S.D.C.

Horror Factor: 13

P.P.E.: 5D6 and radiates of evil magic.

Experience Level: Equal to a knight; 50% fourth level, 25% are sixth level and 25% are 9th level or higher.

Average Life Span: 200 years.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 90 ft (27.4 m), see the invisible, impervious to normal fire and cold, leap 10 feet (3 m) high or lengthwise (add five feet/1.5 m for a running start).

Psionic Powers: None.

Magic Knowledge: None.

Combat: Three attacks per melee round (add one at levels six and nine).

Damage: Bite: 2D4 M.D., claws add 1D6 M.D. plus supernatural P.S., punches or kicks; see supernatural P.S.

Bonuses: +4 to strike, +3 to parry, +2 to dodge, +2 to roll/pull punch, kick attack, critical strike on the unmodified roll of 19 or 20. +2 to save vs all magic and +5 to save vs horror factor. Damage: Varies with P.S. attribute. These are in addition to attribute bonuses.

Vulnerabilities/Penalties: Weapons made of silver, the wood of the Millennium Tree, and rune weapons do double damage!

R.C.C. Skills (these replace old skills): Dance, wilderness survival, land navigation (+15%), prowl, palming, climb, swim (+20%), W.P. battle axe, W.P. targeting/spear/pole-arm, and W.P. sword all at fifth level proficiency. The character can also speak Demongogian and Gobblely at 75%, and American at 98%.

Special vehicle: None, typically travels on foot. May be transported by means of a large animal, skelter bat, crawling tower, or magic.

Weapons: The armored beast guard is especially fond of spears and pole-arms and may also use large battle axes and swords. Some even use energy weapons from other dimensions. Of course they can use any available weapon, but without any weapon proficiency.

Body Armor: None, mega-damage creature.

Alliances & Allies: Sworn to the Unholy and the Forces of Darkness.

Demon Goblin R.C.C.

Demon goblins may be a distant cousin of the goblin faerie folk known on the Palladium World and Rifts Earth. However, they are definitely supernatural beings and much more powerful, organized and cruel than their Earthbound cousins. These tiny war-like people delight in torture and murder. Most are trained assassins or thieves. All are cannibals who feed on the flesh of their own kind, as well as their enemies. They are vicious killers who love their work.

The typical demon goblin stands three feet tall (0.9 m), has white colored skin and no body hair except on the tops of their



heads. The hair is jet black and usually worn as a long mane pulled into a pony tail or shaped as a mohawk. Their mouth is large and filled with pointed teeth. The eyes are a pale yellow encircled by dark shadows. They have no obvious nose. Demon goblins frequently adorn their bodies with tattoos and seldom wear more than a loincloth. For their size, they are very strong and quick. Many are skilled acrobats and all move with amazing stealth.

Demon goblins may work with the Forces of Darkness, but they are the loyal minions of Salome. She is adored as a goddess and their queen. Most are so loyal to her that they will defy the Unholy without hesitation if that is her command. Likewise, most will give their life to protect her's and 3D4 are always in the shadows nearby. Salome won their eternal gratitude by freeing them from the rule of a cruel alien intelligence. Approximately half a billion demon goblins are under her command, but most remain on their homeworld in another dimension. Roughly three million demon goblins have been brought to Wormwood; the majority (80%) are completely loyal to her.

Player Note: Demon goblins should not, generally, be available as a player character, they are NPC villains. If allowed as a player character, the creature must be considered a renegade and a traitor. He or she will be hated by other demon goblins, especially if the character is no longer loyal to Salome. Capture can only lead to torture and death or a dismal life chained to a life force battery. The demon goblin player character must have an unprincipled or anarchist alignment. Some renegades who associate with good characters can actually raise their alignment to scrupulous or principled. A player character should start at first or second level experience.

Alignment of NPC Villains: Always evil, typically diabolic or miscreant.

Attributes: I.Q.: 3D4+4, M.E.: 2D6+8, M.A.: 2D6, P.S.: 3D6+10, P.P.: 2D6+13, P.E.: 2D6+13, P.B.: 2D4, Spd.: 3D6. **Note:** P.S. and P.E. are considered to be supernatural.

Size: Three to four foot tall (0.9 to 1.2 m) humanoid, 50 to 100 pounds (25 to 45 kg).

M.D.C.: 6D6×2

Hit Points (in an S.D.C. environment): 6D6, plus 1D6×10 S.D.C.

Horror Factor: 10

P.P.E.: 3D6

Average Life Span: 195 years.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 400 ft (122 m), see the invisible, resistant to normal fire and cold (does half damage; magic fire does full damage), dig tunnels/mining 70%, exceptional balance 70%, walk tightrope/high wire 60%, back flip 60%, climb rope 60%, leap 6 feet (1.8 m) high or lengthwise (add four feet/1.2 m for a running start), and bio-regeneration 6D6 M.D.C. as often as twice an hour.

Experience Level: Assassin, thief, or spy; 45% are second level, 20% are fourth level, 20% sixth level and 15% are eighth level or higher.

Psionic Powers: None.

Magic Knowledge: None.

Combat: Four attacks per melee round for assassins, three for thieves and spies (in both cases add one additional melee attack at levels five, eight, and 13).

Damage: Bite: 1D4 M.D., punches or kicks; see supernatural P.S.

Bonuses: +1 on initiative, +3 to strike, +2 to parry, +2 to dodge, +2 to roll/pull punch, kick attack, stun on the unmodified roll of 19 or 20, critical strike on the unmodified roll of 19 or 20. +1 to save vs all magic, +2 to save vs poison and disease, and +4 to save vs horror factor. Damage: Varies with P.S. attribute. Don't forget possible attribute bonuses.

Vulnerabilities/Penalties: Eyes are sensitive to bright light; distracting and painful, must squint; reduce all combat bonuses by half.

R.C.C. Skills:

Assassin: Wilderness survival, land navigation (+10%), prowl (+10%), palming, streetwise (+4%), climb (+10%), swim, tracking (humans; +10%), sniper (+2 to strike on an aimed shot), W.P. knife, W.P. sword, W.P. targeting (throwing knife, sling, short bow), one modern W.P. of choice and one W.P. from any category. The character can also speak Demongogian and Gobblely at 94%, Dragonese and American at 55%. Only a small percentage can read and write. Special bonus: +5% on all acrobatic skills.

Thief: Dance, basic math (+10%), wilderness survival, land navigation (+5%), prowl (+5%), concealment (+10%), palming (+10%), pick locks (+10%), pick pockets (+10%), climb (+5%), streetwise (+6%), swim (+5%), W.P. knife, W.P. sword, and one W.P. of choice (including modern weapons). The character can also speak Demongogian and Gobblely at 94%, Dragonese and American at 50%. Only a small percentage can read and write.

Spy: Escape artist (+10%), intelligence (+10%), art (+5%), basic math (+20%), land navigation (+10%), prowl (+10%), concealment (+5%), palming (+5%), pick locks

(+5%), climb (+5%), streetwise (+8%), W.P. knife, and two W.P.s of choice (any category). The character can also speak Demongogian and Gobblely at 94%, Dragonese and American at 70% and one additional language of choice. Only a small percentage can read and write.

Special vehicle: None, typically travels on foot. May be transported by means of a riding animal, skelter bat, crawling tower, or magic.

Weapons: The knives, short swords, short bow, small crossbow, vibro-blades, plasma swords and hand grenades are among their favorite weapons. 50% of the assassins will have a gun or energy weapon, and 30% have a magic item. Among thieves and spies, only 20% have a gun or energy weapon and another 20% will have a magic item.

Body Armor: None, mega-damage creature, but may use a small shield.

Alliances & Allies: Sworn to the Unholy and the Forces of Darkness. However, 80% are completely loyal to their queen, Salome, and will obey her wishes over those of the Unholy or any of the other demon lords.



Demon Hounds — Animal

The demon hound is a predator bigger than a horse. They can run with amazing speed in loping motion and can leap great heights and distances. They are also fair climbers and swimmers.

The hound and its traditional rider represent one of the many different legions of demons found in the armies of the Unholy. In reality, the hound and its rider are not supernatural demons, but creatures from another dimension.

On their native homeworld, the animal and its humanoid rider have developed a strange empathic and psionic link. The two act as one and can sense when the other is frightened, alarmed,

angry or hurt. This makes sneaking up on either man or beast impossible when the other is on guard. Both are 100% loyal to each other and instantly run to the other's aid. This empathic union developed as a means for mutual survival. A sort of symbiotic relationship where humanoid and animal live and work together, as a team, to insure each one's survival in a hostile environment. For example, both the human and hound hunt the same prey and have many of the same enemies. Consequently, working together provides them both with more successful hunting/food and increased protection from mutual enemies.

Most riders will own a mated pair of demon hounds and three to eight young hounds, usually the offspring of the mated pair. The parent animals and their humanoid master(s) share the same psionic link with the young. Likewise, the rider's immediate family (wife and children) will share this same rapport with the animals. Also see the *Demon Hound Rider R.C.C.*

Player Note: This animal cannot be a player character, but may be allowed by the Game Master as the pet or riding animal of a player character. Simvan Monster Riders (see **Rifts Sourcebook One**) will have an instant affinity toward the hound. Characters with patience and the horsemanship skill can also learn to ride a tame demon hound (-10% skill penalty), but do not share the psionic union. Only the demon hound rider (the Br-talb) and simvan can develop a psionic link with the hounds.

Homeworld Name: Kr'talpa (pronounced Kree-talp-ah)

Alignment: Animal predator, generally the equivalent of unprincipled or anarchist alignment. However, some can be vicious and have a lust for blood and therefore an evil alignment.

Attributes: I.Q.: High animal intelligence, M.E.: 2D6+10, M.A.: 3D6, P.S.: 2D6+21, P.P.: 2D6+12, P.E.: 1D6+20, P.B.: 3D4, Spd.: 4D4×10. **Note:** P.S. and P.E. are considered to be supernatural.

Size: Eight to nine feet tall at the shoulders (2.4 to 2.7 m), 12 feet long (3.6 m), and 1200 to 1500 pounds (540 to 675 kg).

M.D.C.: 4D4×10

Hit Points (in an S.D.C. environment): 2D4×10, plus 2D4×10 S.D.C.

Horror Factor: 12

P.P.E.: 4D6

Average Life Span: 45 years.

Natural Abilities: Thick, hard skull (virtually impossible to knock-out), nightvision 120 ft (36 m), exceptional hearing, eyesight, and sense of smell, track by smell 65% (including the invisible), track the scent of blood 89%, recognize specific scents 65%, swim 50%, climb 65%, sense of balance 65%, wilderness survival 80%, and land navigation 70%. It can also leap 20 feet high or 30 feet across (6 or 9 m) from a standing position; add 20 feet (6 m) for running starts.

Psionic Powers: Special; see the description above and the demon hound rider.

Magic Knowledge: None.

Combat: Four attacks per melee round.

Damage: Bite: 4D6 M.D., claws 3D6 M.D., head butt 1D6 M.D., gore with tusks on the side of the mouth 2D4 M.D., ram with horns (running; counts as two attacks) 6D6 M.D., and pounce attack (1D6 M.D. plus a 50% chance of pinning prey smaller than 15 feet/4.6 m tall and can continue its attack by biting its trapped prey).

Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +5 to strike, +1 to parry, +3 to dodge, +5 to save versus horror factor, +2 to save vs poison, drugs, and magic, and +6 to save vs mind control as long as the hound's master is present.

Vulnerabilities/Penalties: Not applicable.

R.C.C. Skills: See natural abilities.

Body Armor: None, mega-damage animal.

Note: In the wild they gather in packs of 4D6 members. They mate for life and can give birth to 1D4 pups every eight months. The demon hound reaches full maturity within one year but cannot breed until two years old. Sky riders, feathered serpents, and skelter bats are natural enemies. Average life span is 45 years.

Demon Hound Riders R.C.C.

Optional Player Character

The demon hound riders call themselves br'talb (pronounced: bree-talb). They are carnivorous predators who hunt other animals for food and clothing. The kr'talpa demon hounds are also meat-eaters who prey on the same animals. Both are hunted by many of the same predators, most notably the skelter bat, feathered serpent and the sky riders. Together, the hounds and the humanoids are better able to protect and feed themselves. This has led to the development of a powerful psychic bond between the br'talb and the kr'talpa. The symbiotic relationship involves a limited empathy and sixth sense shared between both man and beast. When one senses that the other is in trouble they run to the other's rescue. The animal's heightened senses of hearing, vision and smell makes the hound very alert and difficult to surprise. The empathic link means that the rider is instantly aware of any danger, smells, or sounds noticed by his animal, as well as strong emotions such as fear, anger, and hate. Likewise, the hound is aware of any danger, smells, sounds or strong emotions its humanoid master may be experiencing. Thus, it is virtually impossible to surprise the rider or his animal.

The range of empathy between man and beast is roughly five miles (8 km) per level of the rider's experience. Except for hounds left at home with the family, the rider and his animal(s) are seldom separated. They live together, sleep together, hunt together, eat together (often sharing the meat from the same kill), and play together. Each protects and cares for the other and their respective families. A hound and his humanoid counterpart are seldom more than a hundred yards/meters away at any given time. The relationship between the br'talb humanoid and the giant hounds are more like life-long companions and friends than master and pet. If the br'talb rider is slain, there is a 80% likelihood that one or more of his hounds will hunt down the perpetrator(s) and slay him. Likewise, the rider will feel the death of his animal-friend with the same intensity as losing a beloved family member. He (or his son, daughter, wife) is almost certain to seek revenge for the murder or torture of his friend.

Despite the rider's empathic union with the animal, they possess no other form of psionic power other than a high M.E. and resistance to mind control. The character is not given I.S.P. because the empathic link between humanoid and animal are constant and immediate. They do not require concentration or the expenditure of psychic energy to activate or use the link.



The br'talb are extremely gentle and compassionate among their own kind, but tend to view all other life forms as a potential enemy or prey. This can make them an unforgiving and brutal enemy. However, many of those on Wormwood have become more understanding and accepting of other forms of life, with the exception of their natural enemies, the sky riders, skelter bats and feathered serpents.

The demon hound riders prefer large blade weapons, spears and lances. Magic weapons, vibro-blades, energy swords, lances and the bow and arrow are all new items introduced to them on Wormwood — and they like them very much. The few who have encountered energy rifles like them, especially laser pulse rifles. Part of the traditional uniform/armor of the br'talb hunter-warrior is a demonic, insect-like mask with large round eye slots, spiny horns and mandibles. Underneath the frightful mask, the br'talb resemble humans with canine teeth, pale grey skin and long silver or white hair. Although a minor mega-damage creature in magic rich environments, their physical body is also quite human. The main difference is the br'talb have two large, thick fingers and an opposable thumb, three large toes, and sharp canine teeth. They are also larger than humans, standing seven to eight feet tall.

The br'talb allied to the Unholy are evil or selfish characters. They enjoy the hunt and challenge of combat. Many others are unallied adventurers (any alignment), and a small percentage (15%) have allied themselves to the forces of good and have good or selfish alignments. However, all dislike (or despise) the Sky Riders. These lunatic humanoids and the skelter bats or feathered serpents that they ride are natural enemies on the br'talb's homeworld.

Player Note: Hound riders may be allowed as a player character who is unallied with the Forces of Darkness. Unallied mercenaries and adventurers are viewed with great suspicion by other demon hound riders and with extreme prejudice by sky riders. They are one of the few races allowed to wander the planet as (comparatively) free agents, adventurers and mercenaries. However, those suspected of actions against the Forces of Darkness will be captured and an attempt made to show the character the error of his ways (e.g.: given the opportunity to join the Unholy or die). Those recognized as Champions of Light or their sympathizers are hunted down and slain, usually by sky riders and their winged animals.

Homeworld Name: Br'talb (pronounced bree-talb)

Alignment: Any, but those allied to the Forces of Darkness are always evil or anarchist. Player characters can be any alignment, although those working with the Champions of Light are typically of a good or selfish alignment.

Attributes: I.Q.: 3D6, M.E.: 3D6+4, M.A.: 3D6, P.S.: 4D6+8, P.P.: 3D6+4, P.E.: 4D6, P.B.: 3D4+3, Spd.: 6D6.

Note: P.S. and P.E. are considered to be supernatural.

Size: Seven to eight feet tall (2.1 to 2.4 m) humanoid, 200 to 300 pounds (90 to 135 kg; all muscle).

M.D.C.: 2D4 × 10 natural mega-damage creature, plus plate body armor. The standard armor used by the riders has 75 M.D.C., weighs 30 pounds and has a -10% prowl penalty.

Hit Points (in an S.D.C. environment): 6D6, plus 6D6 S.D.C.

Horror Factor: None normally, 9 in demon mask and armor.

P.P.E.: 1D6

Average Experience Level (NPC villain): 1D4+2 warrior-scout.

Average Life Span: 100 years.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 90 ft (27.4 m), keen eyesight, excellent hearing, and heightened sense of smell (track by scent 25%, track by blood scent 45%, recognize a person by scent 20%, recognize poison by scent 55%).

Psionic Powers: Special psionic union with their demon hound riding animals; see the description for details.

Magic Knowledge: None.

Combat: Three attacks per melee round (add one additional melee attack at levels four, seven, ten and 13).

Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +2 to strike, +2 to parry, +1 to dodge, +2 to roll with fall or impact, +3 to pull punch, kick attack, critical strike on the unmodified roll of 19 or 20. +4 to save vs horror factor, +1 to save vs psionic attack and +4 to save vs mind control as long as the hound is at his side. Damage: Varies with P.S. attribute. These are in addition to attribute bonuses.

Damage: Varies; see supernatural P.S.

Vulnerabilities/Penalties: When the character's riding animal dies (and/or any of the hound's offspring to whom the character is psionically linked), the rider instantly knows it. This is very distracting and causes a penalty of -2 on all combat bonuses and -15% on skill proficiencies. The penalty lasts 1D6 hours after the death of the hound. The character will also empathically sense if the animal(s) is in pain which gives him a pounding headache and nausea.

R.C.C. Skills: Basic math (+20%), dance (+10%), sing, sewing (+5%), first aid (+5%), horsemanship: demon hound (+16%), horsemanship: feathered serpent, horsemanship: horse (+4%), pilot: sailboat, wilderness survival (+10%),

land navigation (+10%), preserve food (+10%), skin and prepare animal hides (+15%), track animals (+20%), W.P. sword, W.P. spear/pole-arm, and two of choice (including modern weapons), plus four skills of choice from any of the following categories, physical, rogue, technical, wilderness. The character can also speak his native tongue of Br'talb 98%, Demongogian, Gobblely and American at 85%.

Special vehicle: Player characters will have 1D4 demon hounds. NPC villains own 1D4+2 demon hounds.

Weapons: The Br'talb are fond of large swords, rune swords, spears, pole-arms, tridents and lances. Of modern energy weapons, they like the kittani plasma lance, large vibro-blades and laser pulse rifles. They may also own magic weapons. Of course they can use any available weapon, but without any weapon proficiency.

Body Armor: Standard armor has an M.D.C. of 75.

Alliances & Allies: About 35% are sworn to the Unholy and the Forces of Darkness, 15% to the Champions of Light and 50% are independent mercenaries working for both sides (depending on who is offering the most) or unallied adventurers.



Entrancer R.C.C.

The entrancer is a supernatural humanoid with the powers of illusion and mind control. The vast majority are evil, but a small faction (about 10%) have turned to the ways of good. Many of these good entrancers have come to Wormwood to champion the cause of the humans. These renegades are typically unprincipled or scrupulous in alignment. They are despised by their evil brothers and slain whenever encountered.

Humans are afraid of even the most noble and courageous entrancer. This is largely because of the creature's hideous appearance. The entrancer is human size, but has pale blue skin, yellow fingernails and teeth, skeletal facial features, a slobbering mouth, a long slimy tongue, no nose, and one large eye in the middle of the forehead — definitely an ugly, inhuman monster. The eye is about the size of a softball or orange. The entrancer's powers of illusion and mind control only add to the elements of fear and distrust.

Player Note: Entrancers may be allowed as a player character who is an enemy of the Forces of Darkness or an unallied mercenary. Unallied mercenaries and adventurers are viewed with great suspicion by other demons and good entrancers are feared and disliked by most humans, including Knights of the Cathedral. They are one of the few races allowed by the Unholy to wander the planet as (comparatively) free agents, adventurers and mercenaries. Those recognized as Champions of Light or their allies are hunted down and slain.

Alignment of NPC Villains: Anarchist or evil. Player characters can be any alignment, typically a good or selfish one.

Attributes: I.Q.: 3D6+2, M.E.: 3D6+7, M.A.: 3D6, P.S.: 3D6+6, P.P.: 3D6, P.E.: 3D6+4, P.B.: 1D6, Spd.: 5D6. **Note:** P.S. and P.E. are considered to be supernatural.

Size: Six to seven feet tall (1.8 to 2.1 m), humanoid, 150 to 250 pounds (67.5 to 112.5 kg).

M.D.C.: 1D4×100. Body armor will add 40 to 100 M.D.C.

Hit Points (in an S.D.C. environment): 1D4×1000

Horror Factor: 16

P.P.E.: 3D6×10

Average Experience Level (NPC villain): Mind melter and wizard. 50% are third level, 25% sixth level, 20% 8th level, and 5% 10th level or higher.

Average Life Span: 500 years.

Natural Abilities: Exceptional vision and can see into the infrared and ultraviolet spectrum of light, see the invisible, nightvision 90 ft (27.4 m), bio-regeneration 4D6 M.D.C. per minute and dimensional teleport 64%.

Psionic Powers (natural): Mind melter: 1D4×100 I.S.P.; psionic powers include all healing and sensitive abilities, mind block auto-defense, bio-manipulation, empathic transmission, hypnotic suggestion, mind bond, mind wipe, and two of choice from any category.

Magic Knowledge: Befuddle, fear, calling, compulsion, domination, trance, memory bank, horrific illusion, multiple image, mask of deceit, tongues and 1D4 additional spells selected from levels 1, 2, 3 and 4 each.

Combat: Three attacks per melee round by hand to hand or psionics, or two by magic (add one additional melee attack at levels five, nine and 14).

Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +1 to strike, +1 to parry, +1 to dodge, +2 to roll with fall or impact, +2 to pull punch, kick attack, critical strike on the unmodified roll of 19 or 20. +7 to save vs horror factor, +2 to save vs most psionic attacks, +4 to save vs mind control and illusions. Damage: Varies with P.S. attribute. These are in addition to attribute bonuses.

Damage: Varies; see supernatural P.S.

Vulnerabilities/Penalties: -2 to save vs empathy and empathic transmission. Furthermore, the entrancer is a psychic vampire who feeds on the emotions of others. The stronger the emotions the more delectable. Unfortunately, feeding on strong emotions sometimes (01-50%) adversely affect the entrancer, making the character believe the powerful emotions of others are his. This can also occur at moments of great stress (01-60%). The result causes him to react against his better judgment or knowledge and respond on pure emotion. This can lead to one of the following reactions (roll percentile dice): **Note:** Depending on the situation only one or two of the emotional responses described below may be appropriate; G.M.'s discretion.

01-20 Intense Anger: Strikes out more savagely than usual, +1 to strike, +3 M.D., but also much more likely to be careless, hurt an innocent bystander, fight when he should retreat, incite a brawl or other acts of hostility. Typical duration: 2D4 melee rounds.

21-30 Despair: The entrancer becomes so laden by feelings of sorrow and despair that he can barely make himself move. Tears may flow from his eye and the sounds of whimpering or moans from his mouth. Penalties: Reduce the number of attacks/melee actions by half, initiative -2, and skill performance -25%. Typical duration: 3D4 melee rounds.

31-50 Fear: Nervous, confused, on edge: +4 on initiative when taking action to dodge or runaway, +2 to dodge and +1 to roll with punch or impact, but -1 melee attack/action and -1 to strike and parry, -10% on execution of all skills. Typical duration: 3D4 melee rounds.

51-65 Frustration: +1 to strike and +2 M.D., and may be given to fits of rage (scream, swear, spit, smash things). Penalties: -1 on initiative and -15% on the performance of all skills. Typical duration: 3D4 melee rounds.

66-80 Hate: Sends the entrancer into a berserker rage! He shows no mercy to his enemies, slays them, and will push or fight any friend who tries to stop him. Alternately, the character may engage in torture or other acts of cruelty. Made strong by his hate: +1 on all saving throws, +1 to strike and parry, and +6 M.D. Typical Duration: 2D4 melee rounds.

81-00 Love and/or Happiness: Swept with feelings of joy, compassion, mercy and kindness, and responds in kind. +10% on healing skills and +5% on all other skills. Typical Duration: 3D4 melee rounds.

R.C.C. Skills: Basic and advanced math (+20%), sing (+10%), horsemanship (+10%), wilderness survival (+10%), land navigation (+10%), lore: demons and monsters (+20%), lore: faerie (+10%), anthropology (+10%), two science or technical skills of choice (+10%), two piloting skills of choice, two W.P.s of choice (including modern weapons) and two rogue skills of choice. Speak Demogogian and Dragonese 98% and uses magic or telepathy to communicate with others.

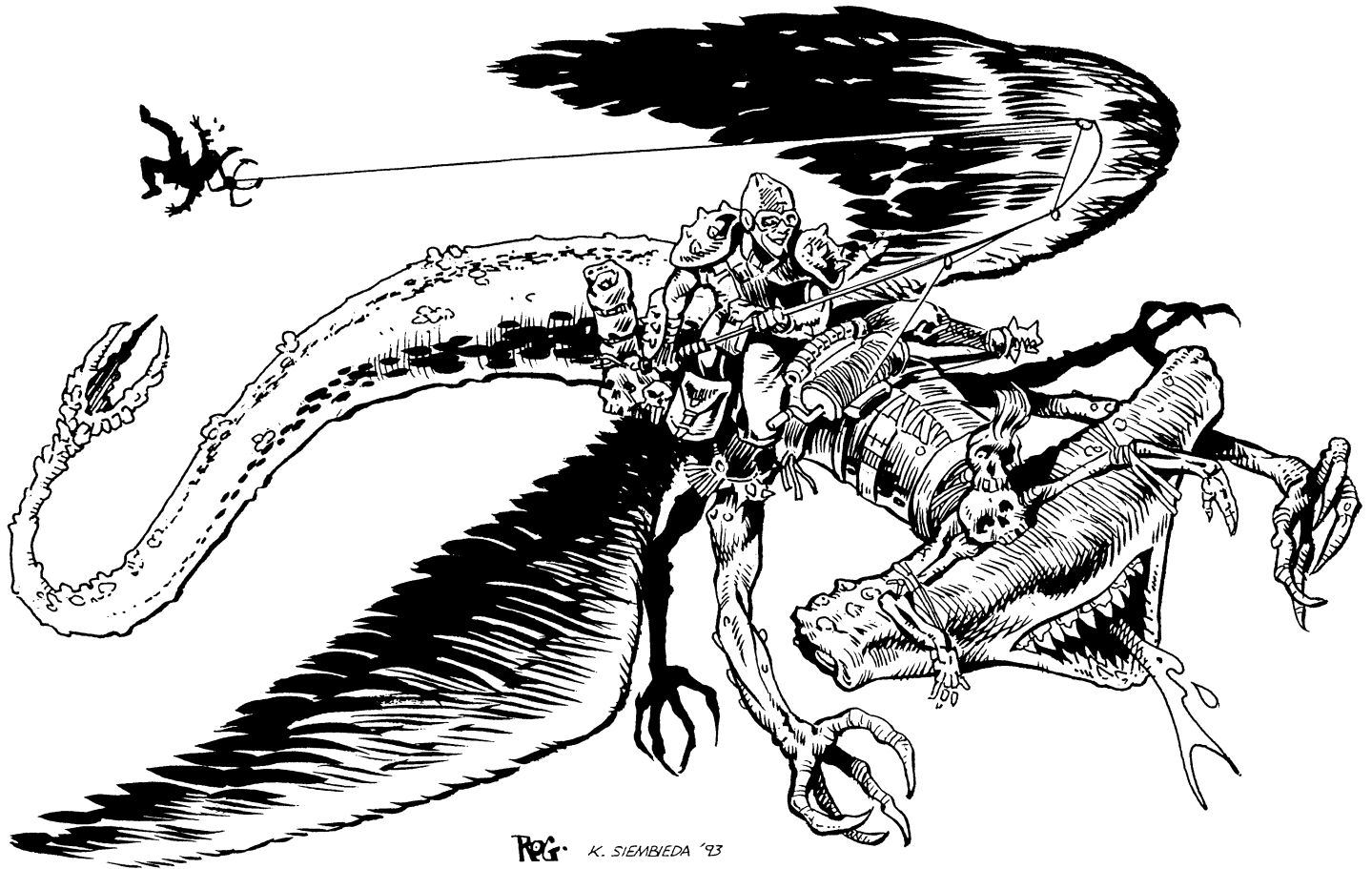
Special vehicle: None to start.

Weapons: The entrancer tends to rely on his own psionic and magic powers and is attracted to magic items, but he may also use energy weapons.

Body Armor: Standard armor: chain or half suit has 40 M.D.C., full plate 100 (seldom wears the latter), or can wear any human armor.

Alliances & Allies: 65% are sworn to the Unholy and the Forces of Darkness, 10% to the Champions of Light and 25% are independent mercenaries working for both sides or unallied adventurers.





Feathered Serpents — Animal

The feathered serpent is from the same planet as the skelter bat and demon hound. They are giant, deadly predators with a taste for blood. The serpents are extremely intelligent by animal standards and exhibit an almost human ability to learn stunts, tricks and routines. They can recognize and remember specific people/enemies, places and experiences and are also fairly clever, cunning, and resourceful. This makes them exceptional riding animals for the skr'lyr. Their most disturbing human trait is that feathered serpents hunt and kill for pleasure, not just for food. Furthermore, they often enjoy cat and mouse games, engage in torture, and like to scare and intimidate others.

The feathered serpent is the preferred riding animal of the sky riders and one of the most feared creatures among the Unholy's minions. In addition to their use as a flying mount, they are also used as guard and attack animals. The monsters are frequently let loose in enemy territory to hunt and terrorize the locals.

The serpents are also extremely loyal to their partner/rider. This is due, in part, to the wildness and savagery of the skr'lyr riders. The monsters enjoy the excitement of battle and the sky rider's daring antics. Like a faithful dog, the feathered serpent will try to protect and help its master. However, this relationship is nothing like the symbiotic relationship and love shared between the br'talb and the kr'talpa demon hounds.

The feathered serpent is somewhat similar in appearance to the skelter bats with its long snaking body, wings and large maw. However, the two are really quite different. The wings are large and flat, like the membrane of a bat, but covered in

light green, yellow, or white feathers. The skin color is usually light green with dark green or blue oval markings running along the sides of the body. The monster's body is covered in small scales and dotted by lumpy blemishes and tiny horns. At the end of the prehensile tail is an articulated claw. The claw-like fingers can stab, slash, or grab and hold prey. A favorite ploy is to snatch an opponent with its tail claw and hurl them through the air with a quick, whipping motion.

The horrible beast has a toothy maw, located in the front of its hammer-shaped head. The eyes are located at the end of each hammer stalk. The eyes, spread so far apart, gives the creature good long range vision, but it can only see with one eye at a time when engaged in close combat or trapped in a contained area. Even when swooping down for an attack, it must rely on the sight of only one eye when it makes its final lunge. This means it will have a blind spot on one side during any melee and may have to turn its entire head to see all of its attackers. This may sound like a tragic flaw, but the feathered serpent is a deadly predator with lightning quick reflexes and it is accustomed to its limitations.

Its long whipping tongue is prehensile and surprisingly strong. It is used to entangle prey and pull it into its maw. In the wild, the creature may swoop down on small animals, use its tongue to ensnare (like a tentacle) and pull prey into its tooth filled mouth. The tongue can extend six feet (1.8 m) beyond the edge of its teeth. The feathered serpent also has four spindly looking arms. Their emaciated appearance belies their supernatural

strength. Its hands have four slender claw-like fingers which enables the serpent to grab and hold things. Without an opposable thumb, the use of weapons or tools is difficult.

Player Note: This animal cannot be a player character, but may be allowed by the Game Master as the pet or riding animal of a player character. Simvan Monster Riders (see **Rifts Sourcebook One**) will be able to control and ride the serpents with relative ease. In fact, they are likely to find the monster very appealing. Characters with patience and the horsemanship skill can also learn to ride a tamed feathered serpent (-20% skill penalty).

Homeworld Name: Shr'ree (pronounced sheer-ree)

Alignment: Animal predator, generally the equivalent of anarchist or miscreant alignment and, like humans, may kill or torture for pleasure.

Attributes: I.Q.: High animal intelligence or low human intelligence 1D4+2, M.E.: 2D6+12, M.A.: 2D6, P.S.: 2D6+28, P.P.: 2D6+14, P.E.: 1D6+20, P.B.: 1D4, Spd.: 5D6+10 crawling like a snake, 4D6×10 flying. **Note:** P.S. and P.E. are considered to be supernatural.

Size: 30 to 50 feet (9 to 15.2 m) long, five to seven feet (1.5 to 2.1 m) in diameter. 3000 to 6000 pounds (1350 to 2700 kg). It can easily accommodate as many as four to eight human size riders.

M.D.C. by Location:

Arms (4) — 65 each

Hands (4) — 25 each

Head (1) — 125

Prehensile Tongue (1) — 10

Prehensile Tail Section (1) — 100

Prehensile Tail Claw (1) — 50

Wings (2) — 90 each

*Main Body — 3D4×10+100

*Depleting the M.D.C. of the main body will kill the monster. Depleting the M.D.C. of the head is fatal, but the horrific creature will thrash around in the throes of death, striking or biting everything it touches until it finally dies (4D6 minutes). Destroying the tail section, tail claw, wing or any limbs is painful, but the serpent will regrow lost or damaged appendages in five months. Destroying a wing will prevent flight until it can be grown back.

Hit Points (in an S.D.C. environment): Same number as the M.D.C.; i.e. Wings (2) — 90 M.D.C. becomes 90 hit points.

Horror Factor: 17

P.P.E.: 6D6

Average Life Span: 100 years.

Natural Abilities: Thick, hard skull (virtually impossible to knockout) and large maw filled with six inch long teeth. Its prehensile tongue (about six feet/1.8 m long) and tail can coil around victims like a snake or tentacle. The tail also has a large, three finger claw that can open and close like a hand. It is used to grab and hold human-size prey, strike like a ball and chain or stab with its sharp, pointed tips.

Other abilities include, winged flight, nightvision 200 ft (61 m), excellent hearing, keen long-range eyesight, and a good sense of smell, track by smell 45%, track the scent of blood 65%, track by sight (humans & animals) 72%, swim 75%, climb 60%, prowl 50%, wilderness survival 85%, and land navigation 85%. It has four arms and claw-like hands enabling the monster to use handheld weapons such as swords, clubs, and similar.

Psionic Powers: None.

Magic Knowledge: None.

Combat: Six attacks per melee round

Damage (includes average P.S. range): Bite: 6D6 M.D., slap with tongue 1D6 M.D., head butt 2D6 M.D., claws (4) 5D6 M.D., strike with tail 6D6 M.D., flying body slam (counts as two attacks) 2D4×10 M.D., coil and crush with tail 5D6 M.D. (1D4 M.D. with tongue), or pounce attack: 4D6 M.D. plus a 65% chance of pinning prey smaller than 15 feet (4.6 m) tall and can continue its attack by biting or claws slashing at its trapped prey.

Bonuses: +3 on initiative, +4 to strike, +4 to parry, +3 to dodge when on the ground, +6 to dodge when in the air, +5 to save vs horror factor, +3 to save vs poison, drugs, and magic, and +2 to save vs psionic attack. These are in addition to attribute bonuses.

Vulnerabilities/Penalties: Not applicable.

R.C.C. Skills: See natural abilities.

Body Armor: None, mega-damage animal.

Note: In the wild they gather in flocks of 3D6 members, but usually hunt in pairs or a small group of three to six members. They mate twice a year, laying 1D4 eggs which hatch after 30 days. The young reach 12 feet (3.6 m) in length within six months and 30 feet (full maturity) within two years. They grow one additional foot (0.3 m) for each additional year of life up to about 60 feet (18.3 m), only a few ever exceed more than 70 feet (21 m). Average life span is 100 years. The kr'talpa hounds and br'talb are natural enemies. Most animals, especially large ones, and humanoids, other than the skr'lyr, are viewed as prey.

Morphworms R.C.C.

Morphworms are hideous monsters who feed on humans, D-Bees and mammals. The worms have a long, snaking body covered in fine scales. Toward the head are two prehensile tentacles that are used as arms and hands. The head has a pair of large, emerald green eyes and a gaping mouth.

Morphworms are experienced dimensional travelers who have visited Earth and many other worlds over the centuries. They are usually perceived as menacing demons or conquering fiends.

At times the morphworm exhibits great curiosity, intelligence, compassion and self control, but when the creature is hungry, it becomes a slobbering monster obsessed with feeding. During this feeding frenzy it will attack the dearest friends and allies. A while after the worm has devoured its victim, it will regain its self-awareness and may regret the act, but there was nothing it could do to stop its deadly attack.

The eating process is disgusting. The long, snake-like body seems to unravel into dozens of tentacles. The tentacles hold and pull its prey (usually still alive) inside the body and reforms around it, trapping the animal inside. Powerful stomach acids kill and dissolve the prey. When the entire animal has been digested, the worm's body again unravels into tentacles and tosses out the skeletal remains. Although the average prey is killed within 1D4 minutes of becoming engulfed/swallowed, it takes 24 hours to completely dissolve and consume a human-size creature. During this period, the morphworm is sluggish; speed, all combat bonuses and attacks/actions per melee round are reduced by half and skills are -40%.

Thankfully, the morphworm only needs to eat a human-size animal once a week. On the sixth day, the worm starts to feel hungry and finds it difficult to concentrate (– 25% skill penalty). Friends and allies begin to have an appeal only as a tasty morsel of food. To avoid eating allies, the creature will usually run off to a place where less personal prey can be hunted. By the seventh day, the morphworm is insane with hunger, blinded by an eating frenzy that cannot be quelled except by feasting. During this frenzy, the morphworm cannot recognize friend or foe, nor think with a clear mind. It is consumed by hunger and the need to feed, nothing more. Even after it has engulfed its prey, the creature will not regain its senses until the food has been completely digested. Thus, it will continue to lash out with murderous intent at anybody, friend or foe, who gets in its way. If left alone, the worm will crawl into the shadows to find a quiet place to sleep for the next 24 hours, while digestion takes place.

A morphworm can survive without eating for as long as eight weeks, but it is a crazed murderous animal until it can consume one human-size prey for every week of starvation. Some cruel owners of gladiatorial arenas deliberately keep morphworms undernourished and constantly hungry, making them mindlessly aggressive and horrifying combatants. Others simply wait until the worm needs to make its weekly feast and (with the worm's cooperation) uses its hunting and feeding as a gladiatorial spectacle.

Even when fed and content, most morphworms are selfish or evil monsters who crave knowledge, power and self-gratification. Few are ever completely trustworthy or sincere. Most are loners who like to operate away from other morphworms. Many will establish a power base on other worlds and may even rule a small kingdom. Others may associate with more powerful beings, such as the Unholy, riding on their coattails to get the power, wealth or excitement the worm desires.

Morphworms use the power of metamorphosis to assume the shape of humans, D-bees or large mammals (tiger, wolf, horse, etc.). The duration of the metamorphosis is limited to a maximum of 20 minutes per hour. The primary purpose of the metamorphosis power is to hunt unsuspecting prey and escape. The ability to shape change allows it to stalk prey in the midst of an entire herd or community without detection. In many cases, the monster may even live among the very creatures it preys upon. The supernatural creature can assume the form of a beautiful female or handsome male of a particular animal species to attract a member of the opposite sex into its ravenous clutches. Before its prey knows what hit it, the morphworm has entangled it in its tentacles and pulls it into its body. Then the worm shape changes into a seemingly harmless creature and makes its escape. Morphworms can eat animals but prefers the taste of humanoids.

Player Note: Most morphworms are supernatural villains not intended to be a common player character. If allowed as a player character, the creature must be considered a renegade and a traitor. If captured by the Forces of Darkness the worm will be tortured and killed, or made to live out its life in madness and hunger in the gladiatorial arena. Morphworms of a good alignment are a true oddity (perhaps one in 50 million), but even self-serving anarchists can make for an interesting (and dangerous) companion.

A player character should start at first or second level experience and cannot have an alignment better than scrupulous (anarchist or aberrant are more likely).



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- Alignment of NPC Villains:** Evil, typically evil or anarchist.
- Attributes:** I.Q.: 2D6 + 10, M.E.: 2D6 + 10, M.A.: 2D6 + 10, P.S.: 3D6 + 10, P.P.: 2D6 + 10, P.E.: 3D6 + 10, P.B.: 1D4 in natural worm form, but can increase its physical beauty via metamorphosis up to a P.B. of 22, Spd.: 4D6 + 6. **Note:** P.S. and P.E. are considered to be supernatural.
- Size:** Eight to ten feet (2.4 to 3 m) long from the tip of its nose to the end of its tail. 300 to 400 pounds (135 to 180 kg).
- M.D.C.** 1D6 × 100
- Hit Points (in an S.D.C. environment):** 1D4 × 1000
- Horror Factor:** 16
- P.P.E.:** 4D6 × 10
- Average Life Span:** 2000 years.
- Natural Abilities:** Dimensional teleport 70% (twice per 24 hours; back to its homeworld or other familiar place), night-vision 200 ft (61 m), see the invisible, swim 90% and survive depths of up to two miles. The Worm can hold its breath and slow its metabolism for 20 minutes, and is impervious to poison and disease. Bio-regeneration 1D4 × 10 M.D.C. once per minute (four melee rounds), but the expenditure of energy for six or more regenerations will make the creature begin to feel hungry. After 13, the morphworm will lapse into a feeding frenzy. It can also regenerate severed limbs within 24 hours, but needs to eat a human-size prey for the extra energy. Also see magic powers and skills.
- Experience Level:** Not applicable.
- Psionic Powers:** 6D6 × 2 I.S.P.; powers are limited to mind block, presence sense, empathy, death trance and alter aura. Considered to be a minor psionic.

Magic Powers: 80% are low level practitioners of magic (level 1D4), usually spell casters or shifters. Few ever advance beyond level four ability. Spell selection: 2D4 spells from each of the levels one, two and three. 1D4 spells selected from levels four and five, one spell from levels six and seven, plus open dimensional portal/rift and close rift.

Combat: Three attacks per melee round (add one additional melee attack at levels five, nine, and 14).

Damage: Bite: 4D6 M.D., strike from the spiny end of the tail adds 1D6 M.D. plus damage from the supernatural P.S.

Bonuses: +3 on initiative, +3 to strike, +3 to parry, +2 to dodge, +3 to roll/pull punch, critical strike on the unmodified roll of 19 or 20. +3 to save vs most types of magic, +5 to save vs illusions and shape changing magic, and +6 to save vs horror factor. Damage: Varies with P.S. attribute. These are in addition to attribute bonuses.

Vulnerabilities/Penalties: Madness from hunger. They are also greedy and deceitful.

R.C.C. Skills: Land navigation (+5%), prowl (+5%), climb (+10%), disguise (+20%), intelligence (+10%), streetwise (+10%), anthropology (+5%), lore: demons & monsters (+10%), and speaks Demongogian, Gobblely, Dragonese, Atlantean (ancient Greek) and American at 98%. It can read and write Dragonese at 90%, runes and magic symbols at 40%. The morphworm can also learn to speak two new languages (+25%) whenever it arrives on a new world (75% proficiency within two months, 90% in six).

Special vehicle: None to start. Typically travels on foot. May be transported by means of a riding animal, vehicle or magic.

Weapons: The worm can use anything at hand, but prefers magic weapons.

Body Armor: None, unless in disguise.

Alliances & Allies: 70% on Wormwood are sworn to the Unholy and the Forces of Darkness. Less than 2% are allied to the Champions of Light. All others are free agents looking for trouble.

Ram-Rat R.C.C.

The ram-rat is a supernatural humanoid with the head of a rodent and the horns of a goat. The body is muscular and covered with brown or grey fur. The ram enjoys fighting, killing, torturing and abusing others, and is generally a bully. They can be very sneaky and cunning. They will spare an opponent only to keep him or her as a slave or to sell into slavery. Several ram-rats typically accompany any dimensional raiding party dispatched by the Host.

In addition to their keen hearing, alert senses, speed and fighting abilities, the ram-rat can turn invisible and see the invisible. They make excellent spies, assassins and thieves.

Player Note: The average ram-rat is a despicably evil fiend who preys on other intelligent life forms. However, there are ram-rats of anarchist and even the occasional good alignment. If allowed as a player character, the creature must be considered a renegade or free agent. The character has little to fear from the Forces of Darkness unless he associates with the forces of good, in which case he will be seen as an enemy. A player character should start at first or second level experience.

Alignment of NPC Villains: Typically evil or anarchist.

Attributes: I.Q.: 3D6, M.E.: 3D6, M.A.: 3D6, P.S.: 3D6+6, P.P.: 3D6+6, P.E.: 3D6+3, P.B.: 2D4, Spd.: 2D4×10. **Note:** P.S. and P.E. are considered to be supernatural.

Size: Six to seven feet (1.8 to 2.1 m) tall; humanoid, 200 to 300 pounds (90 to 135 kg, all muscle).

M.D.C. 4D6×10, plus possible armor.

Hit Points (in an S.D.C. environment): 4D6×100

Horror Factor: 12

P.P.E.: 3D4×10

Average Life Span: 1000 years.

Natural Abilities: Dimensional teleport 45% (twice per 24 hours; back to its homeworld or other familiar place), night-vision 400 ft (122 m), see the invisible, turn invisible at will, bio-regeneration 1D4×10 M.D.C. once per hour and keen senses. The ram-rat has powerful legs and can leap 15 feet (4.6 m) high or lengthwise from a standing still position (add 10 feet/3 m for leaps from a running start) and excellent balance 80%.

Experience Level: All are considered warriors, 50% are equal to third level, 30% sixth level, 10% eighth level and 10% are warlords of 10th level ability.

Psionic Powers: None.

Magic Powers: See natural abilities.

Combat: Four attacks per melee round (add one additional melee attack at levels five, nine, and 13).

Damage: Bite: 1D6 M.D., punches or kicks; see supernatural P.S.



Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +2 to strike, +3 to parry, +3 to dodge, +2 to roll/pull punch, kick attack, paired weapons, critical strike on the unmodified roll of 19 or 20. +2 to save vs most types of magic, poison and drugs, +4 to save vs horror factor. Damage: Varies with P.S. attribute. These are in addition to attribute bonuses.

Vulnerabilities/Penalties: None to speak of.

R.C.C. Skills: Prowl (+5%), climb (+20%), swim (+10%), intelligence (+10%), streetwise (+10%), basic math (+20%), horsemanship (+10%), wilderness survival (+10%), two W.P. axe (same as blunt), W.P. sword and two W.P.s of choice (including modern weapons), plus two piloting skills, two rogue skills (+10%) and two wilderness skills of choice (+10%). Speaks Demongogian and Dragonese 98% and uses magic or telepathy to communicate with others.

Special vehicle: None to start. Typically travels on foot. May be transported by means of a riding animal, vehicle or magic.

Weapons: Axes and swords are favorites as well as, paired weapons. Ram-rats also like magic and energy weapons, especially vibro-blades, plasma swords, plasma axes, and energy rifles.

Body Armor: Typical ram-rat armor has 75 M.D.C. and a -5% prowl penalty, but they can wear anything a human can.

Alliances & Allies: 80% of the ram-rats on Wormwood are sworn to the Unholy and the Forces of Darkness. 5% are allied to the Champions of Light and the remaining 15% are mercenaries and freebooters.



Rathos the Rumbler R.C.C.

The supernatural beings known as the rumbler are demons who love war. They are broad and stout, thickly muscled and covered in ulcerated flesh. The skin color is brown, grey, or green with blotches of yellow or white puss and ooze. Their eyes are tiny and white except for a tiny pupil in the center. The mouth is large and filled with crooked, pointed teeth. They have no hair and the head is crowned with several small spines.

Their race is called the Rathos, but men know them as the rumbler, because “the earth rumbles when they walk.” What this actually refers to is their thunderous roar and thundering footsteps, especially when they run. The rathos are also given to chest thumping and pounding weapons. Furthermore, away from Wormwood, they have limited earth magic powers that can cause the ground to rumble.

Until discovered by the Unholy, rumbler have never entered into the Earth’s or Palladium World’s galaxy. However, now that they have discovered new worlds, they are eager to spread

their terror. The monsters love to fight and kill. Although weaker beings, like humans, are usually targeted, rumbler are incredibly aggressive and will attack other monsters, giants, and dragons. Should they find a way to Rifts Earth, they will see the gargoyles as rivals and fight them. This will be of little solace for the humans and D-bees under the gargoyles’ oppression, because the rathos are even crueler masters — and they will try to conquer the lands and people held by the gargoyles.

Rathos rumbler are incredibly savage in combat, smashing opponents into pulp and tearing limbs from their sockets. They feed on the remains of the dead and wear skulls and bones as ornaments.

Player Note: Rumbler are supernatural villains not intended to be available as a player character. If allowed as a player character, the creature must be considered a renegade and a traitor. If captured by other rathos, the character will be torn from limb to limb and his skull stuck on a pole. Compassion or a desire for peace is extremely rare among the bestial rathos and viewed as a weakness or even an insanity. Those who develop such a view are seen as dangerous mutants and destroyed. A player character should start at first or second level experience and cannot have an alignment better than unprincipled (anarchist or aberrant are more likely).

Alignment of NPC Villains: Evil, typically diabolic or miscreant, occasionally anarchist.

Attributes: I.Q.: 3D4+6, M.E.: 3D4+6, M.A.: 3D4, P.S.: 3D6+30, P.P.: 3D6+6, P.E.: 3D6+10, P.B.: 1D4, Spd.: 2D4×10. **Note:** P.S. and P.E. are considered to be supernatural.

Size: Eight to ten feet tall (2.4 to 3 m), bulky humanoid, 400 to 600 pounds (180 to 270 kg).

M.D.C.: 1D6×100 plus armor (optional).

Hit Points (in an S.D.C. environment): 1D6×1000

Horror Factor: 15

P.P.E.: 1D6×100

Average Life Span: 1000 years.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 400 ft (122 m), see the invisible, impervious to normal fire (magic fire and plasma energy inflict half damage), bio-regeneration 6D6 M.D.C. once per melee round, and regenerate severed limbs within one week. Also see magic powers and skills.

Experience Level: 60% are equal to a fourth level warrior, 30% sixth level and 10% are warlords of 9th or 10th level ability.

Psionic Powers: None.

Magic Powers (natural abilities): Traditional spell magic: Climb, thunder clap, breathe without air, fool’s gold, magic net, repel animals and spoil (water/food). Earth elemental magic (see warlock O.C.C. in the **Rifts Conversion Book**): Identify minerals, identify plants, rock to mud, crumble stone, rot wood, wither plants, wall of clay, and earth rumble.

Combat: Four attacks per melee round (add one additional melee attack at levels six, nine, and 12).

Damage: Bite: 3D6 M.D., claws add 1D6 M.D. to strike along with supernatural P.S.

Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +2 to strike, +2 to parry, +2 to dodge, +3 to roll/pull punch, kick attack, stun on the unmodified roll of 19 or 20, critical strike on the unmodified roll of 18, 19 or 20. +1 to save vs most types of magic, +4 to save vs earth warlock magic, +2 to save vs poison and disease, and +4 to save vs horror factor. Damage: Varies with P.S. attribute. These bonuses do not include attribute bonuses.

Vulnerabilities/Penalties: Eyes are sensitive to bright light which is distracting and painful, must squint; reduce all combat bonuses by half. Daylight vision is limited to about 1000 feet (305 m). Elementals and warlock elemental magic, including magic fire, does full damage.

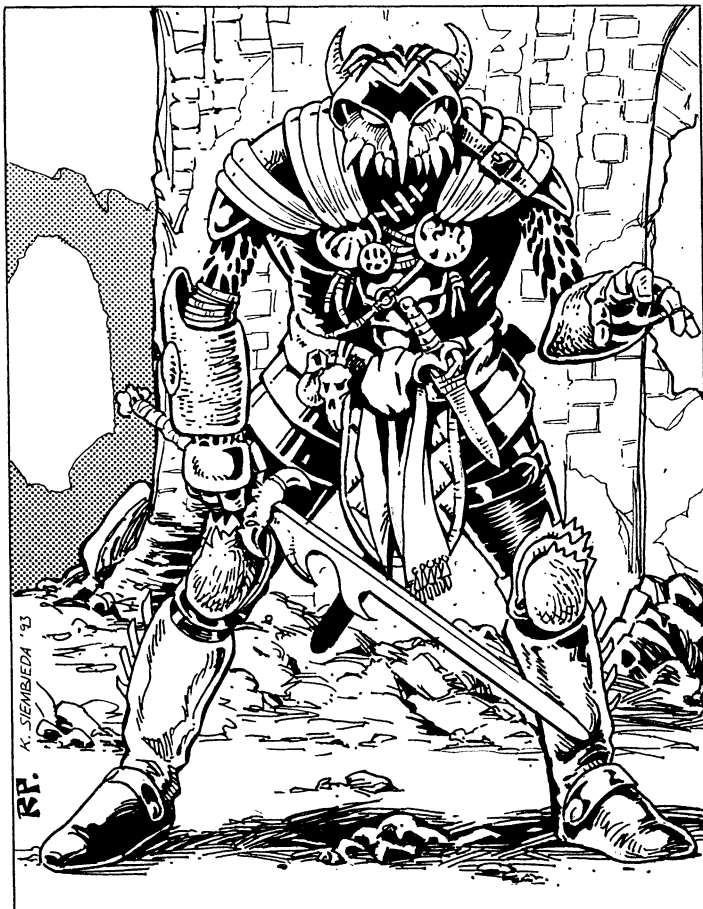
R.C.C. Skills: Land navigation (+10%), prowl (+5%), climb (+10%), swim (+20%), tracking (+5%), W.P. blunt, W.P. chain, and three W.P.s from any category. The character can also speak Demongogian and Gobblely at 98%, Dragonese, elemental and American at 65%. Only a small percentage can read and write.

Special vehicle: None, typically travels on foot. May be transported by means of a riding animal or magic.

Weapons: Clubs, hammers, maces, and ball and chain are among their favorite ancient weapons. They will absolutely fall in love with rail guns, plasma weapons and particle beam rifles. 30% (particularly warlords) have a magic weapon or two and all covet rune weapons and other powerful magic items.

Body Armor: Standard rathos mega-damage armor has 100 M.D.C., but many rumbler wear only a loincloth.

Alliances & Allies: Sworn to the Unholy and the Forces of Darkness. Less than 20% are freelance mercenaries.



Shade R.C.C.

The shade tends to be quiet, calm and confident even during the most terrible of crises. They are intelligent predatory demons who use their brains and natural powers above sheer brute force. They are cunning, devious, stealthy, good strategists and work well in a group. Those who serve the Unholy act as elite warriors, commanders, spies and assassins. The shade's most dangerous

powers are his ability to turn invisible in darkness and shadow meld. Shades, like most true demons, travel the Megaverse and have visited many planets throughout the ages, including Earth.

Physically, the shade is frightening to behold. The head is large and round, with huge fangs rimming a large, smiling mouth. The lower jaw is usually hidden in shadow, the nose is only a skeleton-like pair of holes and the large white eyes gives the head a sort of Jack-o-Lantern appearance. The demon has no body hair although a dozen thin feathers or fins protrude from the top of the head. The body is covered in large, black, oval scales. Shades usually wear black armor with grey or red trim.

Player Note: The shade is a foul-hearted demon not intended to be available as a player character, they are NPC villains. If allowed as a player character, the creature must be considered a renegade and a traitor. He or she will be hated and hunted by other demons. Capture can only lead to torture and death or a dismal life chained to a life force battery. The rare player character should start at first or second level experience.

Alignment of NPC Villains: Always evil, typically diabolic or miscreant. Player characters can be any, probably selfish.

Attributes: I.Q.: 3D6+2, M.E.: 3D6, M.A.: 3D6, P.S.: 3D6+10, P.P.: 3D6+6, P.E.: 3D6+6, P.B.: 2D4, Spd.: 3D6+6. **Note:** P.S. and P.E. are considered to be supernatural.

Size: Six feet (1.8 m) tall, humanoid, 170 to 200 pounds (76.5 to 90 kg).

M.D.C. 2D4 × 100

Hit Points (in an S.D.C. environment): 1D4 × 1000.

Horror Factor: 14

P.P.E.: 1D4 × 100

Average Life Span: 4000 years.

Natural Abilities: Dimensional teleport 65% (four tries per 24 hours; back to its homeworld or other familiar place), night-vision 1200 ft (366 m), see the invisible, turn invisible when in darkness or shadows, resistant to normal fire and cold (does half damage; magic fire does full damage), impervious to poison and disease, impervious to the bite and mind control of vampires, and bio-regeneration 1D4 × 10 M.D.C. once a minute. Also see magic and psionics.

Experience Level: Equal to a wizard and/or espionage agent. 60% are fourth level, 20% sixth level and 15% are eighth level or higher.

Psionic Powers: Major psionic, 3D4 × 10 I.S.P.; powers include mind block, telepathy, death trance, levitation, impervious to fire and ectoplasm. Plus special power in which the shade can instantly sense/recognize vampires when he sees one.

Magic Powers (natural): Shadow meld, energy disruption, escape, tongues, fly and fly as the eagle.

Combat: Three attacks per melee round (add one additional melee attack at levels four, eight, and 12).

Damage: Bite: 1D4 M.D., punches or kicks: see supernatural P.S.

Bonuses: +1 on initiative, +3 to strike, +2 to parry, +2 to dodge, +3 to roll with impact, +3 to pull punch, kick attack, stun on the unmodified roll of 19 or 20, critical strike on the unmodified roll of 19 or 20. +1 to save vs all magic, +2 to save vs poison and disease, and +5 to save vs horror factor. Damage: Varies with P.S. attribute. Don't forget possible attribute bonuses.

Vulnerabilities/Penalties: Eyes are sensitive to bright light; distracting and painful, must squint; reduce all combat bonuses by half. Light energy such as lasers and lightning inflict double damage and a magic sphere of light will hold the demon at bay like it does to vampires.

R.C.C. Skills: Detect ambush, detect concealment (+5%), intelligence (+6%), streetwise (+10%), swim (+10%), prowl (+5%), basic math (+25%), horsemanship (+10%), wilderness survival (+10%), W.P. knife, W.P. sword and three W.P.s of choice (including modern weapons), plus two piloting skills, two rogue skills (+10%) and three science or technical skills of choice (+10%). Speaks and reads Demongogian and Dragonese 98% and uses magic or telepathy to communicate with others.

Special vehicle: None to start. Typically flies, or may be transported by means of a riding animal, vehicle or magic.

Weapons: Axes and swords are favorites, as well as, magic and energy weapons, especially vibro-blades, plasma swords, plasma axes, and energy rifles.

Body Armor: Typical shades armor has 75 M.D.C. and a -5% prowl penalty, but they can wear anything a human can.

Alliances & Allies: 80% of the shades on Wormwood are sworn to the Unholy and the Forces of Darkness. 5% are allied to the Champions of Light and the remaining 15% are mercenaries and freebooters.

Skelter Bats — Animal

The skelter bat is a giant flying creature that appears to be part snake, insect, bat, and demon. Its head is demonic looking, with massive bull horns, large red eyes and a huge maw. Its wings are leathery like a bat's and its six legs are distinctly insect or crab-like, while its body is long and serpentine. That portion of the body is covered in a thick, leathery hide. The spine is covered by plates of bone. Foot long (0.3 m) spikes protrude from the back near the wings as a natural defense against predators. The legs and tail section are covered in hard plates which give the bat its insect-like appearance. Unlike the feathered serpent which is native to the same planet, the skelter bat has low to average animal intelligence and acts on instinct. Still, they are as smart as a dog and are able to learn to obey commands and follow routines quite quickly.

The creature has proven to be a reliable and obedient riding animal. They are also used as watchdogs to guard the inner halls of crawling towers, cathedrals and caves. They can be especially dangerous in this capacity because they can climb walls and scurry along ceilings like a spider. A favorite ploy is to cling to the ceiling, hidden in the shadow, and wait for intruders/prey. When prey enters the area, the bat drops on top of it or attacks from the ceiling. The six insect-like legs provide the creatures with great speed and agility. Its slashing tail and snaking head only adds to its arsenal of weapons.

Player Note: This animal cannot be a player character, but may be allowed by the Game Master as the pet or riding animal of a player character. Simvan Monster Riders (see **Rifts Sourcebook One**) will be able to ride the creature with ease. Characters with patience and the horsemanship skill can also learn to ride a tame skelter bat (-20% skill penalty).

Homeworld Name: Dr'myr (pronounced Drew-mere)

Alignment: Animal predator, generally the equivalent of anarchist or miscreant alignment.

Attributes: I.Q.: Average animal intelligence, M.E.: 2D6 + 10, M.A.: 1D6, P.S.: 2D6 + 28, P.P.: 2D6 + 10, P.E.: 2D4 + 20, P.B.: 1D4, Spd.: 2D4 × 10 crawling like an insect, 4D4 × 10 flying. **Note:** P.S. and P.E. are considered to be supernatural.

Size: 20 to 30 feet (6 to 9 m) long, four or five feet (1.2 to 1.5 m) in diameter, and stands seven feet (2.1 m) tall. Heavily armored and weighs 2000 to 4000 pounds (900 to 1800 kg). It can easily accommodate two to four human-size riders.

M.D.C. by Location:

Legs (6) — 45 each

Head (1) — 150

Horns (2) — 50 each

Prehensile Tail Section (1) — 200

Wings (2) — 90 each

*Main Body — 3D4 × 10 + 150

*Depleting the M.D.C. of the main body will kill the monster.

Depleting the M.D.C. of the head is fatal, but the horrific creature will thrash around in the throes of death, striking or biting everything it touches until it finally dies (5D6 minutes).

Destroying the tail section, wing or leg is painful, but the bat will regrow lost or damaged appendages in three months.

Destroying a wing will prevent flight until it can be regrown.

Hit Points (in an S.D.C. environment): same number as the M.D.C.; i.e. Wings (2) — 90 M.D.C. becomes 90 hit points.

Horror Factor: 15

P.P.E.: 6D6

Average Life Span: 90 years.

Natural Abilities: Thick, hard skull (virtually impossible to knockout) and large maw filled with eight inch long teeth. Its prehensile tail can coil around victims like a snake or tentacle. It is used to grab and entangle human-size prey or strike like a whip.

Other abilities include winged flight, excellent hearing, good day vision, nightvision 600 ft (183 m), thermo-imaging vision (can see in the infrared spectrum of light and see heat emanations, 1000 ft/305 m range), track by thermo-imaging 75% (can also tell if a mammal is dead or alive), track by smell 55%, track the scent of blood 82%, swim 50%, climb 94% and can walk on the side of walls and on ceilings, prowl 45%, wilderness survival 90%, and land navigation 55%.

Psionic Powers: None.

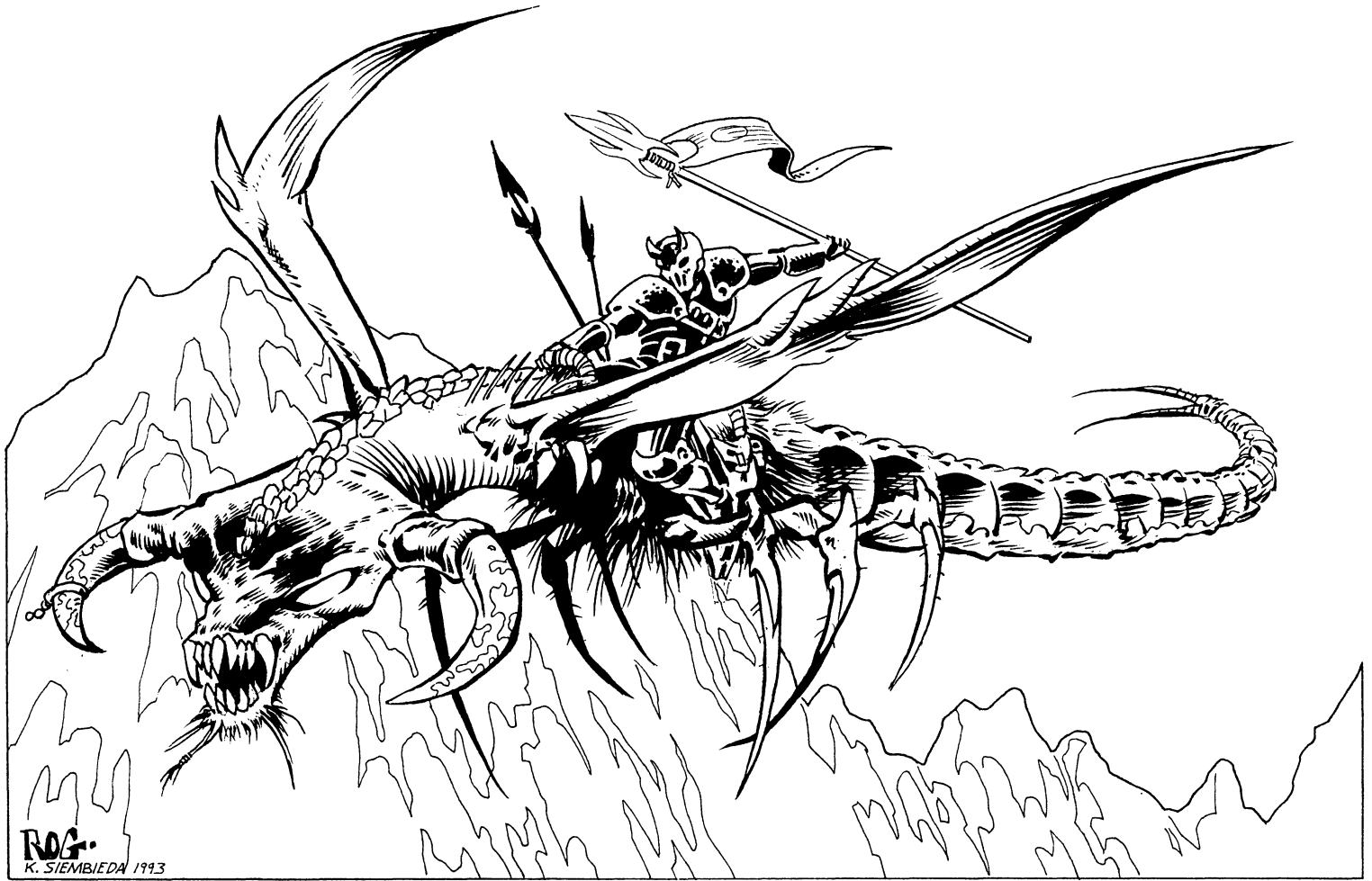
Magic Knowledge: None.

Combat: Four attacks per melee round

Damage (includes average P.S. range): Bite: 1D4 × 10 M.D., swat or stomp from a leg does 2D6 M.D., head butt or jab with horns 2D6 M.D., heavy strike/gore with horns 5D6 M.D., strike with tail 1D6 × 10 M.D., flying ram with horns (counts as two attacks) 2D6 × 10 M.D., coil and crush with tail 4D6 M.D., or pounce attack: 4D6 M.D. plus a 55% chance of pinning prey smaller than 15 feet (4.6 m) tall and can continue its attack by biting or striking with tail.

Bonuses: +3 on initiative, +4 to strike, +3 to parry (using its horns or legs), +4 to dodge when on the ground, +6 to dodge in the air or when scurrying upside down on a ceiling, +5 to save vs horror factor, +4 to save vs poison, drugs, disease and +2 to save vs magic. These are in addition to attribute bonuses.

Vulnerabilities/Penalties: Not applicable.



R.C.C. Skills: See natural abilities.

Body Armor: None, mega-damage animal.

Note: In the wild they gather in flocks of $2D8 \times 10$ members, but usually hunt in groups a quarter that size. However, when large prey is slain, the rest of the skelter bats in the area join in the feeding frenzy like vultures. The bats mate twice a year, giving live birth to two young. The young reach 10 feet (3.6 m) in length within six months and 20 feet (full maturity) within two years. They grow one additional foot (0.3 m) for each additional year of life, up to about 30 feet (9 m). Average life span is 90 years. The kr'talpa hounds and br'talb are natural enemies. Most animals and humanoids, other than the skr'lyr, are viewed as prey.

Sky Riders R.C.C.

Even the wildest canine demon guard will tell you that sky riders are all crazy. They are infamous for taking ridiculous risks and performing outrageous stunts and aerial acrobatics. Most people insist that sky riders are too stupid to be afraid. That's not entirely true. When a sky rider is on foot and caught alone, or severely outnumbered, they can be sniveling cowards afraid of their own shadow. However, the second they hop on top of a skelter bat or feathered serpent they become insane daredevils, frightened of nobody. When on their winged mounts, they will buzz battle saints, fly through walls of fire, attack a small army, and engage in spectacular aerial maneuvers. Sky riders take glee in all sorts of aerial daring-do and are quick to accept a challenge or show off.

Combat stunts include flying at great speed, maneuvering through narrow places, performing backflips and somersaults, riding side-saddle, hanging upside down, forming a human chain and dangling in the wind, leaping from one flying creature to another, and hanging from the saddle, arm, foot or mouth of the flying animal to grab or swing at an opponent. Combat stunts are equally as numerous and dynamic. One is to snare an opponent, carry him high into the air and drop him. Another is to snare and drag the poor fellow across the ground and into obstacles at high speed. They also knock people from riding animals, spook riding animals and troops by flying an inch above their heads, grabbing helmets, weapons and valuables out of people's hands, and a number of others. One favorite tactic is "bowling for soldiers" in which the victim is snared and swung, hurled, or rolled into a group of other warriors. The force of impact inflicts $3D6$ damage to the human bowling ball, plus the hapless rolling human knocks $2D4$ people off their feet and sends them tumbling to the ground (they loose initiative and one melee action and suffer $1D6$ damage from the force of impact; the GM may also want to roll to see if a weapon or valuable was dropped by those bowled over).

The most popular combat tactic is to snare an opponent from the ground and fling or drag him into the side of a mountain, building or pillar. The snaring is usually accomplished by using a grappling hook attached to a line and reel like a giant fishing pole. A hook attached to a handheld rope can also be used, or the flying monster may scoop an opponent up in its mouth or claws. When sky riders are feeling especially confident, they

will take the time to snare a victim and swing him into the jaws or claws of another monster. Or they may play “catch” or “monkey in the middle” with the human victim being tossed around in the air.

Sky riders also engage in “bombing.” A bomb seldom involves any explosives, but typically means dropping objects like boulders, carcasses, and snared victims on top of the enemy or enemy structures.

Another annoying thing about sky riders is that they are always grinning, snickering, laughing or gleefully shouting cat-calls or obscenities. Physically, they loosely resemble humans. They are humanoid bipeds with sunken eyes that are spread apart, giving them a skeletal appearance. The mouth is large and filled with sharp, pointed teeth and canine fangs. The lips are almost always curled into a grotesque smile. Their skin color is grey; some are more of a blue grey with hints of violet. Their arms, legs, head and back are often covered in black or grey hair.

Sky riders wear all types of armor and clothing — pretty much anything they want. Earth style sunglasses and aviator goggles are favorite apparel and only 15% wear full plate armor (50% wear half suits of armor; 40 M.D.C.). Grappling hooks, nets, and chain weapons are their favorites.

Player Note: Sky riders are not generally meant to be used as a player character. The best alignment possible is anarchist and even then the character is a wild idiot without regard for others. If allowed as a player character, the creature must be considered a liability. He or she could change sides or betray the heroes for any reason at any time. Even if the character is loyal he will get the rest of the group into trouble by bragging, lying, name calling, spitting, brawling, cheating, stealing, and causing (or joining) fights. The character will seldom realize when enough is enough. Worst of all, the other sky riders will see the character’s involvement with humans as some kind of stupid joke and he won’t get into any more trouble than a reprimand. However, if he gets the goat of some demon lord, he may be slain on the spot. A player character should start at first or second level experience.

Homeworld Name: Skr’lyr (pronounced skree-lar)

Alignment of NPC Villains: Always diabolic, miscreant or anarchist. The best an optional player character can be is anarchist.

Attributes: I.Q.: 3D4 + 1, M.E.: 3D4 + 3, M.A.: 3D4 + 1, P.S.: 3D6 + 14, P.P.: 2D6 + 10, P.E.: 2D6 + 10, P.B.: 3D4, Spd.: 4D6. **Note:** P.S. and P.E. are considered to be supernatural.

Size: Six to seven feet tall (1.8 to 2.1 m), humanoid, 150 to 220 pounds (67.5 to 99 kg).

M.D.C.: 2D4 × 10

Hit Points (in an S.D.C. environment): 6D6, plus 1D6 × 10 S.D.C.

Horror Factor: 8 on foot or 15 when riding a skelter bat or feathered serpent.

P.P.E.: 2D6

Average Life Span: 90 years.

Natural Abilities: Keen, hawk-like vision, double-jointed, ambidextrous, exceptional balance 92%, walk tightrope/high wire 84%, back flip 86%, climb rope 88%, leap 10 feet (3 m) high or lengthwise (add six feet/1.8 m for a running start).

Experience Level: Assassin, thief, or spy; 45% are second level, 20% are fourth level, 20% sixth level and 15% are eighth level or higher.

Psionic Powers: None.

Magic Knowledge: None.

Combat: Four attacks per melee round (add one additional melee attack at levels five, eight, and 12).

Damage: Punches or kicks: see supernatural P.S., or by weapon.

Bonuses: +1 on initiative, +3 to strike, +1 to parry, +1 to dodge, +1 to pull punch, +5 to roll with a fall or impact, kick attack, stun on the unmodified roll of 19 or 20, critical strike on the unmodified roll of 19 or 20. +1 to save vs all magic, +2 to save vs psionic attack (crazy already), +2 to save vs poison and disease, and +4 to save vs horror factor. **Damage:** Varies with P.S. attribute. These bonuses are in addition to attribute bonuses.

Vulnerabilities/Penalties: Stupid, fearless (even when they should be frightened), reckless, take crazy risks, endanger others, and will often fight against impossible odds or fly into the jaws of death (laughing all the way). They are also lousy strategists, but they do work well in the air with groups of sky riders and their crazy, totally unpredictable antics often give them the edge.

R.C.C. Skills: Basic math (+5%), dance (+15%), horsemanship: skelter bat and feathered serpent (+16%), horsemanship: any other large flying creature (+8%), horsemanship: horse, wilderness survival (+10%), land navigation (+15%), preserve food (+5%), skin and prepare animal hides (+10%), track animals (+15%), W.P. sword, W.P. chain, and two of choice (including modern weapons), plus four skills of choice from any of the following categories, physical, rogue, technical, wilderness or domestic. The character can also speak his native tongue of Skr’lyr (a dialect of Br’talb) 98%, Demongogian, Gobblely and American at 80%.

Special vehicle: Two skelter bats or feathered serpents, or one of each. They are also capable of riding most winged creatures, including gryphons, dragondactyls, peryton, harpies and dragons!

Weapons: Chain weapons such as the ball and chain, flail, mace and chain, nunchaku, hooks and chain, and all types of grappling hooks connected to lines/rope are their favorites. Most own and use a large fishing pole and grappling hook to snare human prey from their riding animals. They also like claw weapons, knives, vibro-blades, and neural-maces.

Body Armor: Some wear armor, others do not; all are lesser mega-damage creatures when in a magic rich environment. Mega-damage chain mail and half-suits of armor offer an additional 40 M.D.C., while full plate provides 100 M.D.C.

Alliances & Allies: 80% are sworn to the Unholy and the Forces of Darkness. 20% are unallied bandits and adventurers, most of whom prey on humans and br’talb demon hound riders. Not more than a tiny handful associate with the Champions of Light and even their motives are suspect.

Temporal Raider R.C.C.

Temporal raiders are so common to Wormwood (compared to almost anywhere else in the Megaverse) that a visitor may believe them to be indigenous to the planet, but they are not. However, many have made Wormwood their home. About 30% are officially allied to the Forces of Darkness, 25% to the Champions of Light and the remaining 45% are free agents solicited by both sides but who avoid formal pacts. Temporal raiders are

fiercely independent and refuse to worship or serve any creature. This makes affiliation with the Unholy extremely distasteful. On the other hand, the Unholy has been willing to accept or ignore their “eccentricity” and not force the issue. He sees them as a valuable commodity and continues to enlist their aid as non-allied independent mercenaries. The only exceptions are temporal raiders suspected of being human sympathizers (they are never hired). If forced to choose sides, 60% of the selfish freelance raiders would leave Wormwood rather than officially join the Forces of Darkness and the remaining 40% would side with the humans.

Temporal raiders and their disciples have a strange fondness for humans and human-like D-bees. They also like to associate with humans and may teach them the secrets of temporal magic. Most raiders are extremely self-serving and can accept the enslavement and persecution of humans under the tyranny of the Unholy. They also understand the Unholy’s desire for power, his use (or misuse) of that power and his quest to conquer the entire planet. However, most will not work exclusively to help one side or the other. To the raiders, conflict is the nature of life. Their immediate concern is how the conflict impacts or profits them.

Alliances & Allies: There are approximately 700 temporal raiders sworn to the Unholy and the Forces of Darkness. Most hold positions of political and/or military power, such as commanders, warlords and governors. There are another 1500 not allied to the Unholy. 50% are allies with the Champions of Light and the other half work as unallied mercenaries and adventurers. There are also a handful of human Temporal Warriors and Temporal Wizards among the human population (70% are not allies to evil).

Note: A temporal raider can be any alignment, but typically selfish or evil. A complete description of temporal magic, the temporal raider, temporal warrior and temporal wizard are all found in the pages of **Rifts World Book Three: England**.

Worm Zombies — Undead NPC

Worm zombies are the product of dark magic at the hands of the Host and their dark priests. They are simple minded, zombie warriors made from the remains of dead humans and giant mystic worms. The worms are actually symbiotic organisms made from Wormwood. However, Wormwood has no control over the forced creation of the worms or the life they give to dead bones. It is the power and evil of darkness which shapes such nightmares. They are given life through magic and the P.P.E. of life essences trapped inside life force cauldrons.

Worm zombies obey their creator, the Unholy and any of the Host. They understand simple commands and respond to basic combat situations. They make a disturbing hissing sound and can even speak short phrases, such as “You must die.” “You cannot escape.” “None may enter,” and so on. However, they mostly hiss or growl and/or repeat one or two words like, “Find and kill,” or “Die ... die ... die.” or “Kill all ... kill ... kill.”

Player Note: Worm zombies are robot-like killing machines created by the Forces of Darkness. They have no independent thought, emotions, or personality. They cannot be used as a player character.



Alignment of NPC Villains: Always diabolic.

Attributes: I.Q.: roughly equal to 6, but only follows orders and kills anybody it does not recognize, M.E.: Not applicable, M.A.: Not applicable, P.S.: 28, P.P.: 13, P.E.: Not applicable, P.B.: 1, Spd.: 1D6 + 10. **Note:** P.S. is considered to be supernatural.

Size: Although once human, the zombies tower nine feet tall (2.7 m). Always a humanoid skeleton covered in giant worms and wearing large shoulder pads, and body armor. 300 pounds (135 kg).

M.D.C. 2D4 × 10 + 40 (armor)

Hit Points (in an S.D.C. environment): 2D4 × 10, plus 40 S.D.C. from the armor (A.R. 16).

Horror Factor: 11

P.P.E.: 1D6 × 10.

Average Life Span: Indefinite; until destroyed; 1000+ years.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 200 ft (61 m), see the invisible, resistant to normal fire and cold (does half damage; magic fire does full damage), impervious to mind control and empathic transmission, impervious to horror factor/fearless, impervious to pain, impervious to poison, drugs, gases, and disease. Bio-regeneration 4D6 M.D.C. once per melee round (15 seconds), plus it can completely grow new limbs within 24 hours unless the head is decapitated, smashed and burned.

The zombie can leap 6 feet (1.8 m) high or lengthwise (add four feet/1.2 m for a running start).

Psionic Powers: None.

Magic Knowledge: None.

Combat: Three hand to hand attacks.

Bonuses (includes all applicable bonuses): +5 to strike, +4 to parry, +3 to dodge, +1 to roll/pull punch, critical strike on the unmodified roll of 19 or 20. +2 to save vs all magic. Also see natural abilities.

Vulnerabilities/Penalties: Cold and/or water slows them down (reduce speed by half and minus one melee attack). Weapons made of magic or silver inflict double damage.

Experience Level: Not applicable.

R.C.C. Skills: They can understand Demongogian and Gobblely at 98% and American at 75%.

Special vehicle: None, typically travels on foot, but may be transported by means of a riding animal, skelter bat, crawling tower, or magic.

Weapons: The zombie can use any type of ancient weapon, typically a large blade weapon, often a scythe or sickle. They are never given magic weapons, although they may pick one up during combat.

Body Armor: See M.D.C. section.

Alliances & Allies: 100% loyal to the Unholy and the Forces of Darkness.

Lords of Darkness

The Unholy — Supreme Ruler, Lord of Darkness

High Lord Lesion — One of the Host and second in command.

Lord Krikton — Master of Parasites and one of the Host.

Salome — Lesion's right-hand woman and queen of the demon goblins.

The Host — Creatures like the Unholy but who serve under him.

The Host of Darkness

These are creatures like the Unholy only less powerful. They are often referred to as the "Host" or as the "Unholy Ones." They are a race of unusual, supernatural monsters from another dimension — perhaps the last of a dying breed. Among the minions of darkness, the Host are the elite, answering only to their Supreme Ruler, the Unholy, and High Lord Lesion. They typically serve in the highest positions as generals, governors and kings. Like the Unholy, they are cruel and malicious, ruling their subjects with an iron fist and sadistic laws.

The Host are not known to most dimensional travelers because they have been put out of commission thousands of years ago. Furthermore, they were never skilled at dimensional travel. At some point in their vile history, the Host must have angered a powerful alien intelligence(s) or other powerful forces who trapped them in a dark, limbo-like dimension; not unlike their own power to create the *black abyss*. If the Unholy and his Host know who imprisoned them in such a way and why, they NEVER discuss it. The matter is so extremely painful that any being to raise the subject evokes their terrible wrath. Pressing the matter can only result in life-long hatred and persecution or slow torture and death!

To escape their dimensional prison, contact must first be made by an outside source (human/mortal in another dimension) and a dimensional rift opened to their prison dimension. This is difficult because the dimension is not known to most (99%) people and communication from it is impossible. Individuals typically find the prison dimension by pure accident and unless

they open a portal to it at that moment, they are not likely to be able to find it again. Furthermore, no other being can enter into the prison dimension, not even the Host once they have escaped its confines.

Freedom is further compromised in that the Host cannot enter another dimension unless an individual is present who is *willing* to allow one of the Host to take over his or her body. This is a more extreme measure than supernatural possession. The life force of that person is completely displaced and dies unless placed in a life force crystal. The human body becomes the physical shell of the demonic Host (hence their name). Within 24 hours the body mutates into the monstrous animal form of the wolfish monster. When the transformation is complete, the process is irreversible and the Host is a permanent part of that plane of existence. The human who willingly gave up his body is gone, unless his life essence is placed in a mystic container to hold the displaced life essence. The invading Host doesn't care whether the character lives or dies. He only seeks to escape. If one escapes, he can rescue others of his kind. However, to do so he must find other foolish mortals "willing" to sacrifice their lives. Each Host must have a living body waiting for him. Finding these willing participants can be a difficult task. Furthermore, only one Host can be retrieved at a time and only when mystic energy flows at a higher level on a cosmic scale, such as during an eclipse, solstices, equinoxes and planetary alignments.

The creator of the prison dimension created a truly difficult place from which to escape. Even after escape from the dimension, the Host are not free to wander the Megaverse. The monsters become a living, physical creature of the world they enter, forever tied to that particular realm of existence. The damned creatures may live on that world for thousands of years but can NEVER leave it! This makes space and dimensional travel impossible. To leave their host world means instant death! When one of the Host dies it is permanent — they do not revert to any sort of spirit or energy being and return to their dark dimension. They are dead. The good news is this means they can be destroyed and their reign of evil stopped. Unfortunately, the Host have a powerful hold over Wormwood and have intelligently established an empire filled with supernatural horrors who serve and protect them.

Another interesting aspect of the Host is that when there are three or more, they all become stronger. Also, ONE becomes the Supreme Leader/Ruler. This leader is always a bit larger and more powerful than all the rest. Some of the other Hosts may covet his power and position, but remain subservient to his rule. Those who dare to challenge him are severely punished and kept a close eye on by other Hosts and minions, but rarely is he slain. Their numbers are too few, and they realize that they must work together or all perish.

Should the current leader be killed, his second in command becomes the new leader and gains the powers and bonuses of leadership. A new second in command is selected by the new leader. On Wormwood, the Supreme Ruler of the Host and the Forces of Darkness is the creature who calls himself the Unholy. His second in command is High Lord Lesion. Only Lord Krikton and a few other malcontents covet the position of the Unholy. The rest are too fearful of him and High Lord Lesion to make a challenge.

Note: There are 19 Hosts on Wormwood, including the Unholy and Lord Lesion. No more than one additional Host can join their ranks every 20 years.

Alignment: Diabolic or miscreant only.

Attributes: I.Q.: 2D6 + 13, M.E.: 2D6 + 13, M.A.: 2D6 + 13, P.S.: 4D6 + 20, P.P.: 2D6 + 13, P.E.: 2D6 + 13, P.B.: 2D4, Spd.: 6D6 running or 1D4 × 10 + 50 flying.

M.D.C./Hit Points: 1D4 × 1000, but when there are three or more Host in the world they draw on each other's power and become stronger; add 2D4 × 100 for the average Host.

M.D.C and Bonuses for the Leader: When there are three or more Hosts in the world, one (and only one) becomes the leader, to which all other Hosts are inferior and submissive. This leader (in this case, the Unholy) gets an additional 4D6 × 100 M.D.C.!! The leader is also 20% larger than all the others, his P.S. is + 10, and he is + 1 to save vs psionic attacks and all magic!

Horror Factor: 17 for the average Host, 19 for their one leader.

P.P.E.: 2D4 × 100 for the average Host; add 300 to their leader's.

Level of Experience: The Host: 6th to 9th level (1D4 + 5), 10th to 13th level (1D4 + 9) for their one leader. The strength and level of spell magic, communion with Wormwood spells, and psionic powers are equal to the character's experience level.

Limitations: The Host cannot swim, they sink like rocks, and drown. Furthermore, holy water (not normal water) burns their flesh and does the same damage to them as it does to vampires. Consequently, the Host avoid living near large bodies of water and dislike rain.

Natural Abilities: Impervious to poison, toxins, drugs, and gases, impervious to fire (magic fire and plasma energy does half damage), nightvision 1000 ft (305 m), see the invisible (including air elementals), keen color vision, see in the ultraviolet spectrum of light, track by smell 60%, track by blood scent 80%.

Their physical body is large and powerful even though their limbs are thin and scrawny looking. They have razor-sharp fingernails that can be used like knives (add 3D6 M.D. to supernatural P.S. damage). The bat wings give them the power of flight and their entire torso is covered in natural heavy plate armor. They can also bio-regenerate 1D6 × 100 M.D.C. points once every five minutes and regenerate lost

limbs and appendages within 72 hours. Only their four eyes (two large, two tiny) cannot be regenerated — an interesting vulnerability. Note: The eyes are small and difficult targets to strike; an attacker, whether using a gun or hand to hand attack, must make a *called shot* to strike and is - 4 to hit the large eyes and - 6 to hit the tiny ones. A blind Host is still powerful, but bitter and vengeful beyond human comprehension.

Special: The ability to warp and shape nature: This strange power applies only when there are three or more Host in the world and happens automatically, whether the Host want it to or not. The area(s) that they dominate and control, be it large or small, takes on a demonic appearance. Trees look evil and frightening with twisted trunks and branches, gnarled oversized roots and tumorous lumps. Shrubs and vines grow thorns, flowers are small and shrivelled, and leaves have a sickly color. Mushrooms and other plants are 2D4 times larger than usual and moss and fungus grows everywhere.

Normally, this power grants the Host the following magic spells: Globe of daylight, chameleon, fear, breathe without air, fingers of wind, wind rush, fool's gold, repel animals, animate and control dead, life drain, eyes of the wolf, summon and control canines, summon and control rodents, summon and control insects, and summon fog, but on Wormwood they have many of the spells of communion with Wormwood instead!

Power over Wormwood: This bizarre power to warp nature has had an even more striking effect on Wormwood, the Living Planet. The living buildings quickly take on an ugly appearance with many horns, spikes, spines, fangs, bony and deformed appendages, tumorous lumps, claws and skull-like images. Furthermore, it has given the Unholy and his Host the power to mutate and control aspects of the planet, creating such things as the monstrous parasites, crawling towers, life force cauldrons, slime, and vile symbiotes. They can also use the blood stones, magic crystals and other magic items. All the Host have the following spells of communion with Wormwood.

- Close an Opening
- Create Life Force Cauldron
- Create Magic Slime
- Create an Opening
- Create a Pillar
- Create Stairs
- Create Tunnel
- Create Wall
- Create Worm Zombies
- Destroy Life Force Cauldron
- Impervious to Symbiotes
- Mold Structures
- Open & Close Dimensional Rifts
- Remove Symbiotes
- Repel Symbiotes
- Ride Giant Parasites
- Summon Entities
- Summon and Command Parasites
- Summon & Use Symbiotes (and redesign/create new types)

Note: Also see the *black abyss* described in the section about the Unholy.



Psionic Powers: Master psionic with the following powers: Astral projection, clairvoyance, empathy, telepathy, see aura, total recall, detect psionics, psychic diagnosis, psychic surgery (used to torture), healing touch, deaden pain, sleep, mind block auto-defense, group mind block, bio-manipulation, empathic transmission, hypnotic suggestion, mentally possess others, psi-sword and one super psionic power of choice!

I.S.P.: 2D4 × 100; add 200 to the I.S.P. of their one leader.

Combat abilities: Equal to hand to hand: expert.

Mega-Damage and Special Types of Attack:

Fingernails/blades — add 3D6 M.D. to P.S. damage

Kick attack — 6D6 M.D.

Bite — 3D6 M.D.

Head Butt — 4D6 M.D.

Ram with Head — 1D6 × 10 M.D., but counts as two melee attacks

Judo Style Body Throw — 4D6 M.D.

Attacks Per Melee Round: Five by hand to hand combat or psionic attack. Or two by magic. The leader of the Host (the Unholy) gets an additional two attack per melee round (7 total).

Bonuses: +1 on initiative, +6 to strike, +5 to parry, +5 to dodge, +4 to roll with impact, +4 to pull punch, critical strike on unmodified 18-20, and hands/finger claws are used as paired weapons. +1 save vs psionics, +3 to save vs spell and illusionary magic, +2 to save vs circle magic and +10 to save vs horror factor.

R.C.C. Skills: Skill knowledge is minimal because they rely entirely on their formidable powers. They can learn to read and write as many as four different languages, learn 1D4 other technical skills and know the following at 85% efficiency: Basic math, literate in American, land navigation, streetwise, cryptography, forgery, palming, concealment, prowl, dance and horsemanship: monsters.

Transportation: Seldom relies on other creatures, but occasionally rides on a giant monster such as a battler parasite or dragon. Most travel under their own power.

Weapons: Tend to rely on their natural powers, magic and psionics. They love magic of all kinds and are likely to have 1D6 different magic weapons.

Body Armor: None; any armor or clothing is worn simply as ornamentation.

Money: They covet magic, gems and valuables and frequently amass a fortune worth 3D6 × 10 million credits.

Symbiotic Organisms: The Host NEVER use symbiotic organisms of any kind, but they will encourage their minions to make use of them.

Size: 10 to 13 feet tall (3 to 3.96 m) and 1200 pounds (540 kg).

The leader is 20% larger, roughly 15 feet tall (4.6 m).

Life Span: 2D4 × 1000 years or until slain.

Appearance: All Host are 10 to 13 feet (3 to 3.9 m) tall giants. They have the head of a wolf, four pairs of eyes — two in the forehead and two tiny eyes located in the snout, the horns and legs of a bull, and the wings of a bat. The arms are disproportionately long, thin, bony and malnourished looking, but superhumanly strong. The hands are almost skeletal with foot long (0.3 m), sharp nails and spiky outcroppings of bone at the knuckles. The monster's bony spine protrudes from the neck and back, covered by a thin sheet of grey flesh. The

skin is grey and pink with blue veins weaving through the tissue pulled taut over bone and thin muscles. Only the head and face have hair.

Note: There are approximately 10,000 Host trapped in the prison dimension.

The Unholy

Lord of Darkness & Supreme Ruler

Non-Player Character Villain

The leader of the inhuman creatures and trans-dimensional monsters is a fiend known as the **Unholy**. He is a dreadful, demonic monstrosity who revels in the conquest, enslavement, suffering and death of lesser creatures. Even his physical appearance is a grotesque mockery of nature, part wolf, part bull, all monster. The Unholy lost his large left eye in combat with the Confessor and covers it with a patch sewn directly into his flesh. This has earned the Confessor his hatred and his fear. The hideous beast wears a suit of crimson plate armor with black trim and a skirt of chain mail. A necklace of humanoid skulls hangs around his neck. His main weapons are a powerful magic scepter, a quick mind and immense psionic and magic power.

The Unholy is "the" power on Wormwood. He and his black-hearted minions dominate a full third of the land. His seat of power is the **Mountain of Skulls**, a huge crawling tower in the center of a monster filled city located in the heart of his domain. The Lord of the Host is a clever manipulator and strategist, as well as a capable leader. The Unholy is a keen observer of people's natures and is a master at giving them the opportunities they seek. His lesser minions, with rare exception, worship the ground he walks on. They are thrilled with the freedom and power they have over humans in the Unholy's evil empire. They love the opportunities he gives them to fight and hurt others. It matters not that their numbers may be slaughtered in battle, they love the opportunity and the thrill of it all. Even among the demon lords, high priests and powerful wizards he is respected and feared. Again, the Ruler Supreme wisely gives his generals and highly placed minions the freedom they crave and rewards them with their own piece of his empire. Thus, each demon or occupied human city has a monster as its ruler. At the head of his armies and elite forces are his most capable and resourceful men.

As a rule, the Unholy leaves the specifics of combat to his warlords and generals. If they win a battle, he adds more territory to his domain or crushes one more obstacle in his path of conquest. If they lose, he gets to watch them extract their revenge or plot a new strike against a worthy opponent. All in all, the Unholy sees the conflicts as part of a massive game. A game he excels at and very much enjoys.

Special Power:

The Black Abyss Dimensional Pocket

The only dimensional power possessed by the leaders of the Host is the ability to create the **Black Abyss**, a dimensional pocket. Unlike most dimensional pockets, this limbo is a one-way stasis prison that can contain one person of any size. The prisoner does not age, hunger or change in any way — time has no



meaning in the black abyss. One hour seems like a few seconds. One year seems like one day. While inside the black abyss, the prisoner is completely isolated and cannot see, hear or communicate with others.

The dimensional pocket is only visible to all observers when it is first created, when it is opened to retrieve its prisoner and when its duration time expires. At these periods, a pitch-black, circular rift appears. No light can enter or pass through this rift. The size of the black circle depends on the size of its prisoner. A moment after it first appears, the prisoner must be tossed into its blackness or it vanishes. After the prisoner has been deposited, the black circle disappears and remains invisible to the human and inhuman eye alike.

Only the creator of the dimensional pocket can easily find it and retrieve the people he has placed inside the darkness. Others such as the masters of temporal magic and the shifter can find and rescue victims trapped inside a black abyss. But even for them it is an extremely difficult task. Rate of success: Shifter 17%, temporal warrior: 21%, temporal wizard: 37%, or temporal raider 69%. Only a temporal raider can instantly escape from the abyss! The shifter, temporal wizard and warrior can escape within 2D4 days. The creator of a black abyss can always find it and can dispel it at any time, releasing its prisoner.

When a prisoner is retrieved, the black circle reappears and spits out its contents, then vanishes completely. The same thing occurs when the maximum duration time expires. The black abyss is a one use type of thing. A new one must be created every time it is wanted.

A black abyss can be created and left anywhere. They last for 1D4 days per level of its creator, unless created along a ley line or at a nexus. When created on a ley line or similar place of power (like a subterranean tunnel deep inside Wormwood), the black abyss lasts one decade per level of its creator. At a ley line nexus (there are none on Wormwood), the dimensional prison exists for one century per level of its creator. When there are five or more black abysses located at a nexus junction, they have the interesting side-effect of preventing any other dimensional rifts from opening at that location, effectively sealing that dimensional gateway.

This power is available only to the leader of the Host and his second in command. It can also be mastered as a temporal spell by temporal raiders and temporal wizards who are 13th level or higher.

P.P.E. Cost: 500 points

Limitations: Available only to the Leader of the Host and his second in command.

The Unholy, Supreme Ruler of The Host and the Lord of Darkness

Alignment: Miscreant

Attributes: I.Q.: 21, M.E.: 25, M.A.: 23, P.S.: 51, P.P.: 19, P.E.: 21, P.B.: 3, Spd.: 27 (18 mph/29.7 km) running or 70 flying (roughly 50 mph/80 km).

M.D.C./Hit Points: 6100

Horror Factor: 19

P.P.E.: 900

Level of Experience: 11th level; the strength and level of spell magic, communion with Wormwood spells, and psionic powers are equal to 11th level.

Natural Abilities: Same as the Host. **Note:** The eyes are small and difficult targets to strike. An attacker, whether using a gun or hand to hand attack, must make a *called shot* to strike and is -4 to hit the large eyes and -6 to hit the tiny ones. A blind Host is still powerful, but bitter and vengeful beyond human comprehension.

Special: The ability to warp and shape nature: Same as the Host. The Unholy has the following spells of communion with Wormwood.

- Close an Opening
- Create Life Force Cauldron
- Create Magic Slime
- Create an Opening
- Create a Pillar
- Create Stairs
- Create Tunnel
- Create Wall
- Create Worm Zombies
- Destroy Life Force Cauldron
- Impervious to Symbiotes
- Mold Structures
- Open & Close Dimensional Rifts
- Remove Symbiotes
- Repel Symbiotes
- Ride Giant Parasites
- Summon Entities
- Summon and Command Parasites
- Summon & Use Symbiotes (and redesign/create new types)

Note: Also see the *black abyss* described previously.

Psionic Powers: Master psionic with the following powers: Astral projection, clairvoyance, empathy, telepathy, see aura, total recall, detect psionics, psychic diagnosis, psychic surgery (used to torture), healing touch, deaden pain, sleep, mind block auto-defense, group mind block, bio-manipulation, empathic transmission, hypnotic suggestion, mentally possess others, psi-sword and pyrokinesis.

I.S.P.: 800

Combat abilities: Equal to hand to hand: expert.

Mega-Damage and Special Types of Attack:

Fingernails/blades — add 4D6 M.D. to P.S. damage

Kick attack — 1D6 × 10 M.D.

Bite — 4D6 M.D.

Head Butt — 5D6 M.D.

Ram with Head — 2D4 × 10 M.D., but counts as two melee attacks

Judo Style Body Throw — 4D6 M.D.

Attacks Per Melee Round: Seven by hand to hand combat or psionic attack. Or two by magic.

Bonuses: +1 on initiative, +6 to strike, +5 to parry, +5 to dodge, +4 to roll with impact, +4 to pull punch, critical strike on unmodified 18-20, and hands/finger claws are used as paired weapons. +2 save vs psionics, +4 to save vs spell and illusionary magic, +3 to save vs circle magic, +1 to save vs all other magic, and +10 to save vs horror factor.

R.C.C. Skills: Same as the Host. Skill knowledge is minimal. He knows the following at 85% efficiency: Basic math, literate in American, land navigation, streetwise, cryptography, forgery, palming, concealment, prowl, dance and horsemanship: monsters.

Transportation: Seldom relies on other creatures, but occasionally rides on a giant monster such as a battler parasite or dragon.

Weapons: Tends to rely on his natural powers, but does have a powerful scepter. The scepter of power inflicts 2D6 × 10 M.D. (as a result of a greater blood stone known as the battle stone) when used as a blunt weapon and has the following magic stones and crystals: battle stone, bio-booster, a shadow crystal and two lesser spell gems; one with the spells globe of daylight and turn dead and the other with detect concealment and levitation.

Body Armor: His crimson armor adds another 100 M.D.C. but is worn as ornamentation more than anything else.

Money: The Unholy has a treasure stash that would be worth 100 million credits on Rifts Earth.

Symbiotic Organisms: None.

Size: 15 feet tall (4.6 m) and 1400 pounds (630 kg).

Lesion

High Lord of the Host

Non-Player Character Villain

High Lord Lesion is the Unholy's second in command and the most trusted of his Host. It is Lord Lesion whom he trusts to deal with most of the day to day chores of coordinating the armies and running an empire. It is Lord Lesion who the Unholy

calls upon to do most of his dirty work and Lesion gladly accepts every challenge. In the event of the Unholy's demise, High Lord Lesion automatically becomes the Supreme Ruler and Lord of Wormwood. However, he has no aspirations for the throne. Lord Lesion is satisfied with his position as second in command and is completely loyal to the Unholy. The two admire and respect each others' abilities and work extremely well together. Both trust the other with his life, a rare bond between such evil beings. In fact, one of Lord Lesion's favorite pastimes is ferreting out plots against him and/or the Unholy.

The High Lord loves war and conflict more than anything else in the world. He has an excellent head for organization, strategies and tactics. The fiendish commander is equally masterful in the arts of espionage, mind control and deception. To this end, he will frequently possess one of his priests or other humanoid minions to disguise himself and spy on the enemy. He takes great pride at having his hand picked agents infiltrate the gilded halls of the Cathedral's high command. He is alert, resourceful and dangerous in the extreme.

High Lord Lesion (pronounced Lee-zhen)

Alignment: Miscreant

Attributes: I.Q.: 24, M.E.: 21, M.A.: 18, P.S.: 41, P.P.: 20, P.E.: 19, P.B.: 5, Spd.: 26 running or 70 flying (roughly 50 mph/80 km).

M.D.C./Hit Points: 3800

Horror Factor: 17

P.P.E.: 600

Level of Experience: 9th

Limitations: Same as all the Host; cannot swim, sinks like a rock, and drowns. Furthermore, holy water (not normal water) burns his flesh and does the same damage to him as it does to vampires. Consequently, Lord Lesion avoids living near large bodies of water and dislikes rain.

Natural Abilities: Standard; same as all the Host.

Special: The ability to warp and shape nature & power over

Wormwood: Standard; same as all the Host.

Note: As second in command, Lord Lesion also has the *black abyss power* (see the description in the section regarding the Unholy).

Psionic Powers: Master psionic with the following powers: Astral projection, clairvoyance, empathy, telepathy, see aura, total recall, detect psionics, psychic diagnosis, psychic surgery (used to torture), healing touch, deaden pain, sleep, mind block auto-defense, group mind block, bio-manipulation, empathic transmission, hypnotic suggestion, mentally possess others, psi-sword, and psi-shield.

I.S.P.: 600.

Combat abilities: Standard; same as all the Host.

Attacks Per Melee Round: Five by hand to hand combat or psionic attack. Or two by magic.

Bonuses: +1 on initiative, +6 to strike, +5 to parry, +5 to dodge, +4 to roll with impact, +4 to pull punch, critical strike on unmodified 18-20, and hands/finger claws are used as paired weapons. +1 save vs psionics, +3 to save vs spell and illusionary magic, +2 to save vs circle magic and +10 to save vs horror factor.

R.C.C. Skills: Standard.

Transportation: Seldom relies on other creatures, but occasionally rides on a giant monster such as a battler parasite or dragon.

Weapons: Tends to rely on his natural powers, magic and psionics. Lord Lesion also has a lesser rune dagger and a scepter similar to the Unholy's. His scepter has the following blood stones and crystals: spell gem of dimensions (greater), three lesser energy cells with 25 P.P.E. each, two lesser energy cells with 10 P.P.E. each (95 P.P.E. total) and a psi-booster blood stone (greater).

Body Armor: Grey resin shoulder plates and arm bands are worn as simple ornamentation.

Money: He covets magic, gems and valuables and has amassed a fortune worth 100 million credits.

Symbiotic Organisms: The Host NEVER uses symbiotic organism of any kind, but they will encourage their minions to make use of them.

Size: 11 feet (3.3 m), and 1100 pounds (500 kg).

Appearance: All Host are 10 to 13 feet (3 to 3.9 m) tall giants. They have the head of a wolf, four pairs of eyes — two in the forehead and two tiny eyes located in the snout, the horns and legs of a bull, and the wings of a bat. The arms are disproportionately long, thin, bony and malnourished looking, but superhumanly strong. The hands are almost skeletal with foot long (0.3 m), sharp nails and spiky outcroppings of bone at the knuckles. The monster's bony spine protrudes from the neck and back, covered by a thin sheet of grey flesh. The skin is grey and pink with blue veins weaving through the tissue pulled taut over bone and thin muscles. Only the head and face have hair.

Lord Krikton

Master of Parasites

Non-Player Character Villain

Lord Krikton is one of the Host. His general appearance is the usual wolf head and bull-like body, except that he is even more emaciated and macabre looking than usual. His face is gaunt and skeletal. The eyes sunken, yellow and bloodshot. His skin is a bluish grey and his hair stark white.

Lord Krikton has an unusual knack for designing giant, mutant parasites. His exclusive and best designs bear his name, an honor granted to him by the Unholy. They include the Krikton Flailer, Krikton Leaper and Krikton Battle Wagon. He also had a hand in the creation of the Battler and is currently working on three new designs (Material for a supplement perhaps. Hint, hint. The editor).

This creature of darkness is the epitome of vice. Greedy Lord Krikton hoards gems, magic and secrets, he lusts for power and glory, is envious of others (especially the Unholy and Lesion), lecherous, sadistic, devious and murderous. He loves to engage in torture, terrible experiments, blood sacrifices and brutality of all kinds. He often pits human and D-bee captives against his "pets," the horrible parasites, and feeds prisoners to them alive. When excited, he gets a crazed look in his dark eyes, drools and repeats words and phrases in an anxious tone, such as, "Yes. Yes. I see. I see. Come! Come to me and behold ... behold my dark, dark magic at work. Yes, yes. Come and behold!"

The malicious beast is bitter and frustrated. He wrestles with treacherous thoughts and aching anxiety to be more than he is. He is not satisfied with being the third most feared and powerful member of the Host. He craves power and lusts to be the Unholy, Supreme Ruler of the Host! But to become the Supreme Leader, he'd have to destroy both the Unholy and Lord Lesion — a nearly impossible task. Even then there is no guarantee that he'd become the next Supreme Ruler (although it's a 65% likelihood). As a result, he festers inside, tearing himself apart with desire, fear and regret, for he cannot bring himself to take action against his two more powerful (and secret) rivals. Instead, he turns his attention to creating new grotesque parasites and taking out his frustration by tormenting humans and lesser demons.

Lord Krikton is known to all as a sadistic monster, given to terrible rages and the slaughter of hundreds to sate that anger. He beats his servants and starves his slaves. His only true friends, his "children," are the parasites.

Lord Krikton, Master of Parasites (pronounced Krick-ton)

Alignment: Diabolic

Attributes: I.Q.: 25 M.E.: 17, M.A.: 19, P.S.: 36, P.P.: 20, P.E.: 22, P.B.: 2, Spd.: 22 running or 80 flying (roughly 56 mph/90 km).

M.D.C./Hit Points: 4400

Horror Factor: 17

P.P.E.: 800

Level of Experience: 8th level

Limitations: Standard; the same as all Hosts. The Host cannot swim, they sink like rocks, and drown. Furthermore, holy water (not normal water) burns their flesh and does the same damage to them as it does to vampires. Consequently, the Host avoid living near large bodies of water and dislike rain.

Natural Abilities: Standard; the same as all Host.

Special: The ability to warp and shape nature: The same as all Host, although Lord Krikton's control and influence over Wormwood, symbiotes and parasites seems stronger than most. His kingdom is among the most alien and horrific with doorways shaped like hungry maws and giant, claw-shaped, tower spires reaching toward the heavens.

Psionic Powers: Master psionic with the following powers: Astral projection, clairvoyance, empathy, telepathy, see aura, total recall, detect psionics, psychic diagnosis, psychic surgery (used to torture), healing touch, deaden pain, sleep, mind block auto-defense, group mind block, bio-manipulation, empathic transmission, hypnotic suggestion, mentally possess others, psi-sword and electrokinesis.

I.S.P.: 700

Combat abilities: Standard; same as all the Host.

Attacks Per Melee Round: Five by hand to hand combat or psionic attack. Or two by magic.

Bonuses (including attribute bonuses): +11 on all skills, including secondary skills. +1 on initiative, +9 to strike, +8 to parry, +7 to dodge, +4 to roll with impact, +4 to pull punch, critical strike on unmodified 18-20, and hands/finger claws are used as paired weapons. +2 save vs psionics, +7 to save vs spell and illusionary magic, +6 to save vs all other magic and +10 to save vs horror factor.

R.C.C. Skills: Skill knowledge is minimal because they rely entirely on their formidable powers. They can learn to read

and write as many as four different languages, learn 1D4 other technical skills and know the following at 85% efficiency: Basic math, literate in American, land navigation, streetwise, cryptography, forgery, palming, concealment, prowl, dance and horsemanship: monsters.

Transportation: Seldom relies on other creatures, but occasionally rides on a giant monster such as a battler parasite or dragon. Most travel under their own power.

Weapons: A particle beam rifle with three extra clips and a boom gun from Rifts Earth. A large, jewel encrusted sword with the following magic crystals: Magic bio-booster crystal and spell gem of destruction. The other gems are precious stones worth 280,000 credits back on Rifts Earth.

He also has 1D4 of every type of magic slime, potion and ointment, worms of blood, worms of mending, life force batteries, his private life force cauldron (it typically has about 1100 P.P.E. available at any given time), and experimental parasites (G.M.s go to town).

Body Armor: None.

Money: A treasure that would be worth 59+ million credits on Rifts Earth.

Symbiotic Organisms: He NEVER uses symbiotic organisms on himself, but provides them for his humanoid minions.

Minions: Lord Krikton surrounds himself with his parasites. A hundred ticks and half as many tangle and monster worms roam the halls of his palace tower. Two dozen flailers attend to his every need, while leapers and battle wagons guard the palace grounds and private rooms. Two battlers and an array of other monsters are also at his beck and call. His private life force cauldron is guarded by a half dozen priests and a score of the more powerful parasites. His kingdom also contains thousands of human slaves and demonic minions.

Size: 13 feet tall (3.96 m) and 1000 pounds (450 kg).

Appearance: Thin and skeletal with sunken eyes.

Salome

Queen of the Demon Goblins

Non-Player Character Villain

Salome is High Lord Lesion's trusted right-hand woman, friend and confidant. This friendship should tell one a great deal about this lady all by itself. Salome is an ambitious, power hungry, human shifter (summons and commands monsters, creates rifts, dimensional travel, etc.; see the **Rifts RPG** for details regarding shifters). She is also a ruthless fighter and skilled swordswoman. She uses a variety of symbiotic organisms, magic items, technologies, and supernatural slaves gathered from across the Megaverse. Among her most obvious symbiotes are the booster claw attached to her face and the M.D.C. providing chest wrap crawler. She is incredibly cunning, quick thinking and resourceful. When she wants to, Queen Salome can melt butter with seductive words and a soft voice, but beneath her attractive facade and false gentleness is a cold, black heart as hard as the resin mountains of Wormwood.

Rumors about the evil queen abound. Depending on which ones a character chooses to believe, she is a Sunaj assassin or the daughter of a Sunaj, a True Atlantean, metamorphed dragon,

witch or a temporal wizard. Many believe she is the lover of High Lord Lesion and/or the Unholy (she is not). There are also rumors that claim she is immortal and others that she has found the secret of immortality in a distant dimension. As is often the case, the myths make Salome out to be more than she really is. She is a mere mortal human (S.D.C. and hit points), who through her dimensional magic and travels, has spanned (not lived) hundreds of years exploring the Megaverse.

Salome and Lazarus Vespers are old acquaintances. They were fellow students who spent seven years under the tutelage of the same masters of magic. During this period they became close friends. Although their relationship was always platonic, not sexual, they shared many long hours of studying, trials, tribulations and triumphs. Even then, Lazarus saw a hard edge to her. She was driven by inner demons to be the best and to acquire knowledge and power. Although she had many lovers, he cannot say that she loved a single one. Toward the end of their studies, she seemed to view him less as a friend and more as a rival, but she always had a soft spot for him. After their studies were completed, they parted company, but their paths have crossed many times during their dimensional travels. Each time, Lazarus is struck by Salome's ever growing intensity, coldness and obsession with power.

They both spent time together in a Splugorth prison as slaves on a distant world. It was there that Salome was introduced to bio-wizardry and symbiotic organisms. Unfortunately, this introduction was as the subject of agonizing experiments. Lazarus saved her life and together they managed to escape the Splugorth. Sadly, the horrors she endured at the hands of her tormentors have scarred Salome's very soul. From that day forward she became a creature of darkness, concerned only with herself and the acquisition of power. She uses people as a means to an end and enjoys enslaving and controlling others. She delights in her role as queen and god to the demon goblins and has finally found satisfaction in her quest for power at the side of High Lord Lesion and serving the Unholy.

Lord Lesion has become her closest friend and mentor in the arts of manipulation, subterfuge and treachery. Salome, as always, is a quick learner and a star pupil. The Unholy treats her with respect that no other human can command and considers her an equal to the Host. He trusts her more than he does some of his demon brothers and warlords. In the unspoken hierarchy among the minions of darkness, Queen Salome is fourth, right below Lord Krikton. Of course, Lord Krikton despises her and thinks of Salome as Lesion's lap dog.

The cannibalistic **demon goblins** adore Salome as their queen and goddess. They are sworn to her for life and will fight to the death to protect her. She earned this adoration when she freed them from the tyrannical reign of a cruel alien intelligence. Under her rule, the demon goblins live a much happier and prosperous life. She is a strong, capable leader who shows her goblin minions tolerance, compassion and loyalty.

Queen Salome, Goddess of the Demon Goblins (pronounced Sah-low-m)

Alignment: Aberrant. Queen Salome has her own twisted code of honor. She will show mercy to a worthy opponent in the way of a quick death. She will never strike down an unarmed foe if he is worthy of her respect and honor; Lazarus Vespers



falls into this category. She will not torture or hurt children, innocent women, or an honorable opponent. Furthermore, she won't let her minions or demon charges hurt the innocent. Those who defy her orders are slain on the spot. She will keep her word of honor and live to the letter of any promise she makes. She is loyal to her mentor Lord Lesion and the Unholy. She will turn on them only if they should betray her first. If this should happen they will become mortal enemies!

Attributes: I.Q.: 15, M.E.: 21, M.A.: 20, P.S.: 18, P.P.: 14, P.E.: 17, P.B.: 24, Spd.: 13.

M.D.C.: By armor and symbiotes only; human.

Hit Points: 59 plus 14 S.D.C.

Horror Factor: Not applicable

P.P.E.: 163

O.C.C.: Shifter

Level of Experience: 10th level shifter

Shifter Abilities: Dimensional rift home, sense rifts, and others; see the **Rifts RPG**, pages 87-89, for all the character details.

Magic Knowledge: Salome knows the following spells: Sense magic, see aura, glove of daylight, call lightning, fire ball, circle of fire, levitate, float in air, fly like the eagle, breathe without air, climb, concealment, chameleon, shadow meld, time slip, teleport: lesser, teleport: superior, animate and control dead, turn dead, trance, exorcism, constrain being, control/enslave entity, summon and control canines, summon and control lesser beings, summon entity, create mummy, create golem, protection circle: simple and superior, close rift and dimensional portal/rift.

Psionic Powers: Minor Psionic with the following powers: telepathy, and speed reading.

I.S.P.: 59

Combat abilities: Hand to hand: basic

Attacks Per Melee Round: Four by hand to hand combat or two by magic.

Bonuses (including attribute and hand to hand bonuses): +1 on initiative, +1 to strike, +4 to strike with a sword, +2 to parry, +5 to parry with a sword, +2 to dodge, +4 to roll with impact, +4 to pull punch, +2 S.D.C. damage, critical strike on unmodified 19-20, Judo-style body throw (1D6 S.D.C.), and kick attack (1D6). +4 to save vs magic, +3 save vs psionics, +1 to save vs poison, +7 to save vs horror factor, 60% to evoke feelings of trust or intimidation and 70% to charm and impress.

O.C.C. Skills of Note: Hand to hand: basic, astronomy, basic math, lore: demon, lore: faerie, land navigation, wilderness survival, intelligence, dance, computer operation, pilot motorcycle, pilot hovercycle and horsemanship, all at 10th level. She speaks American, Dragonese and Gobblely at 98%, Demongogian at 70% and she is literate in American and Dragonese at 85%.

Transportation: Hovercycle, motorcycle or magic (fly, teleport, rift).

Body Armor: 155 M.D.C. total. Scale mail: 75 M.D.C. plus a chest wrap crawler providing an additional 80 M.D.C. (which regenerates).

Weapons: A vibro-knife, vibro-sword, Wilk's laser pistol with six extra E-clips, Splugorth psi-interrogator, a staff of pacification and an Impaler rune sword (1D6 × 10 M.D.; her favorite weapon).

Symbiotic Organisms: Wormwood: Booster claw, chest wrap crawler, finder crystal, null slime, stasis slime and restoration slime. She also has access to High Lord Lesion's life force batteries, life force cauldron, and magic slime potions and ointments. She had a coveted control gem but it was stolen by Lazarus Vespers who had a wormspeaker return it to Wormwood.

She had the following blood stones and crystals built into the gold plated forearm plate on her right arm: mini-healing stone (heal wounds, 4D6 three times), four robin egg-size energy cells (40 P.P.E. total) and the Eye of Wormwood (greater crystal). In addition, she has a basketball size energy crystal (180 P.P.E.) she keeps on a pedestal in her lair.

Splugorth/Atlantis: The evil queen has also acquired a number of symbiotic organisms from other dimensions (see **Rifts World Book Two: Atlantis**). They are often used on others as a means of control and torture. 2D4 mystic leeches, 2D4 zombitrons, 1D4 lobee-optos, 1D4 pathic healers, 1D4 doses of aerobes and 1D4 doses of plastirobes. She also has a Splugorth psi-interrogator, staff of pacification and Impaler rune sword.

Money: A treasure in gems, gold and other valuables worth 40+ million credits on Rifts Earth, plus her rune sword and other magic items.

Minions: In addition to the millions of demon goblins at her disposal, she has the following demons under her power to assist and protect her: a pair of dimensional ghouls, three tiny lasae demons and one malignant (see **Rifts Conversion Book One** for details regarding these creatures). Furthermore, 1D4+2 demon goblin assassins (8th level) are always in attendance at her side, with another 3D4 within earshot (these range in experience from 4th to 8th level). She dislikes parasites and tends to use them only for combat.

Size: Five feet ten inches tall (1.7 m) and 150 pounds (67.5 kg).
Appearance: Tall, thin and beautiful, with long black hair.

Note: Salome's quest for power is finally at an end. She is a major power among the Forces of Darkness, counsel to the Unholy, has her own kingdom within the empire of the Unholy, is considered a goddess by demon goblins and feared by the Champions of Light and most lesser beings. This is everything she has ever wanted. Now her goal is to keep this power and position, thus she diligently serves the Unholy and the Forces of Darkness. Salome was dismayed when Lazarus Vespers made his appearance and chose to fight on the "wrong" side.

Salome has a love/hate relationship concerning her old friend Lazarus Vespers. She is getting tired of him dogging her trail and trying to make her change her ways. She is increasingly perturbed that he seems to have made a career of following her and thwarting her campaigns. They have clashed a dozen times in the past. Sometimes she has won and other times he has. So far, she has resisted the temptation to kill him in deference to their past closeness and his saving her from the Splugorth. However, she will NOT let him take her dream away and will do whatever is necessary to preserve her kingdoms. If she must face Lazarus in a duel to the death, she is determined to stand triumphant over his corpse.

The Domain of The Unholy

The empire of the Unholy is a terrible place. There are a dozen demon cities and scores of human cities subjugated under the tyranny of the Unholy and the Forces of Darkness. There are also hundreds of ghosts towns and the occasional ruin. The following are key background elements and places of note.

Typical Human Free Cities

The last of the great and powerful free cities is Worldgate. All others located in the territories claimed by the Unholy are comparatively small and hang on to their freedom by the skin of their teeth. It is only a few years before they too will fall to the encroaching demon hordes. The best protected of the free cities will have an entire army camped within its borders — mainly freelancers and mercenaries. Others may have a supernatural or magical protector.

Medium to modestly large free cities:

Civilian Population: $1D4 \times 10,000$. The civilian populace will also participate in defending their homes as best they can, but only 15% will have magic or modern weapons, the rest will be armed with swords and clubs.

Armed Forces: $1D6 \times 1000$; 40% are likely to be paid mercenaries, 25% noble freelancers, 20% knights of the Hospital, 10% knights of the Temple, 2% monks, and 3% practitioners of magic and/or other powerful O.C.C.s/R.C.C.s.

The Average Mercenary: Is a $1D4 + 2$ level fighter O.C.C. and may include vagabonds, wilderness scouts, ex-knights and other O.C.C.s and D-bees.

The Average Citizen: Those untrained in combat will have two attacks per melee round and average about 33 M.D.C. Only 10% will have armor or special weapons.

Those citizens with basic combat skills (never more than 10% of the population) typically know hand to hand: basic, $1D4$ weapon proficiencies and seldom exceed 5th level experience ($1D4 + 1$ level). Average M.D.C. will be around 45 to 50 points (P.E. plus a 15 M.D.C. bonus and $1D6$ M.D.C. per level of experience). 60% will have body armor and 30% will have a special magic or mega-damage weapon.



T7/ R0/TT

Establishments Common to Human Cities:

- Food cave
- Dance halls
- Small market area
- Town square — a large area for social gatherings, festivals, parades, competitions and speech making.
- Civic center — a large building for social gatherings, festivals and competitions.
- A handful of pubs and diners — these are more like social gathering places than a place to get drunk.
- 1D4 Churches (most will have 1D4 priests at levels 1D4 + 4, 3D4 priests at 1D4 level and 1D6 at first level).
- 1 tiny monastery or modest temple with 3D4 monks of varying levels and disciplines, seldom higher than 8th level.
- Hospital with 1D4 priests, 1D4 + 1 wormspeakers, and 1D4 + 2 monks, all fourth to seventh level experience; plus 3D4 knights of the Hospital of second to fourth level experience and scores of citizens to assist them. A magic user or D-Bee healer may also be counted among them.
- 1 or 2 Magic shops
- 1 or 2 Armorer/resin worker shops (makes, repairs, sells)
- 1 or 2 Techno-wizard shops/technicians; may work with the armorer to provide weapons and equipment for mercenaries, the citizen's militia and city defenses.

Small free cities & towns:

Civilian Population: 1D4 × 1000. The civilian populace will also participate in defending their homes as best they can, but only 10% will have magic or modern weapons, the rest will be armed with swords and clubs.

Armed Forces: 1D4 × 100; 20% are likely to be paid mercenaries, 30% noble freelancers, 25% knights of the Hospital, 5% knights of the Temple, 5% monks, 5% priests and wormspeakers, 5% other powerful beings/O.C.C.s and 5% other.

The Average Mercenary: Is a 1D4 level fighter O.C.C. and may include vagabonds, wilderness scouts, ex-knights and other O.C.C.s and D-bees.

The Average Citizen: Those untrained in combat will have two attacks per melee round and average about 33 M.D.C. Only 5% will have armor or special weapons.

Those with combat skills (never more than 10% of the population) typically know hand to hand: basic, 1D4 weapon proficiencies and seldom exceed 5th level experience (1D4 + 1 level). Average M.D.C. will be around 45 to 50 points (P.E. plus a 15 M.D.C. bonus and 1D6 M.D.C. per level of experience). 40% will have body armor and 25% will have a special magic or mega-damage weapon.

Establishments Common to Human Cities: Fundamentally the same as the larger cities, but with less resources and smaller buildings.



The Submissive Human City Occupied by Demon Forces

Farther north there are communities that are 80% to 90% human, but under the rule and watchful eyes of the Forces of Darkness. The vast majority (60%) of the people in these cities have had their spirits broken and show little or no resistance to their demonic masters. They live a life of fear and pray that they and their families simply survive. They will not disobey the supernatural beings who dominate and harass them, but they will not lift a finger to help them either. They often turn a blind eye to visitors and underground activities.

60% of the people are completely lost to despair and are submissive to the monsters who dominate them. Even if a liberation force comes to fight the monsters, they will not join in the fight.

20% are so petrified or desperate (or evil) that they are traitors and informers and will help their supernatural masters defend the city against would-be liberators.

20% still cling to the spirit of freedom and will do what little things they can to oppose or undermine the demon hordes. This includes hiding and feeding knights and freedom fighters, providing information to the underground and so on.

Civilian Population: The number of people depends on whether it is a small or large city or town. 20% will be enslaved and forced to serve the invading monsters. Only serious troublemakers, combat troops and members of the underground are tortured, executed, eaten or sent to demon cities.

Armed Occupying Forces: 2D4 × 100 demon troops, 2D4 × 10 worm zombies, 2D4 × 10 lesser parasites and 1D4 × 10 greater parasites. 20% of the troops are sky riders and their mounts, 20% demon hounds and riders, 10% beast guards, 10% air fish, 20% demon goblins, 20% ram-rats, entities and other minions.

The Average Human Citizen: The inhabitants are families and peasant laborers. Most are untrained in the ways of combat. Those who show obvious resistance are slain, enslaved or sent away. Only those secretly involved with the underground will have access to weapons and armor.

Establishments common to these communities:

- Food cave
- Small market area
- Small hospital
- Town square — a large area for social gatherings, festivals, parades, competitions and speech making.
- Civic center — a large building for social gatherings, festivals and competitions.
- A handful of pubs and diners — these are more like social gathering places than a place to get drunk.
- 1D4 secret temples and places to worship and gather away from their demonic watchdogs. Each temple will have 1D4 resident priests at 1D4 level of experience and one at 7th level or higher.
- 1D4 secret tiny monasteries or modest temple with 1D4 monks of varying levels and disciplines, seldom higher than 8th level.
- 1D4 wormspeakers (1D4 + 2 level) who serve the community as healers and or teachers.

- No organized network of underground resistance fighters.
- No safe houses or weapon caches.
- No magic shops.
- 1D4 Armorer/resin worker shops (makes, repairs, sells), but kept under close supervision and have 1D4+2 demonic minions working in the shop.
- 1 or 2 Techno-wizard shops, but kept under close supervision and have 1D4+1 demonic minions working in the shop.

Places established by the monsters

- Small slave market — a haven for monsters.
- Slave pens — usually contains prisoners to be shipped to the demon cities).
- Meat market — a haven for monsters.
- Monster stables (demon hounds, skelter bats, parasites, etc.)
- Gladiatorial arena — a haven for monsters.
- Gambling parlor — a haven for monsters.
- Drug dens — a haven for monsters.
- Taverns — dangerous places occupied by monsters.
- Game rooms & arcades — including the gladiatorial-type contests, boxing, wrestling, brawling, dueling, the torturing of humanoids, sharp-shooting, gambling, etc.; a haven for monsters.
- Temple of Darkness, with eight or ten dark priests of 1D4+1 levels of experience, two at sixth level and one at 8th level or higher. This facility serves as the main base of operations for the demonic minions. A life force cauldron and slave pit filled with 3D4×10 life force batteries (with humans attached them) are found at this location. In addition to the priests, the temple of darkness will also be protected by 2D4×10 air fish, 1D4×10 worm zombies, 3D6 beast guards and 3D6 greater parasites. As many as 20 human slaves may also be found at the temple.



executed, eaten or sent to demon cities.

Armed Occupying Forces: 1D4×100 demon troops, 1D4×10 worm zombies and 1D4×10 parasites. 20% of the troops are sky riders and their mounts, 10% demon hounds and riders, 10% beast guards, 10% air fish, 20% demon goblins, 30% ram-rats and/or other minions.

The Average Human Citizen: Most are untrained in the ways of combat. The inhabitants are families and laborers. Priests of light and those who show obvious resistance are slain, enslaved or sent to demon cities. Only those secretly involved with the underground will have access to weapons and armor.

Establishments common to these communities:

- Food cave
- Dance halls
- Small market area
- Small hospital
- Town square — a large area for social gatherings, festivals, parades, competitions and speech making.
- Civic center — a large building for social gatherings, festivals and competitions.
- A handful of pubs and diners — these are more like social gathering places than a place to get drunk.
- 2D4 secret temples and places to worship and gather away from their demonic watchdogs. Each temple will have 1D4+1 resident priests at 1D4+1 level of experience and one at 7th level or higher.
- 1D4 secret tiny monasteries or modest temples with 1D4 monks of varying levels and disciplines, seldom higher than 8th level.
- 2D4 safe houses — secret places where champions of Light and members of the underground can hide without fear of discovery.
- 2D4 secret weapon caches.
- One secret medical facility; small like a safe house. Maintained by a priest or wormspeaker with healing powers.
- Underground resistance fighters: 1D4 priests of light (1D4+6 level), 1D4+1 wormspeakers (1D4+5 level), 1D4+1 knights of the Temple, 2D4+3 knights of the Hos-

The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing City Occupied by Demon Forces

These people pretend to be the quiet, obedient “sheep” that the Unholy desires. They show no evidence of threat or discord, but actively work against the Forces of Evil. This city will have a secret underground of freedom fighters establishing safe houses, temples, churches, food and weapon caches, and information networks. They also spread words of hope and encouragement among the people by reporting triumphs and good deeds. Of all the occupied cities, only 25% have a strong underground of resistance fighters. Most are the submissive cities like the ones described previously.

5% are traitors and informers.

20% are too frightened to be of any assistance and turn a blind eye to the goings on. They don't help the good guys or the enemy.

25% still cling to the spirit of freedom and will do what they can to help, but usually stay out of trouble.

50% are actively involved in the undermining of the monsters and long for the day that humans are free of their reign.

Civilian Population: The number of people depends on whether it is a small or large city or town. 20% will be enslaved and forced to serve the invading monsters. Only serious troublemakers, combat troops and members of the underground are tortured,

pital and 2D4 monks (all 1D4 + 4 level), 2D4 other O.C.C.s active in the underground (most are mid-level)

- No Magic shops
- 1D4 Armorers/resin worker shops (maker, repairs, sells), but kept under close supervision and likely (90% chance) to have 1D4 demonic minions working at the shop.
- 1 or 2 Techno-wizard shops, but kept under close supervision and likely (80% chance) to have 1D4 demonic minions working at the shop.

Places established by the monsters

- Small slave market — a haven for monsters.
- Slave pens/prison — used primarily to imprison characters to be shipped to demon cities for interrogation, torture, sacrifice or as slaves or fuel for life force batteries.
- Small meat market — a haven for monsters.
- Monster stables (demon hounds, skelter bats, parasites, etc.)
- Gladiatorial arena — a haven for monsters.



- Gambling parlor — a haven for monsters.
- Drug dens — a haven for monsters.
- Taverns — dangerous places occupied by monsters.
- Game rooms & arcades — including the gladiatorial-type contests, boxing, wrestling, brawling, dueling, the torturing of humanoids, sharp-shooting, gambling, etc.; a haven for monsters.
- Temple of Darkness, with 1D4 dark priests of 1D4 + 1 level of experience, two at sixth level and one at 8th level. This facility serves as the main base of operations for the demonic minions. If a life force cauldron is present (01-30% chance) it will be located here. Likewise, life force batteries (01-50% chance) will also be found at this location. In addition to the priests, the temple of darkness will also be protected by 2D4 × 10 air fish, 2D6 beast guards and 2D6 greater parasites.

- 1D4 Armorers (makes, repairs, sells)
- Fortune Telling Parlors
- Massage Parlors
- Gambling Parlors
- Drug Dens (most patrons are zoned out)
- Taverns (most patrons are rowdy and looking for trouble).
- Game rooms & Arcades (including the gladiatorial-type contests, boxing, wrestling, brawling, dueling, the torturing of humanoids, sharp-shooting, gambling, etc.).
- Other Shops & Services

Charun

Capital City of the Evil Empire & the Home of The Unholy

The Typical Demon City

The typical demon city will be predominately inhabited by supernatural demons and monstrous D-bees. Exactly which monsters can be found in the city will depend on its leaders, locations and other inhabitants (and the Game Master, of course). Some may be inhabited by only one or two specific races and a tiny handful of other monsters. Others may be very trans-dimensional and have a dozen or more races in equal numbers. Also don't forget that the use of symbiotic organisms and magic can transform ordinary humans and D-bees into monsters with special powers.

The vast majority (85%) of the humans found in demon cities are slaves or the unwilling citizens of the Unholy and his demonic legion. Humans and human-like humanoids with any measure of independence or power will be of an evil alignment and are likely to be a powerful practitioner of magic, a priest of darkness, an assassin, spy, evil warrior or bandit. Many unsavory, evil humans work for or with the Forces of Darkness.

Note: Remember that the humans of Wormwood are minor mega-damage beings even without M.D.C. armor. Even the scrawny peasant will have physical M.D.C. equal to his P.E. attribute number plus 1D6 M.D.C. per level of experience. Certain O.C.C.s like the knight, freelancer, priest and others, will offer additional physical M.D.C. just as Earth counterparts enjoy S.D.C. bonuses. Also note that Wormwood human assassins, thieves, bandits and criminals, not specifically described in this book, can be easily thrown together using the wilderness scout and vagabond O.C.C.s from the **Rifts RPG** (or even **Palladium (fantasy) RPG** characters). Such brigands will usually have a typical O.C.C. bonus of 30 M.D.C. or 1D4 × 10.

Establishments Common to Demon Cities

- Slave Markets (humans & others for sale and trade)
- Slave Pens (prison-like places where slaves are kept)
- Meat Market (including animal and humanoid products)
- Monster Stables (demon hounds, skelter bats, parasites, etc.)
- Gladiatorial Arena
- 1D6 Healers
- 1D4 Symbiotic Shops
- 1D4 Magic Shops

Charun is the center of power for the Forces of Darkness. It is the city where the Unholy was first summoned and enslaved by humans, thus it was the first to fall. It is typical of most demon cities. The living buildings have been reshaped into frightening and horrific shapes. Doorways and windows look like devouring mouths. Horns, spikes, teeth, fangs and death head shapes crown the spires and protrude from the walls. Blistering lumps and blemishes mar the walls and claw shaped appendages grope at the sky.

The Unholy's palace is a giant, tumorous dome surrounded by 13 huge crawling towers. Inside the palace, there are many great chambers that have been molded to resemble the ribs, bones and muscles of a living animal, giving visitors the feeling of being inside the belly of a monster. Beyond the first several stadium sized chambers are winding halls and ramps that create a labyrinth. These halls eventually lead upward and to smaller chambers that serve as the lairs of a hundred dark priests (all 4th to 10th level).

The center chamber in the priests' complex is a nightmarish temple. Along its walls are chains and cubicles for prisoners and places for torture. Menacing statues of monsters loom from the shadows and out of the walls. In one area is a bank of 13 life force batteries and their emaciated human energy supply chained before them. These people are so thin and pale they look more like animated skeletons than real people.

Towards the farthest wall are a series of pews capable of seating 500 people. Beyond them is a large, blood stained altar, and beyond it, a life force cauldron and another set of 13 hungry life force batteries. Above the sacrificial altar and cauldron, the ceiling has been shaped to resemble a 100 foot (30.5 m) wide, devouring maw. Recessed to the right of the altar is another, partially concealed life force cauldron. Behind this cauldron are shelves built into the wall. They are lined with slime potions, ointments and vats filled with slime. To the right of the altar is a large, claw shaped throne protruding from the floor. It is used by **Kaanker**, one of the Host who serves as the High Lord Priest of Charun (9th level, female, diabolic alignment).

The largest living chamber nearest the temple of darkness is the lair of Kaanker (there is a 01-33% chance of encountering her in this room). It is guarded by six air fish and a pair of flailer

parasites. She leaves it modestly guarded because she doesn't believe anybody is foolish enough to plunder it.

The highest chambers are reserved for visiting guests and dignitaries. These chambers have many windows and easy access to the domed roof.

The lair of the Unholy is located deep beneath the ground below the palace. Only High Lord Lesion, Lord Krikton, Lord Kaanker, Queen Salome, and a handful of others know the secret way through the labyrinth down into his dwelling place. The Unholy has selected this subterranean lair because he has learned that tunnels inside of Wormwood provide the same mystic power as do ley lines.

Intruders first pass a large, unused food cave (with plenty of hiding places). 2D4 tick parasites cling to the ceiling and two leaper parasites live among the rocks. They are trained to attack only humans, other than Queen Salome. Beyond this chamber is a large tunnel going downward, with many stalactite and stalagmite shaped pillars. It dead-ends about 300 feet (91 m) down. Trying to create an opening at the end of the tunnel is futile; it's solid Wormwood. However, creating an opening in the floor about halfway down the tunnel will reveal a series of three equal-sized chambers. This is the lair of the Unholy.

The ambient energy in all of the chambers is equal to standing on a ley line. One chamber is the Unholy's parlor. It contains his personal life force cauldron with a vat of null slime and a vat of stasis slime placed in the corner. Shelves near the cauldron are cluttered with a dozen different potions, books, skulls, a preserved zembach in a jar, implements of torture and personal items. Two large thrones rise up from the floor near a slab of living rock that serves as a table.

The other room is his bed chambers, with more shelves lined with personal items, trophies, and memorabilia, including the head/helmet of a glitter boy.

The third room is his treasure trove. Value is provided in Rifts Earth credits. It contains 1D4 × 10 million credits worth of precious gems, 1D4 × 10 million in gold and silver. In addition, there are 1D4 × 10 lesser energy crystals, 1D6 greater energy crystals, 1D4 blank spell gems, a bio-stasis field blood stone, 3D4 different symbiotic organisms, miscellaneous magic items (nothing too cosmic), a handful of tech-weapons, and a variety of mementos from Wormwood and other dimensions. Protruding from the wall is a large claw. Clutched in its grasp is the fractured skull of a great horned dragon (the genuine article). A similar claw holds the remains of a giant (a vanquished foe). **Note:** Game Masters can add to, delete from or modify this treasure. See more about the Unholy in the section describing the Forces of Darkness.

Population Breakdown of Charun:

- 3.5 million demons and monsters of all kinds.
- 1.2 million human slaves (100,000 of whom are hooked up to life force batteries).
- 300,000 D-bee slaves
- Two Hosts: The Unholy and Kaanker.
- 56 Crawling towers
- 250,000 parasites of various types, including three battlers.

Atala

High Lord Lesion's Kingdom

A few miles southwest of the city of Charun is Atala, the Kingdom of High Lord Lesion, the second largest of the demon cities. It is another sprawling kingdom of demons. Lord Mar is the governor of the area that includes Charun, Atala, Goblin Gate, the Mountain of Skulls and several occupied towns of submissive or enslaved humans. It is Lord Mar who takes care of the daily administration of the kingdoms, particularly when Lord Lesion is involved in plotting or directing combat strategies.

Note: Also see High Lord Lesion's NPC character description.



Population Breakdown of Atala:

- 1.5 million demon and monster citizens of all kinds (20% are demon goblins).
- 1D4 × 100,000 demon troops at any given time. These are transients always sent back out into the field (remember, Lord Lesion is the five star general of the armies of darkness).
- 100,000 various greater parasites including three battlers.
- 700,000 human slaves (60,000 of whom are hooked up to life force batteries).
- 100,000 D-bee slaves.
- Two Hosts: High Lord Lesion and Governor, Lord Mar.
- 100 Crawling towers

Goblin Gate

Queen Salome's Kingdom

The suburb of Atala is Goblin Gate. It is under the direct command of Queen Salome and occupied primarily by her legion of demon goblins. Goblin Gate is also noteworthy for its large number of free humans, all evil or selfish and sworn to the Forces of Darkness. When the Confessor was a minion of evil, he resided in this city — so he knows it, Atala and Charun well.

The buildings tend to be small and circular/bubble-shaped to accommodate the short demon goblins. The only large structures are Salome's crawling palace tower and four other crawling towers.

Queen Salome usually has a rift open to the demon goblins' homeworld and can bring through 1D4 × 10,000 additional troops every hour, up to about half a million. **Note:** Queen Salome is frequently away (75% of the time) with High Lord Lesion, doing his dirty work or engaged in some scheme of her own. See her NPC character description for more details about the Queen.

Population Breakdown of Goblin's Gate:

- 500,000 Demon goblins
- 100,000 Air fish
- 70,000 Other demons.
- 30,000 Human sworn to serve the Forces of Darkness
- 55,000 Human slaves.
- 5 Crawling towers

The Unholy Desert

Southeast of the Mountain of Skulls is the Unholy Desert. It gets its name because of its relatively close proximity to the Mountain of Skulls and the Unholy's seat of power. The temperature in this desert is a consistent 110 degrees Fahrenheit. It is also dotted with several ghost towns and the wreckage of a giant spaceship from another dimension that crash-landed 400 years ago. Both humans and demons tend to avoid this place, although the heat has little effect on true demons.

The Mountain of Skulls

This is a resin mountain that no longer flows with fresh resin. When the Unholy began his conquest of Wormwood, he directed his inhuman troops to heap the remains of slain humans at the base of the mountain. Rumor claims that he had sworn that he'd use the bones of man to cover the mountain in grim tribute to his power and revenge. Over the centuries (especially in the early days), the bones of millions who fell in battle have been piled at the foot of the mountain. At some places the bones reach a hundred feet (30.5 m) deep. The macabre ring of bones has given the mountain its name. **Note:** Wild parasites, insects and scavengers from other worlds make their home among the bones and in the mountain.



Demon Mountains

The Unholy Desert ends at the Demon Mountains. This range of living mountains gets its name mainly because it is located in the heart of demon territory. There is only one city located in or around these mountains. However, bandits, rogue demons, wild parasites and the occasional intelligent monster make their homes here.

Rock Ridge

An infamous location of another battle saint is known as Rock Ridge. The ridge is located in the Demon Mountains and is the home of an evil adult dragon who calls herself "The Rock." Rock is a devious and cruel creature who loves confrontations with heroes and adventurers. She found Wormwood purely by accident while fleeing the wrath of some angry Atlantean undead slayers. She has made Rock Ridge her home (for the last 139 years) where she conducts experiments in magic, torture and dimensional rifting/summoning. She is an expert in summoning supernatural monsters.

The dragon is an ally of the Unholy and serves as the main defender of Rock Ridge. At the foot of the ridge is the location of a giant rocky outcropping the size of three-story building. Beneath it lays a dormant battle saint and a short way above it, a battle saint orb.

The Defenders of Rock Ridge

- 10 Poltergeist Entities
- 4 Harpies
- 2 Tectonic Entities
- 1 Manticore
- 1 Baal-roq
- 1 Goqua (10th level)
- 1 Great Horned Dragon (The Rock)

Note: A family of 1D4 + 2 wild, feathered serpents also live at Rock Ridge. A number of lesser and a few greater parasites also live in the mountains around Rock Ridge.

The Rock — Great Horned Dragon

Alignment: Diabolic

Attributes of Note: I.Q. 28, M.A. 30, M.E. 26, P.S. 48, P.P. 21, P.E. 23, P.B. 28, Spd 50 running, but 130 (90 mph/148 km) flying; female.

M.D.C.: 6500

P.P.E.: 1100

Level of Experience: 9th level shifter and dimensional traveler.

Valuables of Note: One million credits worth of gems, jewelry, gold, body armor and miscellaneous equipment. Exactly what magic might be available, if any, is left to the Game Master.

Note: Her old friend and travelling companion is a goqua who calls himself, "He Who Seeks" (see **Rifts Conversion Book One** for complete data on goqua; Baal-rogs, entities, harpies, and manticore are also found in that book).



Sky Cape

This is a small city located in the Demon Mountains and mainly inhabited by sky riders and their monstrous animals.

Population Breakdown of Sky Cape:

- 158,000 Sky riders
- 34,000 Skelter bats
- 12,000 Feathered Serpents
- 20,000 Air fish
- 1000 Other demons.
- 30,000 Human slaves
- 1 Crawling tower

Valley of Spires

Southwest of the Demon Mountains is a huge valley filled with 500 foot (153 m) tall spires rising up from the ground of Wormwood. The spires are so thick and have so many large, strong branches, that travel through the valley is difficult even for small creatures like humans (reduce speed by half). Legend suggests that somewhere in the Valley is a dormant battle saint, but neither humans nor monsters have been able to find it. Wild ticks, harpies, rogue air fish (evil bandits) and a few other monsters inhabit the Valley of Spires (it's ideal for small flying and climbing creatures; gargoyles would love it). Beyond the Valley are a cluster of tall hills.

Krik Lesion

This is a submissive human city ruled by a High dark priest who has taken the name of Krik Lesion in homage to his dark masters. He has also renamed the city the same. Krik Lesion is diabolic evil and a 10th level dark priest. He is a notorious master of deception and uses assassins, spies, torture and brutality to get and keep what he wants.

The seat of power at Krik Lesion is a crawling tower where the temple of darkness is located. The crawling tower contains Krik Lesion's army of demons and its priests. There are 6D6 young dark priests (1st & 2nd level), 2D4 × 10 postulants (assis-

tants with no mystic powers and only the most basic combat skills), six mid-experienced priests (5th and 6th level) and two 8th level high priests.

Population Breakdown of Krik Lesion:

- 300 Demon warriors of various types (all lesser beings).
- 30,000 submissive human citizens.
- 8,000 Human slaves.

Demon Bridge

This is one of the desert areas and the location of a permanent dimensional doorway that keeps opening to different worlds inhabited by supernatural beings.

Passing through the rift will send the character(s) into a random domain of demons!

A battle saint and an orb is rumored to exist somewhere in this area but it has never been uncovered and may not really exist.

Random Dimension Table

- 01-20 Gargoyles
- 21-25 Demons
- 26-30 Deevils
- 31-40 Vampires
- 41-50 Rumbler
- 51-60 Demon Goblins
- 61-65 Splugorth or Splugorth held domain
- 66-79 Morphworms or Entrancers
- 80-90 Other (see **Rifts Conversion Book 1** or **Rifts Conversion Book 2: Pantheons of the Megaverse** for ideas).
- 91-00 Rifts Earth

Demon Camp

West of the Demon Mountains is another desert. Toward its southern end is a place known simply as Demon Camp. This is little more than an armed camp in the middle of the wilderness.

Population Breakdown of Demon Camp:

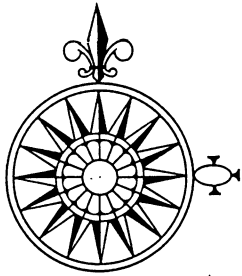
- 14 Feathered serpents and riders
- 10 Skelter bats and riders
- 12 Demon beast guards: Armored
- 10 Demon beast guards: Canine
- 10 Ram-rats
- 10 Demon hounds
- 8 Demon hound riders
- 6 Worm zombies
- 2 Shades (commanders, 6th and 7th level)
- 2 Dark priests (both 5th level)
- 1 Evil wormspeaker (6th level)

Kriktonspire

Kriktonspire is a medium-size demon city located west of Charun. It has many tall, pointed buildings with spiky outcroppings and insect-like appendages and designs. It is the home of Lord Krikton, Master of Parasites. He is the creator of the Krikton flailer, leaper and battle wagon. He continues his work developing new parasites and festering in his envy of the Unholy. He covets power and longs to be the leader of the Host. His jealousy

THE DARK DOMAIN

LALIBELA



MORPHIA

DEMROGGAN

KRIEGSTAR

KRIKTONSPIRE

ATALA

GOBLIN GATE

CHARUN

MOUNTAIN OF SKULLS

KRIKTON DESERT

THE UNHOLY DESERT

DEMON CAMP

DEMON MOUNTAINS

ROCK RIDGE

VALLEY OF SPIRES

SKY CAPE

MAP CODE KEY

- ACTIVE (DEMON) CITY OR TOWN
 - ★ HUMAN CITY OCCUPIED BY DEMONS
 - GHOST TOWNS
 - ||||| NATURAL PILLARS
 - ⚡ MOUNTAINS
 - ⌋ HILLS
 - ▨ DESERT
- 100 MILES / 160 KM PER HALF INCH

KRIK LESION

THE GREAT BARRIER DESERT

DEMON BRIDGE

DEMON TERRITORY
HUMAN TERRITORY

WORLDGATE

THE NORTHERN MOUNTAINS

of the Unholy and High Lord Lesion is so intense that lord Krikton would consider secretly helping the Champions of Light to destroy them; provided he would be able to save the empire and his place as ruler. Note: Also see his NPC character description.

Population Breakdown of Kriktonspire:

- 500,000 demons and monsters of all kinds.
- 150,000 human slaves (50,000 of whom are hooked up to life force batteries).
- 50,000 D-bee slaves
- 250,000 lesser parasites of various types
- 20,000 Worm zombies
- 30,000 Krikton Flailers
- 50,000 Krikton Leapers
- 15,000 Krikton Battle Wagons
- 5 Battlers.
- 6 Crawling towers

Note: He is currently developing new parasites, which prowl the streets of Kriktonspire.

Demroggan

This is another large demon city with a variety of monsters and many dark priests. The lord of the city is Lyr of the Host.

Population Breakdown of Demroggan:

- 2.1 million demons and monsters of all kinds.
- 1.1 million human slaves (100,000 of whom are hooked up to life force batteries).
- 100,000 D-bee slaves
- Three Hosts; the governor of the region is Lord Lyr.
- 50,000 lesser parasites of various types.
- 10,000 greater parasites, including two battlers.
- 24 Crawling towers

Morphia

Morphia is a medium-size city dominated by morphworms. It is located northwest of Demroggan.

Population Breakdown of Morphia:

- 100,000 Morphworms
- 100,000 Demon goblins
- 50,000 Air fish
- 50,000 Other minions, including entrancers, dybbuk, succubus and incubus.
- 330,000 Human slaves.
- 5000 parasites of various types.
- 6 crawling towers.

Lalibela

This a demon city built around the permanent dimensional doorway to Rifts Earth. On the other side is the ancient ruins of Lalibela in the Ethiopian Mountains. Dimensional raiders are dispatched from this city to Earth. Its troops and many inhuman citizens are armed with vibro-weapons, Kittani-style plasma weapons, and even the occasional rune weapon, bio-wizard device, rail gun, and energy rifle.

Population Breakdown of Lalibela:

1.3 million demons and monsters of all kinds, including evil temporal raiders and Sunaj assassins. 20% are experienced dimensional raiders.

1 million human slaves (100,000 of whom are hooked up to life force batteries).

- 150,000 D-bee slaves
- Two Hosts
- 50,000 lesser parasites of various types.
- 10,000 greater parasites, including two battlers.
- 12 Crawling towers

Kriegstar

This is an armed encampment of demons around a hill that has turned into a small town. Inside the hill is a dormant Battle Saint. Their mission is to keep Champions of Light from acquiring the powerful war machine. Two crawling towers rest atop the hill. Sky riders on skelter bats make regular patrols.

Population: Approximately 2500 troops (including 100 human slaves attached to life force batteries).

- 500 Air fish
- 500 Demon goblins
- 200 Demon beast guards (50/50 split)
- 200 Ram-rats
- 432 Sky riders
- 244 Skelter bats
- 144 Demon hounds
- 144 Active human slaves
- 72 Demon hound riders
- 48 Worm zombies
- 24 Dark Priests (most are 4th level; four are 7th)
- 48 Other (including 1D4 Rathos, 2D6 Morphworms)
- 2 Crawling Towers



Experience Tables

Hospitaller Knights

1	0,000-2,150
2	2,151-4,300
3	4,301-8,600
4	8,601-17,200
5	17,201-25,500
6	25,501-36,000
7	36,001-52,000
8	52,001-73,000
9	73,001-98,000
10	98,001-134,000
11	134,001-184,000
12	184,001-240,000
13	240,001-295,000
14	295,001-365,000
15	365,001-425,000

Apok

1	0,000-2,200
2	2,201-4,400
3	4,401-9,000
4	9,001-19,000
5	19,001-28,000
6	28,001-40,000
7	40,001-60,000
8	60,001-80,000
9	80,001-100,000
10	100,001-150,000
11	150,001-200,000
12	200,001-275,000
13	275,001-350,000
14	350,001-425,000
15	425,001-525,000

Freelancer & Symbiotic Warrior

1	0,000-1,900
2	1,901-3,700
3	3,701-7,400
4	7,401-14,800
5	14,801-22,100
6	22,101-31,200
7	31,201-41,300
8	41,301-54,400
9	54,401-75,500
10	75,501-105,600
11	105,601-140,700
12	140,701-190,800
13	190,801-240,900
14	240,901-292,000
15	292,001-335,000

Templar Knights

1	0,000-2,100
2	2,101-4,200
3	4,201-8,400
4	8,401-16,800
5	16,801-25,000
6	25,001-35,000
7	35,001-50,000
8	50,001-70,000
9	70,001-95,000
10	95,001-130,000
11	130,001-180,000
12	180,001-234,000
13	234,001-285,000
14	285,001-345,000
15	345,001-410,000

Priests of Light

1	0,000-2,200
2	2,201-4,400
3	4,401-8,800
4	8,801-17,600
5	17,601-27,800
6	27,801-37,900
7	37,901-55,100
8	55,101-75,200
9	75,201-100,300
10	100,301-145,500
11	145,501-190,600
12	190,601-245,700
13	245,701-295,800
14	295,801-345,900
15	345,901-415,100

Monk & Entrancer

1	0,000-2,200
2	2,201-4,400
3	4,401-8,800
4	8,801-17,600
5	17,601-24,000
6	24,001-35,000
7	35,001-50,500
8	50,501-72,500
9	72,501-98,500
10	98,501-140,500
11	140,501-200,500
12	200,501-250,500
13	250,501-300,500
14	300,501-400,500
15	400,501-500,000

Wormspeaker

1	0,000-2,150
2	2,151-4,300
3	4,301-8,600
4	8,601-18,600
5	18,601-26,600
6	26,601-36,600
7	36,601-54,600
8	54,601-75,600
9	75,601-99,600
10	99,601-135,600
11	135,601-185,600
12	185,601-240,600
13	240,601-290,600
14	290,601-343,600
15	343,601-423,600

Shade

1	0,000-2,500
2	2,501-5,000
3	5,001-10,000
4	10,001-20,000
5	20,001-28,500
6	28,501-38,500
7	38,501-52,000
8	52,001-72,000
9	72,001-105,000
10	105,001-140,000
11	140,001-190,000
12	190,001-235,000
13	235,001-290,000
14	290,001-350,000
15	350,001-520,000

Temporal Raider

1	0,000-2,700
2	2,701-5,400
3	5,401-10,800
4	10,801-21,600
5	21,601-31,600
6	31,601-42,800
7	42,801-62,000
8	62,001-90,000
9	90,001-120,000
10	120,001-170,000
11	170,001-220,000
12	220,001-290,000
13	290,001-400,000
14	400,001-500,000
15	500,001-700,000

Demon Goblin, Demon Hound Rider, Ram-Rat & Sky Rider

1	0,000-1,970
2	1,971-3,940
3	3,941-7,880
4	7,881-14,880
5	14,881-21,880
6	21,881-31,880
7	31,881-41,220
8	41,221-54,440
9	54,441-74,660
10	74,661-104,880
11	104,881-139,220
12	139,221-189,440
13	189,441-239,660
14	239,661-290,880
15	290,881-335,000

Morphworm, Rumbler, & Holy Terror

1	0,000-2,900
2	2,901-4,800
3	4,801-9,600
4	9,601-19,200
5	19,201-29,200
6	29,201-49,000
7	49,001-79,000
8	79,001-119,000
9	119,001-169,000
10	169,001-230,000
11	230,001-300,000
12	300,001-380,000
13	380,001-470,000
14	470,001-600,000
15	600,001-800,000



Optional Monster Races & Notes

The dark priest, the Unholy, the Host, air fish, beast guards, demon hounds, feathered serpents, skelter bats, worm zombies, parasites and symbiotes are NOT available as player characters.

See **Rifts World Book Three: England** for character data regarding the temporal raider, temporal wizard, temporal warrior and traditional knight. See the **Rifts RPG** for the experience tables and additional data about the techno-wizard, wilderness scout and others.

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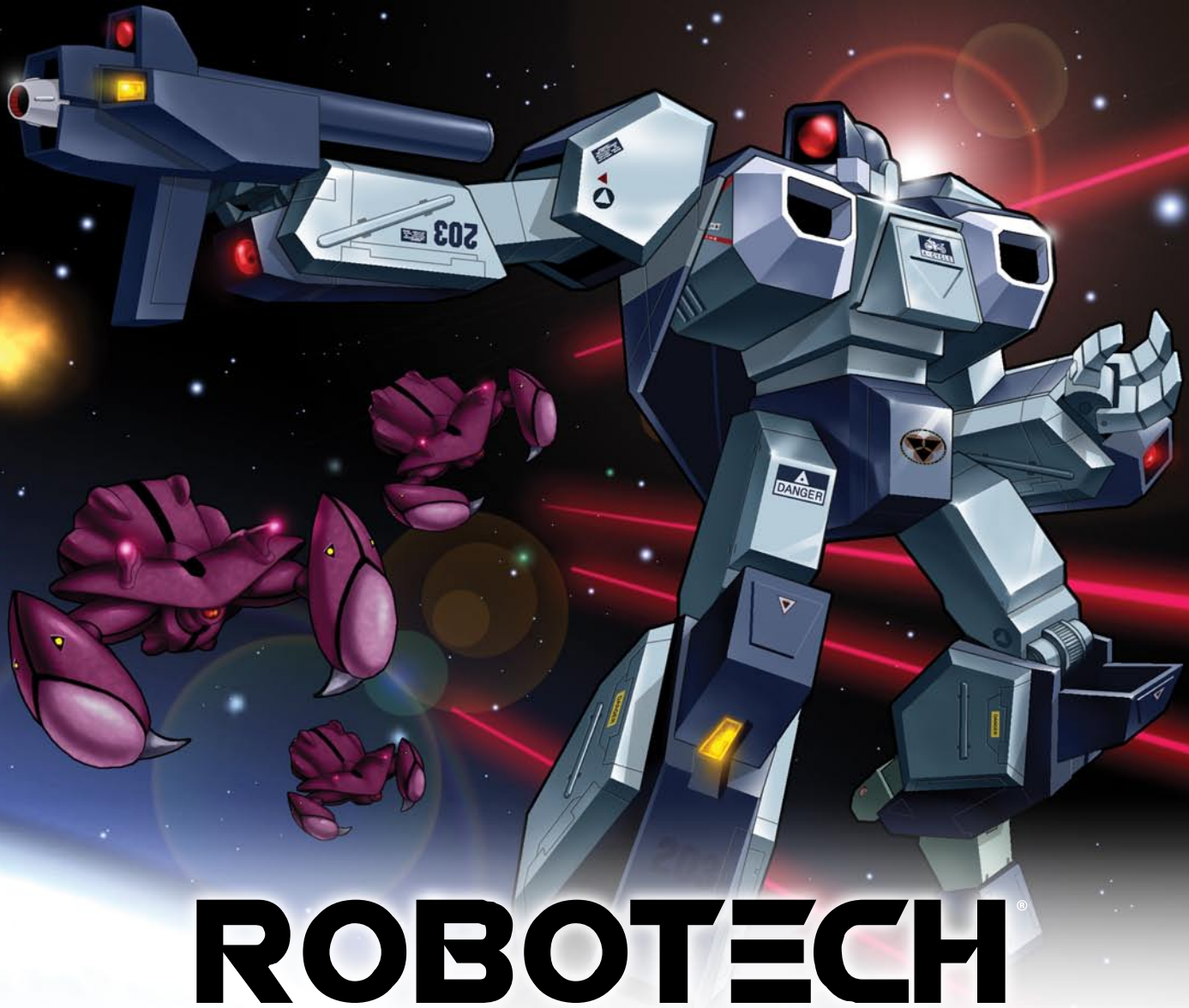
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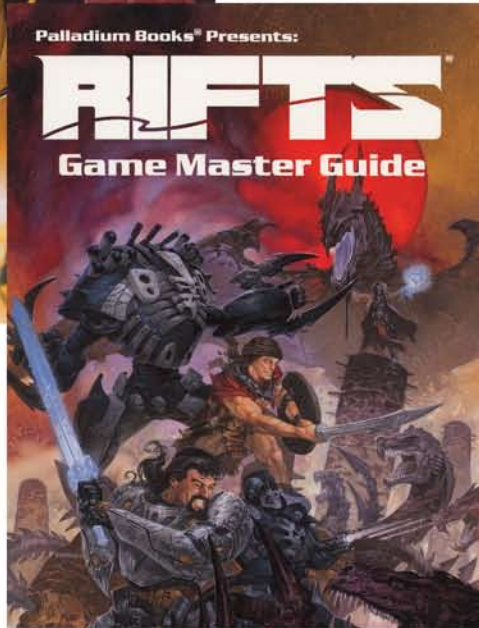
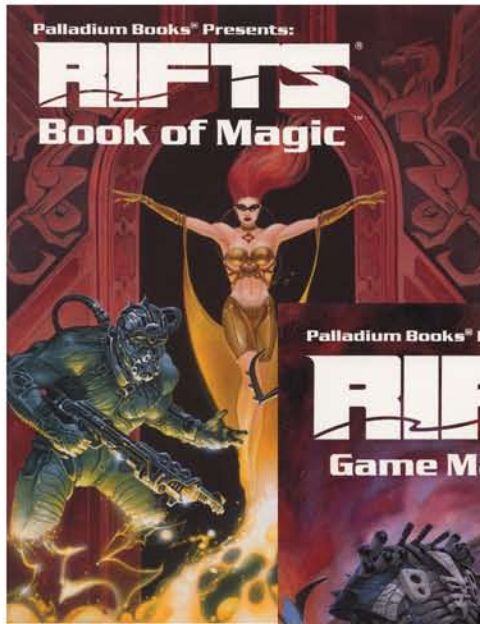
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