

An Adventure for *TORG: ROLEPLAYING THE POSSIBILITY WARS*™

TORG

CITY OF DEMONS



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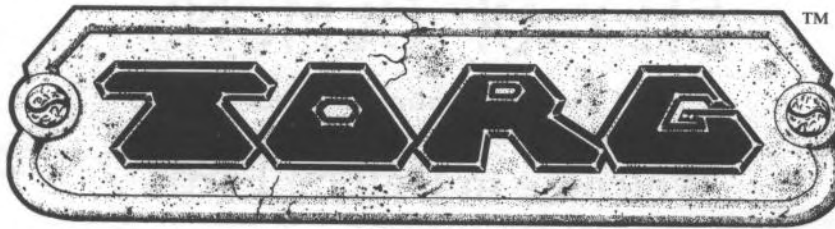
Welcome to Hell on Earth

CITY OF DEMONS

By Christopher Kubasik

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Roleplaying the Possibility Wars™

City of Demons

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20565



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“There is nothing in life so delightful as a compromise. It lets a man go to bed comfortably at night, while letting me join him in his nightmares.”

— Thratchen

Prologue



Great flames rose out of bronze urns. The flames hungered to eat the darkness of the large room, to consume it and flood the chamber with red light, but the darkness of Illmound Keep was not so easily defeated. Deep shadows hung in the corners and along the rafters. Within the shadows, strange creatures with gleaming eyes of gold and silver scuttled about and argued over scraps of rotted food.

Thratchen sat upon a throne made of bones and skulls. The silvered metal parts of his body caught the light of the red flames and mirrored it. His clawed hands, his large, folded wings, his fearsome visage, seemed to writhe with fire.

Ahead of him churned the maelstrom of a reality storm, powered by an eternity shard called the Heart of the Coyote. The storm had boiled on and on for nearly two years. Thratchen peered into the storm and saw the Gaunt Man, High Lord of Orrorsh, and victim of Thratchen's betrayal.

Thratchen saw the withered flesh of the Gaunt Man ripped apart by the storm. The storm did not rend the Gaunt Man, as the werewolves of Orrorsh might assault a helpless child. Instead it frayed the edges of his body, and pulled the fabric of the Gaunt Man's body into its coiling force. Not just the Gaunt Man's flesh, but his very being, was swirled about, lost and formless, dragged to the precipice of oblivion.

Thratchen leaned forward, desperate, curious. Would this be the moment at last? Would his damnable former master finally be gone?

No.

As he had done so many times before, the Gaunt Man imposed his will. He mustered the awesome strength that was his to command and gathered himself — piece by piece — together once again. He clawed his being back from the force of the storm, re-built himself, rescued himself from the maw of nonexistence.

Thratchen lowered his head, weary of the sight. How many more times could the Gaunt Man accomplish that miracle? When he had helped send the Gaunt Man into the maelstrom months ago, he had expected the Raider to perish. The Gaunt Man's realm, Orrorsh, would be available for Thratchen to claim, and he would become, in the Gaunt Man's stead, a High Lord.

But the Gaunt Man did not perish. He lived on, despite the power of the storm. The two of them, the Gaunt Man and the storm, were almost evenly matched.

Thratchen had thought that even if the Gaunt Man were not dead, he could use the Gaunt Man's situation to his own advantage. While the Gaunt Man remained trapped in the storm, Thratchen believed he could conquer Orrorsh, master its reality and its inhabitants.

But such goals seemed beyond even Thratchen's abilities. He had allies in Orrorsh, but he had no true feel for realm's reality. He was from Tharkold, and the magic of Tharkold and Orrorsh were so different that he simply could not feel its logic in his cybernetic body. Both were based on terror, but each of its own flavor.

He looked up and his eyes widened. Ahead of him, he was certain, the face of the Gaunt Man peered out of the storm and smiled at him. The man's eyes burned with dark malevolence as they met Thratchen's eyes. The smile broadened, turning his taut face into a death mask. Then the storm's power overcame him. Slowly it frayed him at the edges and the Gaunt Man dissolved toward oblivion. The storm took his eyes last, and the whole while they remained transfixed upon Thratchen.

Thratchen stood completely still, his breathing quick, and watched with terror as the eyes finally faded.

Never had the Gaunt Man been able to do that.

The storm was losing. The Gaunt Man simply was the more powerful,

and would outlast the storm. And with the storm gone, the Gaunt Man would be free.

What would he do? He had turned his back on Tharkold, and then betrayed the Gaunt Man. He needed a safe haven, but who would take him in now?

An idea occurred to him, and he stood straight, his wings unfurling slightly.

Another traitor, perhaps? Someone who might be sympathetic to the benefits of treachery? Someone who might be surrounded by enemies?

Jezrael, perhaps?

His agents had brought him word that Tharkold, his native cosm, had attacked Los Angeles on the North American continent. With that news came the revelation that Kranod had been deposed by one of the Race, a Janissary named Jezrael. Apparently Malgest, Tharkold's Darkness Device, had grown tired of Kranod's incompetence, and had backed Jezrael against the demon. She defeated It in hand-to-hand combat and took the title of High Lord. Her allies were few, for most demon lords would have nothing to do with her.

She needs help, Thratchen thought. Perhaps even from the likes of me.

He would have to make a gift, of course, for she would never take him into her court empty handed. But what?

Perhaps he could find something in Los Angeles, her beachhead on Earth. Help her war, somehow. He would keep his actions a secret, telling no one of his presence. He could not fail her then, for she would have no expectations. He would simply act, and let the actions speak for themselves.

He glanced back at the storm. Once more the Gaunt Man stared out of it, once more his eyes transfixed on Thratchen. The Gaunt Man smiled at him.

Certainly it would not harm him to leave Orrorsh for a while.

No. A trip to Los Angeles seemed a wonderful idea ...





D. Gelon



Introduction



City of Demons is an adventure for *Torg: Roleplaying the Possibility Wars*. Adventures for *Torg* take place on Earth in the Near

Now. Earth is besieged by several powerful beings from other realities. The High Lords, the leaders of the invaders, have the power to conquer other cosmos by imposing their own realities upon their victims.

Although the High Lords worked together in the invasion of Earth, the disappearance of the Gaunt Man has allowed each of the former allies to pursue his goals unchecked. Each of the High Lords is attempting to secure enough possibility energy to become the Torg, a being of near infinite power and destruction.

You must have the *Torg* roleplaying game to play this adventure, and both the *Nippon Tech* and *Tharkold* sourcebooks would be helpful, but are not necessary.

Aside from certain props, the contents of this adventure are for the gamemaster only. Any player reading this adventure will ruin the adventure for herself and everyone else.

The gamemaster should familiarize themselves with the entire adventure before running it. Thus if the players have their characters do something unexpected during the course of the adventure, the gamemaster will be able to handle it in a manner that will not conflict with later details of the story.

Adventure Background

The techno-horror realm of Tharkold recently invaded the city of Los Angeles. The invasion was very small compared to the attacks made on Earth by other Possibility Raiders, but then, Tharkold has had a hard time of it of late. First, the Tharkoldu invasion of Kadandra was repelled, and then Tharkold's attack on the Soviet Union collapsed as Core Earth forces destroyed the stela just as the

maelstrom bridge was forming.

These defeats turned Malgest, the Tharkoldu Darkness Device, against Kranod, Tharkold's High Lord. Malgest gave strength to a woman named Jezrael, a human warrior from the ranks of Kranod's elite guard. Jezrael defeated Kranod, and took control of Tharkold. However, few demons wish to follow the orders of a former human slave. Jezrael is only beginning to build her power base, and her attack on Earth had of necessity to be limited.

She attacked Earth with a specific purpose in mind. She investigated Kranod's failed attack on this cosm and learned that Nippon agents had been largely responsible for the techno-demon's defeat. Using the idea of vengeance against 3327 and his forces as a rallying point to bring the demon lords in line with her rule, Jezrael attacked Los Angeles, where the Kanawa Corporation has a strong presence.

Nippon has invested a tremendous amount of time and resources into the city, which makes it a tempting target. In addition, it is far enough away from 3327's power base in Japan that he can provide only limited aid to the forces defending the city.

Many of the demons decided to help her achieve her goal—at least for the time being. And that was what Jezrael sought—time to gather power.

Meanwhile, in the realm of Orrorsh, Thratchen, a former lieutenant of Kranod, watched the reality storm that held the Gaunt Man prisoner weaken. He knew that the High Lord would soon be free. Fearing for his life, he decided to return to Tharkold, his native reality, and try to claim a spot in the new Tharkoldu court.

However, he didn't want to simply appear and ask for grace from Jezrael. That would make him appear weak, and he would have to accept whatever scraps she offered. An ever-ambitious creature, Thratchen wanted to arrive with a gift that would gain him great glory in Jezrael's eyes.

Thus he decided to travel to Los

Angeles and see if he might aid her in any way. He decided to keep his presence in the city a secret, searching for information that might prove valuable to her.

It took a few months for him to sort out the politics. The super-struggles of the High Lords paled against the subtle power games played out in the ruined city of Los Angeles. Kanawa agents, Tharkoldu demons, street gangs, the US military, and the local city bureaucracy all contributed to a political nightmare. But Thratchen is an exceptional techno-demon, being both patient and subtle. He watched from the shadows, hired gang members to be his eyes and ears, gathered information, sifted it, discarded the useless data, and correlated the important details.

After a few months he discovered something that might buy him a place in Jezrael's court: a demon lord named Garthak, leader of a powerful pride, was planning a coup against the new High Lord. Thratchen could not find out why Garthak expected to win such an endeavor, but the discovery of the intended betrayal was enough.

Thratchen decided to eliminate Garthak without telling Jezrael. This would make it his own victory, and gain him more favor. Besides, if he defeated Garthak himself, he might get the demon lord to submit, and he would then gain a demon pride of his own.

But Thratchen knew he was no match for Garthak and his pride by himself. He needed help. But whom to turn to? Certainly not other techno-demons, for he did not yet know who he could trust. And it was extremely doubtful that Nippon agents would be willing to work with him.

No. Thratchen knew he needed someone on the outside of the conflict, someone used to working the ins and outs of the Possibility Wars. Finally, Thratchen realized he had already worked with exactly the kind of people he needed now.

Storm Knights.





D. Gelon

Adventure Synopsis

The adventure begins when Thratchen approaches the Storm Knights and outlines his plan. He does not lie to them about the situation in Los Angeles, or about the details of his plan. In fact, at no time in the adventure does he try to deceive the Storm Knights.

After checking his story, the Knights will discover that there Garthak is indeed planning a coup, one which will play into the hands of Nippon by weakening the Tharkoldu realm. They will also learn something Thratchen does not know: Garthak has recently come into possession of a powerful eternity shard.

Thratchen asks the Knights to take a computer disk he provides them and feed its data into a computer in the offices of Kanawa-controlled Katana Security. Once processed, this data will

make it seem as if an eight by eight block area of the city is about to be utterly destroyed by techno-demons.

The result of this cunning maneuver will be to lure Kanawa Corporation forces into a preemptive strike on the area, which serves as the home of Garthak's pride. While this is taking place, Garthak can be found and defeated.

But there's one catch to this deal: Thratchen proposes a race between himself and the Storm Knights to reach the rebellious demon lord. If the Knights win, they can claim the eternity shard and Thratchen will be content with telling Jezrael how he helped preserve her power. But if Thratchen reaches Garthak first, he will kill or dominate the demon lord and take over his pride, thus gaining a power base in the Tharkold realm.

No matter what happens, Thratchen wins. But the Storm Knights stand to gain a victory also — Jezrael is capable

of maintaining the stalemate with Nippon, which provides the Knights badly needed time to strike back at both realms.

Uneasy Allies

Throughout this adventure the Storm Knights are asked to form temporary alliances with people and creatures they normally would fight on the spot. Post-invasion Los Angeles is like that. Things are too complicated for clear-cut morality, there are too many factions at work to know all the time who's right and who's wrong. Part of the strategy of the city is setting villains against one another.

Watch for these moments of compromise in the adventure and try to play them up for the Storm Knights. They provide an excellent opportunity for roleplaying.



LA's Weather

As noted in the *Tharkold* sourcebook, Los Angeles' climate is affected by its proximity to the Living Land, Kanawa industrial activity, and Tharkoldu reality.

Rain will be falling for the entire time the Storm Knights are in the city. Rain makes the task of spotting characters or items more difficult. The difficulties of *find* or other *Perception*-related skills which require vision are increased by +3 in a drizzle or steady rain, and by +5 during a torrential downpour. The difficulty of hitting an opponent in the rain, when the opponent is not at point blank or short range, has the difficulty increased by +3 in a drizzle or steady rain, +5 during a downpour. This is in addition to the usual penalties. The Knights should encounter all three levels of storm during their stay in LA.

The Response Form

On page 64 of this adventure, you will find a special response form. Once you have completed this adventure, please fill it out and mail it to us. The outcome of this adventure is crucial to the future of the Possibility Wars and the survival of Earth's reality, so we want to know how every group makes out. For instructions on filling out the form, please refer to page 13 of the *Infiniverse Campaign Game*, Issue 1 (which is included in the *Torg* boxed set). Mail it to the address listed on the form.

Starting the Adventure

This adventure can begin anywhere, under almost any circumstances, for Thratchen will track down a strong group of Storm Knights to help him. No matter where the Storm Knights are, no matter what they're doing, Thratchen can find them. After all, he's Thratchen ...



Act One

Deal with the Devil

The Major Beat

The adventure opens with the Storm Knights receiving a peculiar message from Thratchen: he wants to meet with them, and will allow the Knights to pick the spot.

Thratchen keeps an eye on the Storm Knights, and when they get to their meeting place and give the appropriate signal, Thratchen approaches and makes his request for help. It will take some negotiation on the part of Thratchen to get the Storm Knights to believe him, of course, and the Storm Knights can use their various abilities to determine that Thratchen is telling the truth.

The Storm Knights then go to Los Angeles to check the situation out for themselves. Once there, they confirm what Thratchen has told them, but discover something else. Garthak, the demon lord that Thratchen wants to defeat, is in possession of an eternity shard. He plans to sacrifice it to Malgest to get the power he needs to defeat Jezrael.

SCENE ONE: The Servant

The Situation

Standard. This scene opens with the Storm Knights engaging in an activity they seldom get to experience: relaxing. You should ask the players what their Storm Knights do on their time off. They can pick almost anything, but it should be something the group can do together. Do they hang out in jazz clubs? Museums? Forests, fishing and hunting? Do they have a base where they just sit around and read books and wait for people to call them up for help?

A slower tempo is important to the start of this adventure, so the Storm Knights are *not* all hyped up for a fight when they come face to face with Thratchen. A slow opening scene gives the Storm Knights a chance to approach the meeting with Thratchen in a more thoughtful mood. You should allow the characters to banter amongst themselves for a bit, if their players are prone to do so, letting them soak up the idea of just hanging out. If the players aren't intrigued with the idea of roleplaying their characters relaxing, or if the scene should start to lose momentum, Thratchen's servant arrives with his message.

When the servant approaches, read aloud or paraphrase:

You see a man made of silver metal. He does not seem to be a robot; that is, his smooth, reflective surface does not seem to have been stamped out of an assembly line. Instead it seems to have the same contours and curves of a human's body. The face is asymmetrical in the same way a human face is asymmetrical. The features, the man's hair, all seem as if sculpted to match a man's face — and you cannot shake the feeling that this is a man, a true man, recently turned to metal. He seems calm and is apparently unarmed. He walks directly toward you without hesitation in his step.

The Action

Thratchen's servant, a man under the effects of a Tharkold *mechanization* miracle, approaches the Storm Knights wherever they are: a jazz club, a museum, the wilderness. If they are in a locked building or base, the servant knocks on the door or rings the doorbell and waits patiently for an answer. If the scene is occurring in a public place, almost everyone around the Storm Knights will run off in panic.



Thratchen's Servant**DEXTERITY 8**

Dodge 9, maneuver 9, stealth 9

STRENGTH 8 (11)

Lifting 10 (13)

TOUGHNESS 8 (11)**PERCEPTION 8**

Find 10, tracking 13, trick 10

MIND 7

Test 11

CHARISMA 8

Persuasion 11, taunt 9

SPIRIT 8

Intimidation 12

Possibilities: none**Equipment:** none

Note: Parenthetical values apply to character while under influence of *mechanization* miracle.

The Storm Knights can either run, attack, or hear the servant out. If they try to flee, the servant will pursue, forcing them to either attack or listen to what he has to say.

If they attack, the servant will take the blows and gunshots and sword strokes or whatever the Storm Knights might pummel him with, as Thratchen instructed him to do. He will not fight back, and will probably end up flat on his back within a round or two. When

things settle down and the Storm Knight approach him to examine his fallen form, he will attempt to deliver the message. If the Storm Knights have severely wounded or killed the metal man, cut to "Variables," below.

If they wait to listen to him, or they stop their attack once they see that he isn't fighting back, the servant delivers the message.

The Message

The servant approaches the Storm Knights, and when close enough to be heard, he says, "I have a message from my master." His voice is cold and mechanical, though not purposefully menacing. If the Storm Knights let him speak, he says:

"I have come to bring you word from Thratchen. He wishes to meet with you, and make you an offer. He desires your help, and believes cooperation between himself and your group will be mutually beneficial."

Pause here and let the implications of the metal man's words sink in. Players familiar with the Torg mythos will be especially taken aback — Thratchen wants to meet with them! This might be very good, or very bad. Let the player characters talk amongst themselves for a few moments, before having the servant ask if there are any questions.

The servant will answer any queries put to him to the best of his ability (use the information listed under "... But Were Afraid to Ask" to provide the answers). If the Knights don't ask a number of questions sufficient to obtain that information, have the servant volunteer it. Remember that his job is to slavishly communicate Thratchen's terms for the meeting with the Knights.

If the Storm Knights make use of any miracles or magic to determine the veracity of the servant's words, they will find that everything he is saying is the truth, as he knows it. An inclination check of the servant will reveal that he is *Good* — merely a victim of Thratchen's cruelty.

... But Were Afraid to Ask

The servant can provide the Knights with the following information:



D. Shuler



• Thratchen has kept an eye on the Storm Knights for about a week, and has decided they are the ones he wishes to make a deal with.

• As a gesture of good will, Thratchen wants the Storm Knights to pick the meeting site. He will keep an eye on them, and when they are ready for the meeting, they should speak his name loudly and clearly, and then say, "Meet with us now, as equals."

• He requests that the meeting not take place indoors (and certainly not in the base of the Storm Knights, if they have one). He makes his offer in all good will, but he is no fool and will not walk blindly into a trap.

• The matter he wishes to speak with the Storm Knights about is of dire consequence, and time is running out. He has no time to waste fighting the Storm Knights. If they are not interested in meeting with him under a flag of truce for purposes of negotiation, he asks that they simply refuse his request to meet now.

• Thratchen proposes this as the topic of discussion: the fate of Los Angeles, and the conflict between Kanawa corporations and the Tharkoldu demons now fighting for control of the metropolis.

The servant does not offer the following information of his own accord, but if asked who he is or where he came from, he responds:

"I am a man, I am ... Stan Greer ... I am not like this. A thing — Thratchen, did this to me. I feel very cold. I want to be warm again.

Metal to Flesh

The *mechanization* miracle only lasts for five minutes, and when that time is up, the servant transmutes from a metal creature to a flesh-bound man. He is shivering and is very afraid, but he can talk. If questioned, he says his name is Stan Greer, that a terrible creature made of metal swooped down and grabbed him. The creature said he needed to borrow him for a little while. Stan remembers nothing after that.

At this point the characters will probably want to get Stan to a hospital

or help him in some way. They'll also want to discuss what action to take regarding Thratchen's offer.

Flags

If a *Suspicion* card is played, one of the Knights does not trust the metallic servant, and will refuse to listen to anything he says. He will be convinced the "thing" intends to attack.

If a *True Identity* card is played, one of the Knights recognizes Stan Greer, and feels that the party should do whatever they can to help him.

If a *Mistaken Identity* card is played, one of the Knights thinks Greer is merely a robot.

Variables

If the Storm Knights attacked Greer while in metallic form, any damage carries over to his human form. The Storm Knights may have to work quickly to save his life. This should serve to teach them not to be quite so rash when dealing with metal humanoids — like Thratchen.

If the Knights kill Greer while in metallic form, he will be unable to interact with them. He will simply recite all of the information above like a broken record. When the miracle's duration expires, the Knights will have a human corpse at their feet.

The Road Less Travelled

The Storm Knights must now decide whether to take Thratchen up on his offer or not. If they should simply refuse to have anything to do with him, the adventure is essentially over.

This probably won't happen, however. Most Knights are willing to undertake any challenge, and besides, even if Thratchen is setting them up, he must have a reason. It's unlikely that the High Lord Regent of Orrorsh goes to the trouble to entrap individual parties of Knights just for fun (well, maybe not that unlikely, but you get the point).

Cut To ...

The Storm Knights will probably need some time to think over Thratchen's offer — first to decide if they want to accept, and then to decide where they want to meet him. Let them have all they need. When the Storm Knights are in agreement and the meeting place has been chosen, cut to Scene Two, "A Meeting of Minds."

SCENE TWO: A Meeting of Minds

The Situation

Standard. The Storm Knights meet Thratchen in a place of their choosing. Whatever site they picked, try and inject a little atmosphere—the weather is dark and gloomy, with lots of gray clouds overhead and lightning flashing in the sky. The feeling should be oppressive and dreary.

When the Storm Knights gather and speak the words, "Thratchen, meet with us now as equals," read aloud or paraphrase:

In the distance, you see a speck of silver approaching. As it gets closer you see it is a human form, made of metal, borne along the wind with large silver wings. Within moments, you can see it is a demon from Tharkold. He has large talons and across his forehead lies a series of datajacks. His face is full of both mirth and malice. He swoops up high on his final approach, and then dives down, landing gently twenty meters from where your group stands.

"Greetings, Stormers!" the technodemon calls. "I am Thratchen, and I am pleased you answered my request for a meeting."

The Action

Thratchen has a great deal of information to impart to the Knights. The trick to making exposition interesting is to make sure to put a lot of character



into it. You should figure out a voice for Thratchen (something deep, with heavy breathing), and make sure to curl your fingers into claws as you speak for Thratchen. Thratchen also loves being annoying, so you should wear a smirk as much as possible.

Thratchen

DEXTERITY 15

Dodge, 17, energy weapons 17, fire combat 16, flight 19, maneuver 18, stealth 18, unarmed combat 23

STRENGTH 18

TOUGHNESS 26 (30)

PERCEPTION 24

Evidence analysis 26, find 27, scholar (The Nameless One) 27, tracking 25, trick 26

MIND 25

Science 26, test 27, willpower 27

CHARISMA 16

Charm 21, persuasion 22, taunt 23

SPIRIT 24

Faith (Tharkoldu Evil) 29, focus 30, intimidation 26, reality 28

Possibilities: 40

Equipment: cybersenses, internal computer (+3 bonus to *evidence analysis*, *find*, and targeting rolls if the target generates electrical impulses; such as a character with cybware), cyberclaws, damage value STR+5/23; cyberwings, speed value 11; laser pistol, damage value 23, ammo 30, range 3-10/50/100; armor, TOU+4/30

If the Storm Knights attack Thratchen, he'll simply stand there and take it for a while. He's got plenty of Possibilities at the start of the adventure, and uses them to burn off wounds. His goal is to show the Storm Knights he has come in peace. He's willing to take some damage to make that point.

The meeting is divided into two parts. The first is the Set-Up, where Thratchen describes the situation in Los Angeles. After Thratchen speaks, the Storm Knights can think through his statements and determine their veracity. Once that's done, Thratchen moves into the second part of the negotiations, where he describes his plan.

The Set-Up

First, Thratchen wants to make it clear that he means no ill to the Storm

Knights. He says, "I know you expect me to try to deceive you. Just to annoy you, I am going to speak the truth in all matters."

Thratchen then proceeds to the other points, all the while attempting *persuasion* on the Knights:

- The Gaunt Man is winning the fight with the reality storm within Illmound Keep, and might soon be free.

- Thratchen wants to gain favor with Jezrael, the new High Lord of Tharkold, so he can retreat to his home cosm if the Gaunt Man frees himself.

- Thratchen has learned that a demon pride in Los Angeles is planning to rebel against Jezrael. He is not sure how its leader, Garthak, plans to defeat Jezrael, but he is certain that the demon lord would not be making the attempt if he didn't have the means at claw to accomplish the deed.

- Thratchen wants to destroy or dominate Garthak to prevent the attack from occurring. This will curry favor with Jezrael.

- He believes that the Storm Knights will want to help him with his plan, for right now the forces of Tharkold and Nippon are evenly matched. Garthak may be as strong as Jezrael, but he is not as clever. If he should become High Lord, he will not deal with the Nippon forces as well as Jezrael can, and 3327's agents may quickly overrun Los Angeles and then the rest of the United States. Right now, with Jezrael in power, the two realm raiders are in check.

If asked why so powerful a techno-demon requires the help of Storm Knights, Thratchen answers:

"I cannot attack Garthak myself, for I am not strong enough. I cannot turn to my own kind, for there are many demons who hate having a human for a High Lord. I do not know which of them I can trust. Nor can I seek the aid of the Nippon forces, as there is no love lost between us. So I turn to you.

"You know the ways of moving freely between realities. You have something to gain from this, as do I. It is not as good as a victory over a High Lord, I agree, but you will be helping two High Lords remain locked in a stalemate. That is some-

thing, is it not?

If Garthak rebels, multiply by tenfold the number of innocent deaths occurring in this place. If Garthak rebels, all of this city will be his battlefield; ally with me, and only Garthak's stronghold need suffer. And remember — it was only with my help that your fellow Knights trapped the Gaunt Man."

"I will curry Jezrael's favor, and you will delay the conquest of your world. What do you say?"

Checking Out the Story

The Storm Knights will most likely want to use whatever means they have at their disposal to see if Thratchen is trying to lead them on. As mentioned in the last scene, the use of magic and miracles will reveal that Thratchen is telling the truth. Thratchen will let the Storm Knights cast such spells on him, even if they are attempting to cast it on him without his knowledge, and he takes notice. (He will, however, leave or defend himself if attacked with magic. See "Variables" below.)

The Storm Knights can also use more mundane methods to discern the veracity and logic of Thratchen's statement. A character may attempt an *evidence analysis* or *Perception* roll against a difficulty number of Thratchen's *persuasion*. What the Knight comes away with depends upon his level of success:

On a *Minimal* success, the Knight thinks Thratchen is telling the truth, but isn't certain;

On a *Good* level of success, the Knight is almost fully convinced that Thratchen speaks the truth;

On a *Superior* or *Spectacular* success, the Knight feels certain that Thratchen truly means all he is saying.

Knights can also use *scholar* (*realm lore*) to reflect on the situation within the Tharkold area. On a 12, he realizes that Thratchen's logic is sound: Nippon and the Tharkoldu are deadlocked, in part due to the fact that Jezrael is well near as subtle and crafty as 3327. A techno-demon would find it far more difficult to counter the Nippon High Lord's carefully calculated moves.



However, all of this only confirms that Thratchen is saying what he *believes* to be true. The Knights may still harbor a desire to check out the situation in LA personally, something the rest of Act One allows them to do.

The Plan

Once the Storm Knights are ready to hear it, Thratchen outlines his plan:

- Garthak's demon pride is made up of 2,000 demons living in the Compton district of Los Angeles, many only recently arrived from the Tharkoldu cosm. Even the combined might of the Storm Knights and Thratchen would not be enough to attack Garthak and defeat him. They'll need more help.

- Thratchen wants to get this help from Kanawa. He knows that Katana Security, Inc., a Los Angeles based subsidiary of the Magnolia Station Research Park (which is in turn owned by Kanawa Petroleum, Kanawa Enterprises, and then Kanawa Co.) is keeping close tabs on gang and demon activity in Los Angeles. The company is paid by the city of Los Angeles to file weekly reports of the city's "hot spots." Of course, 3327 and his *aide-de-camp*, 7710, also read the reports, looking for data of interest.

- Thratchen's plan is to make Katana believe that the eight-by-eight block neighborhood where Garthak is located is infested with demons that are about to go on a rampage. He wants to plant false data in Katana's computer that will force the Nippon forces to take immediate aggressive action, a "first strike" as humans call it. If his plan works properly, Nippon will launch an attack on Garthak's pride with hundreds upon hundreds of agents. Once the battle has begun, Thratchen and the Storm Knights can use the diversion to seek out Garthak and conquer or kill him.

When Thratchen is done explaining the above, he pulls a computer disk out of a slot on his body and gives it to the Knights. He explains they are free to examine it at their leisure. He goes on to say that the disk contains false data designed to twist all of Katana's projections into a form of use to Thratchen. There is also a special



D. Shuler

program on the disk to load the false data smoothly into the Katana computers.

The key to this plan is that it must be executed without alerting anyone to the fact that the Katana offices were invaded. This is not a theft that can leave a string of guards dead as long as the data is in the hands of the thieves. Katana must not know their security was breached. If they suspect foul play, they may question or even completely disregard the data produced by the computer.

This is part of the reason Thratchen needs the Storm Knights. He cannot trust himself to keep his Tharkoldu rage in check. If cornered, he might kill a guard rather than hide and jeopardize the entire plan.

In addition, the Morgan Building, where Katana is located, is a hardpoint of Nippon reality. The disk will function perfectly, as it was created using Nippon technology, but getting it into the office will be that much more dangerous.





D. Gelon

The Last Detail

During the scene, one or more of the Storm Knights might press Thratchen about just what he's getting out of this plan. After all, he could simply go to Jezrael, and tell her about the impending attack. Certainly that would get her on his good side. If they do, he smiles and says:

"Well, yes. I said I would not deceive you, and I will not. I do not know if you are familiar with the ways of my kind, but we have, in the reality of Tharkold, a law of domination. If I should force Garthak to submit to me, I will gain control of his pride. His 2000 techno-demons will be the start of my new power base.

"But we will make it a contest, eh? If you kill Garthak before he submits to me, then you maintain the balance of power in Los Angeles, and I only gain Jezrael's favor. But if he submits to me, then I also gain a demon pride. That will add spice, won't it?"

If the Storm Knights don't pursue the matter, Thratchen will bring it up himself, for he doesn't want the Storm Knights to find out about it later and think he was holding out on him. He says something to the effect of, "I must confess something, just so you do not think I have tried to deceive you." He then says everything in the above paragraph, starting with, "I said I would ..."

Hour of Decision

If the Storm Knights are still unsure as to whether or not they want to work with Thratchen, as well they should be, he says:

"Very well. Take two weeks. Go to Los Angeles. My informants tell me that whatever Garthak is planning to do, it will not start for three more weeks. We have a little time.

"Investigate, and you will see that not only is everything I have said true, but it is the wisest course of action. I will find you again in Los

Angeles. When you are ready to meet, go to Griffith Observatory and speak the words, 'Thratchen, come to us now so we can work together.' I will attend you at that time."

Thratchen will wait around if the Storm Knights have any more questions, but explains he can do nothing to prove his statements — the Knights simply must go to Los Angeles for themselves.

When there is no more to be said, Thratchen will turn and fly away.

Flags

If a *setback* occurs, an innocent bystander will accidentally intrude on the Knights' meeting place. The Knights will have to restrain Thratchen from immediately killing him, but also see to it that he doesn't run for the police and have them break up the meeting.



Variables

The Storm Knights might have tried to booby-trap the meeting place before this scene occurs. You should remember that Thratchen is keeping an eye on the Knights, and if he sees them trapping the area, he'll remove the traps at the first chance he gets. Thus, if the Storm Knights trap the area and then leave, he'll come in and deactivate the traps.

If he doesn't get this chance, he'll simply avoid the traps, but will comment on them, letting the Storm Knights know he knows they're there.

The only real problem is once again the Storm Knights might decide to ignore Thratchen. If this happens, they should be reminded that innocent lives could be lost if Thratchen carry out his plan on his own, or with less honorable Stormers by his side.

Cut To ...

Thratchen has left the Storm Knights with a great deal of information to ponder and a computer disk. If they want to check out the disk, see "Thratchen's Disk." If they want to check out the politics of LA, cut to Scene Three, "Looking for Trouble." If they want to check out Garthak and his pride, cut to to Scene Four, "Gutterpunk Alley." (Of course, the characters can examine the disk before they leave for Los Angeles, or while they are in the city.)

If the Storm Knights accept Thratchen's deal on the spot, he says he'll meet them in Los Angeles. When they get to LA, cut to Scene Eight, "And the Heavens Weep ..."

There's no need to play out getting to Los Angeles. It might be difficult for the Knights to get there (a group based in CyberFrance would have to be most careful about revealing their destination, for instance), but it can be assumed that a group of Storm Knights are resourceful enough to make it to Los Angeles relatively unscathed.

Victoria Hester

DEXTERITY 9

Dodge 12, running 10, stealth 13

STRENGTH 8

TOUGHNESS 9

PERCEPTION 10

Evidence analysis 12, find 12, land vehicles 11, trick 13

MIND 11

Science (computers) 15, willpower 12

CHARISMA 9

Charm 12, persuasion 12, taunt 10

SPIRIT 11

Faith (Christianity) 12, reality 13

Possibilities: 2

Equipment: home-made computer (Tech 24)

Description: Victoria is a shy, personable computer genius. Daring and imaginative, Victoria would love to go on the adventure with the Storm Knights, but will have to get out of the house without her parents knowing where she is going.

Victoria is very bright, but is not a "nerd," nor arrogant about intelligence. She loves computers, though, and drifts off into some strange mental state when she begins to work on them.

The following information is gleaned from the disk, depending on the result of the *science (computers)* roll.

On a *Minimal* or *Average* success, the Knights see that the program is written in a very sophisticated computer language.

On a *Good* success, the Knights learn that the program is a computer virus, designed to worm its way into the sub-routines of a very sophisticated number-crunching program.

On a *Superior* success, the Knights discern that the program will divert data throughout the whole number-crunching programming, re-focusing everything to give completely false results.

On a *Spectacular* success, the Knights realize the virus will do exactly what Thratchen predicted. It's aimed at a security alert number-crunching program, which logs criminal and violent activities throughout Los Angeles. Once fed into the Katana program, the virus will alter the results and give completely false data, making it look as if a tremendous amount of demon activity is centered on an eight-by-eight block area of Compton, a district of LA.

If the Storm Knights ask, Victoria will gladly accompany them on their

Thratchen's Disk

To examine the computer disk, the Storm Knights need a computer of at least *Tech 24* (the same *Tech* axiom as Nippon, whose machines it is designed to be run on). Thratchen did not put any security measures on the disk, so examining it requires only a *science (computers)* total of 9.

If none of the Storm Knights have this skill, they will need to find someone who has some talent in this area. If a *Connection* card is played, one of the Knights knows Victoria Hester, a sixteen-year-old computer whiz with frizzy blonde hair and braces on her teeth. She's always thrilled to help out Storm Knights, but doesn't want her parents finding out about it ("They wouldn't understand") so they'll have to contact her secretly. She's built her own *Tech 24* computer, so even if the Storm Knights have the relevant skill, they might still need to borrow her computer.

quest to Los Angeles. She'll need to make up a story for her folks (a class trip, maybe), and the Storm Knights can use whatever skills they have at their disposal to help her.

SCENE THREE: Looking For Trouble

The Situation

Standard. The Knights arrive in Los Angeles and try to get a feel for the city and its bizarre post-invasion politics.

Read aloud or paraphrase:

The city is worn down and torn by strife. Wherever you go, you see the results of violence committed by



some of the city's factions — the corpses of children cut down by gangster drive-by shootings; the interiors of cars splattered with blood from a techno-demon hunt. Squads of Kanawa security guards and LAPD patrol sections of the city in full riot gear.

A steady rain falls from the dark sky. The rain is thick, and mixed with pollutants from Nippon factories, giving the air a sulphur taste.

You have heard a rumor that a Rauru Block agent codenamed Phoenix is working in the city. It's said he knows all the players in LA, and has aided Storm Knights before. His street contact is a bum named Charlie — find him, and you've got a good shot at finding Phoenix.

The Action

Each day the Storm Knights spend searching for Charlie, they get to generate a *find* or *Perception* total (characters can support each other on this roll — coordination difficulty is 8). Charlie rarely stays in one place for very long, so a total of 16 is needed to find him.

The Storm Knights have four days to find Charlie. If they encounter him in that time, cut to "Charlie."

On the fifth day, the Knights will find him as soon as they make their roll, but he is being attacked by corporate ninjas. Cut to "Ambush!"

If you'd like, you may play out a small scene from each day's search: talking to an LA cop, meeting with a drug dealer who might have seen Charlie. But since these people really don't know him that well, and have no relevant information to offer the Storm Knights, you can choose to let the days pass quickly in terms of real time.

Charlie

As soon as the Knights have generated a successful *find* or *Perception* total, read aloud or paraphrase:

You see a man picking through a garbage dumpster. He's wearing a long, battered rain coat and coughs violently every once in a while. A bum down the block said you could find Charlie in this alley, and he de-

scribed him with the raincoat and the cough. He took five bucks in return. Now you get to find out if your money was well spent.

Charlie won't notice the Storm Knights as they approach. If they speak to him or touch him, he whirls in terror. He will be certain a techno-demon has come to kill him, and when he sees the Knights aren't Tharkoldu, he leans over, a bit relieved, and says, "What?"

Charlie

DEXTERITY 7

Dodge 8, stealth 10, unarmed combat 8

STRENGTH 7

TOUGHNESS 8

PERCEPTION 12

Find 15, trick 13

MIND 11

Survival 13

CHARISMA 11

Persuasion 12

SPIRIT 11

Possibilities: none

Equipment: none

Description: Charlie is a 54 year-old bum with rheumy eyes and white stubble on his chin. He has an odd relationship with Phoenix: he really likes the ancient Japanese cook, but mostly for the food he receives in payment for his services. Thus, he can be bribed, but there's an emotional check in place that has to be overcome first.

Charlie has seen some horrible things since the invasion of Los Angeles, and he's convinced himself there are at least a dozen factions out to get him. So while the Storm Knights negotiate with him, he should be scanning the rooftops, looking over their shoulders, laughing slightly when there's no reason to laugh. It's a tough call as to whether he's actually insane. He might simply be responding appropriately to the Possibility Wars.

To bribe Charlie, the Storm Knights must first prove their good intentions toward Phoenix with a *persuasion* roll. Charlie begins the scene *neutral* to the Storm Knights. Until they convince him they don't want to hurt Phoenix, he'll say over and over again, "I don't know who you're talking about."

Once assured of their good intentions, Charlie will accept a bribe. If the Storm Knights offer \$500, he'll tell them

to go to the FOOD Cafe on Wilshire Boulevard and ask the cook for some cooked sushi. The \$500 dollars is his base negotiation price, and can be raised or lowered using the haggling rules (see pages 72-74 of the *Torg Rulebook*).

The Storm Knights can also try to *interrogate* Charlie to get the information they want. For the purposes of *interrogation*, Charlie is *friendly* with Phoenix. If the Storm Knights use threats or force or any approach other than giving him cash, Charlie will get on the phone to Phoenix as soon as the Storm Knights are gone. He will tell Phoenix some people roughed him up and are on their way to see him.

If the Knights ask Charlie to show them the way to the FOOD Cafe, he refuses. He feels uncomfortable in that area of the city, and will be *hostile* toward any efforts to get him to go there.

Ambush!

After the Storm Knights have searched for four days, Nippon operatives will be aware of their presence in LA and who they are searching for. Since Kanawa Corp. wants to find Phoenix as much as the Storm Knights do (though they intend on killing him), they start searching for Charlie, too.

On the fifth day of the Knights' search, they come across Charlie in an alley, dressed in the same manner described above. However, this time instead of finding him picking through a garbage can, they find him surrounded by a group of ninjas who are systematically beating the life out of him. They had offered him money, but there was no way a group of ninjas could convince him that they meant well for Phoenix.

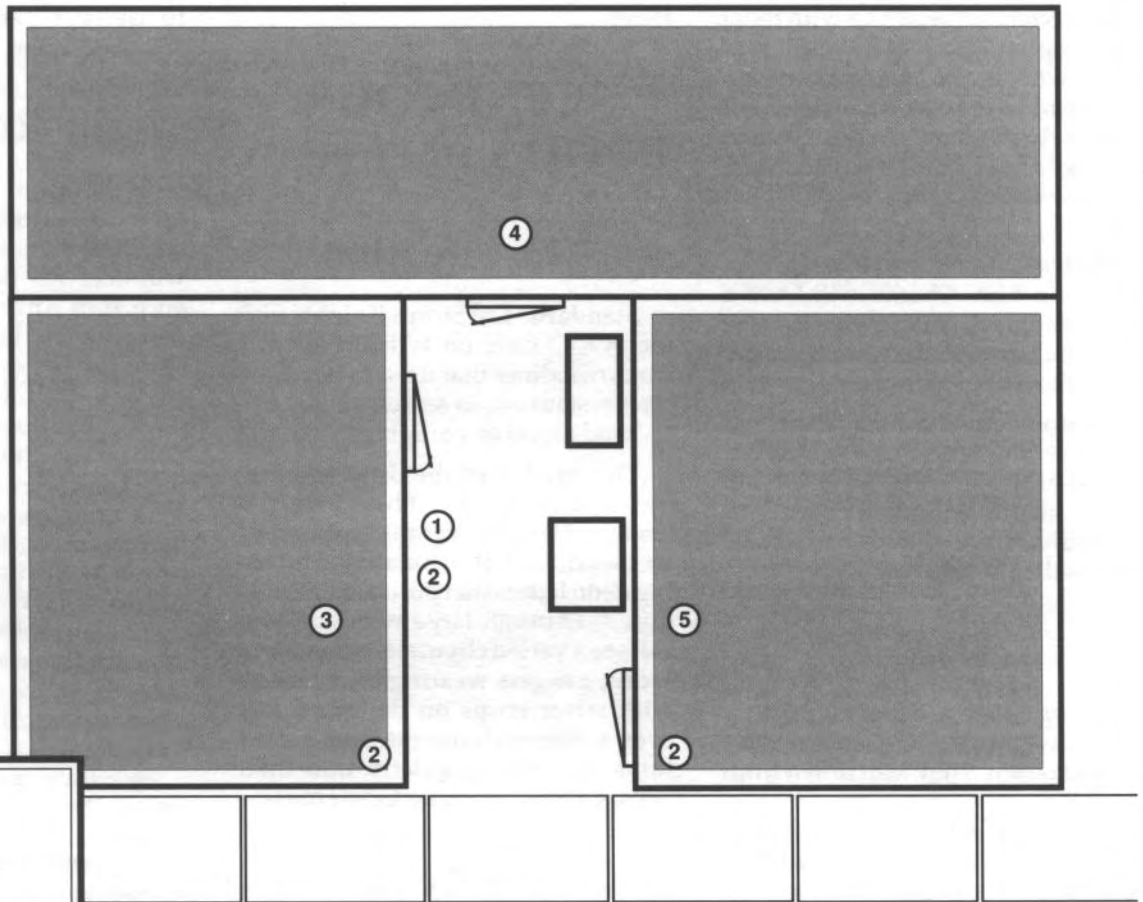
Rounds begin as soon as the Storm Knights see the beating. If the Knights receive the initiative in the first round, they have the advantage of surprise on the ninjas.

There is one ninja for each Storm Knight in the group. Two ninjas are hidden on the rooftops overlooking the alley. Storm Knights will have to generate *find* or *Perception* totals against a difficulty number of the ninjas' *stealth* values to spot them. One round after





City of Demons: Map 1
Charlie's Alley



1. Charlie
2. Ninja
3. Lamp store
4. Fast food restaurant
5. Furniture store

the Knights have entered the fray, these two ninjas attack. You can have them simply jump down three flights, ninja style, and land gracefully on the alley's pavement.

Corporate Ninja (one per Storm Knight)

DEXTERITY 16

Acrobatics 17, dodge 17, energy weapons 17, fire combat 17, maneuver 18, martial arts (*ninjutsu*) 18, melee weapons 17, unarmed combat 17

STRENGTH 11

Climbing 12

TOUGHNESS 10

PERCEPTION 11

Find 12, tracking 12, trick 12

MIND 8

Test 10

CHARISMA 7

Charm (11), persuasion 12, taunt 10

SPIRIT 7

Intimidation 10, reality 10

Possibilities: 1

Equipment: shimsi sword, damage value STR+5/16; 13mm Chunyokai, damage value 18, ammo 9, range 3-10/40/50; laser rifle, Tech 25, damage value 23, ammo 10, range 10-40/80/150

As soon as the ninjas are aware of the Storm Knights, they'll forget about Charlie for the moment. His face is a bloody mess, and he won't be going anywhere soon. He collapses to the ground during the fight.

If two-thirds of their number have been defeated, the ninjas will attempt to retreat. The Storm Knights can, of course, pursue.

If captured and successfully interrogated, a ninja reveals what was stated above: Kanawa is aware of the Storm Knights' presence in LA, they heard they were searching for Phoenix, and they heard Charlie was the link to



Phoenix.

Once the fight is over, the Storm Knights can deal with Charlie. He's beaten up, but has only suffered a KO 6. Once revived, he will gladly accept any medical assistance the Storm Knights offer, but won't go with them to a hospital. He's convinced that people who go to hospitals are enslaved and sold to the demons.

All of the negotiations described in "Charlie" above now take place, with the following changes:

- If the Storm Knights have not attempted *first aid* or some other form of healing on him, Charlie will have a *hostile* attitude toward them. He will be convinced the Knights are just more thugs out to kill Phoenix.
- If the Storm Knights have attempted *first aid* or any other form of healing (successfully or unsuccessfully) on Charlie, his attitude toward them will be friendly. His base price for the bribe remains the same (\$500).

Flags

If a *hero setback* appears, another ninja shows up for every ninja already knocked down. They leap down from the roof.

If a *Nemesis* card is played, one of the ninjas escapes and may return to bedevil the Knights later in the adventure.

If a *Romance* card is played, and Victoria has accompanied the Knights, she develops a crush on a male Knight.

Variables

The Storm Knights may wish to simply grab Charlie and escape from the ninjas. If they can pull it off, let them. The ninjas will chase after them, however, for they really want to find Phoenix. You'll have to play out the chase to see what happens.

Cut To ...

If the Storm Knights have learned about the FOOD Cafe, they can go there and hook up with Phoenix. Cut to Scene Four.

If they failed to learn about Phoenix, they can look for information about gangs and demons in Compton. Cut to Scene Five, "Gutterpunk Alley." If they decide to accept Thratchen's deal, cut to Scene Six, "And the Heavens Weep ..."

SCENE FOUR: FOOD and Phoenix

The Situation

Standard. The Storm Knights visit the FOOD Cafe on Wilshire Blvd, a rundown diner that used to be a first-class restaurant, in search of Phoenix.

Read aloud or paraphrase:

The outside of the diner is pink-painted stucco. The original restaurant's sign is gone, replaced by an assortment of mismatched blinking neon letters that proclaim "FOOD Cafe." Through large windows you can see a varied clientele — rundown locals, gangers wearing blue jackets with silver strips on the arms, and even a couple of edeinos. Some of the folks are staring quietly into their cups. Others are quite boisterous.

The Action

The action here centers around finding Phoenix and the information he imparts to the Knights. Charlie told them to give the password to the cook, who would connect them with Phoenix. What he didn't tell them is that the cook is Phoenix. All they have to do is say "cooked sushi" and Phoenix will smile and lead them to a quiet place to talk.

An alley runs alongside the restaurant, and contains the back entrance to the restaurant. This door is locked (*lock picking* difficulty of 8). If the Knights choose to break in, they will find themselves in the kitchen, but may be mistaken for gangers in the employ of Kanawa. If Phoenix suspects danger, he will slip out of the diner and try to lose himself in the night.

The Storm Knights might want to check the restaurant out before they make contact with Phoenix. They can

pick up some interesting information this way. If they choose to absorb some of the local atmosphere, cut to "Rumors."

If the Storm Knights choose to enter the restaurant and go right to the cook to deliver the password, cut to "Cooked Sushi."

Rumors

If the Storm Knights choose to enter the restaurant, they can easily find an empty seat, and most likely no one will take any notice of their appearance. (Los Angeles was always pretty free-wheeling before the invasion, and since the scales and the demons arrived — well, LA's inhabitants have always considered the city a metropolitan weirdness magnet, and now they know they were right.) However, if the group is especially fantastic in a dark or dangerous way — cyberpapist priests with attitudes, werewolves in full fur — a few folks might get up and take off into the rain. When they leave, it's with fear clearly marked on their faces. They've known buildings to blow up around people like the Knights.

By sitting and listening to conversations, the Knights might overhear a few rumors floating around the diners. Have each Storm Knight make a *Perception* roll against a difficulty of 8. Read or paraphrase the relevant information below based on the success level.

Minimal/Average: Nothing of note.

Good: You hear some of the gangers talking about a war escalating in Compton between the Posse, a ganger federation, and the Mercuries, a slavegang hooked up with a pride run by a demon lord named Garthick, or something.

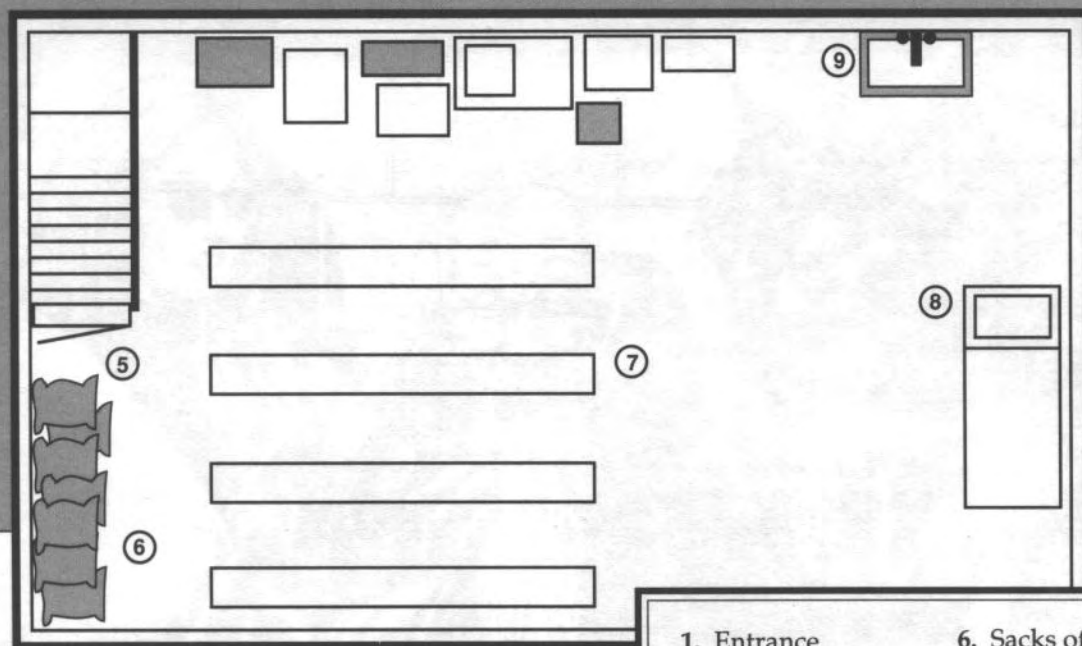
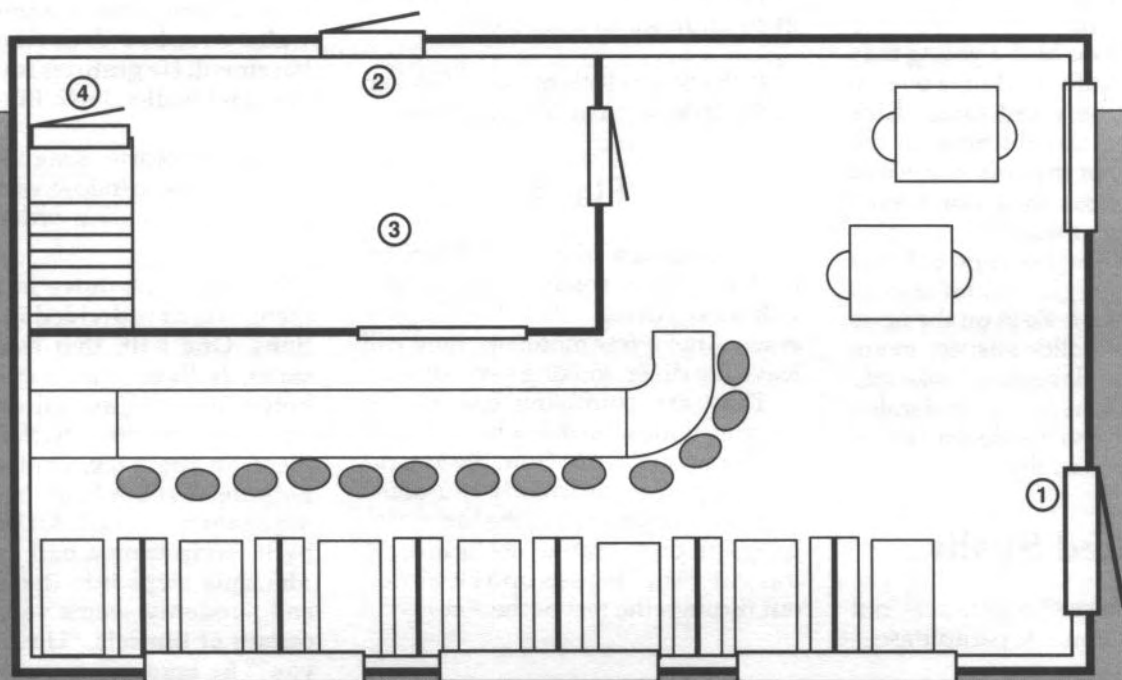
If the Storm Knights were already involved in the fight in Compton in Scene Five, have the gangers mention that as well.

Superior: You hear a group of old men and women arguing local politics. Seems that all the Japanese corporations that the city welcomed have stalled on their promises to deliver economic recovery. Several theories are bandied about — the gangs, crooked politicians, and so on — but





City of Demons: Map 2
The Cafe



Basement

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Entrance | 6. Sacks of flour |
| 2. Exit to alley | 7. Shelves |
| 3. Kitchen | 8. Cot |
| 4. Stairs to basement | 9. Sink |
| 5. Stairs to first floor | |



the general consensus seems to be that the demons have stopped the Japanese corps. dead in their tracks. The only mystery is why the demons would pick on the Japanese companies in particular.

Spectacular: You hear a young man talking to his wife. He looks over at the gang members and says, "Kids like that killed the old man on the news. They went into his home and stole an old cross they don't even know anything about."

If the Storm Knights approach him and ask for more details, he says he heard about the break-in on the news last week. The police suspect members of a demon slavegang broke into the home, killed the owner, and stole a small, ancient cross. He doesn't know anything more than that.

Cooked Sushi

When the Storm Knights seek out the cook, read aloud or paraphrase:

You see a wizened little man, about a meter and a half tall. He smiles and bows slightly whenever he passes anyone. He seems like he just got off the boat, and you're not sure if he'll even understand English.

If the Storm Knights say "Cooked sushi" to him, cut to "Phoenix Rising."

Flags

If a *Mistaken Identity* or *Suspicion* card is played, some of the gangers will stop talking when the Knights enter. After a few moments, they will leave the diner, looking very afraid.

They are confusing one of the Knights with someone who wasted a ganger named RAM from the Mercuries gang in a particularly gruesome manner. They are not in the Mercuries gang, but they'd rather not be around this guy. (This flag sets up a bit carried out through the rest of the Act.)

Phoenix Rising

Read aloud or paraphrase:

The old man looks at you, and then smiles, almost mindlessly. He walks over to a door leading to the basement. He gestures for you to follow, and walks down the stairs.

Let the Storm Knights decide if they're going to follow, who's going to follow, and in what order, and then read:

He leads you down into the basement, which is divided into two sections. One half, that closest to the stairs, is lined with sacks of flour, bottles of water, and other restaurant supplies. The other half of the basement, in the back, contains almost nothing. A cot. A bamboo staff leaning against the wall. An Uzi hanging by its strap from a nail on the wall. The cook steps into the area, turns, and suddenly seems very alert and certain of himself. "How can I help you?" he asks.



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At this point the characters can introduce themselves, explain what they want, and so on. If they don't understand that the old man is Phoenix, he laughs and tells them.

Phoenix

DEXTERITY 9

Acrobatics 10, dodge 11, fire combat 14, maneuver 11, melee weapons 15, stealth 12, unarmed combat 15

STRENGTH 10

TOUGHNESS 10

PERCEPTION 12

Evidence analysis 14, find 15, trick 14

MIND 14

Artist (chef) 16, survival 15, test 16, willpower 16

Survival 13

CHARISMA 11

Charm 15, persuasion 16, taunt 14

SPIRIT 14

Intimidation 15, reality 17

Possibilities: 5

Equipment: bamboo staff, damage value STR+3/13; Uzi, damage value 17, ammo 11, range 3-15/40/100

Description: Phoenix is a native of Japan who now works as an operative for the Rauru Block. He's a competent agent, but people sometimes feel uncomfortable around him because he's got a strange mystical side to him. He believes in the concept of moderation in all things. A man who devotes all his energies to remaining pure is so outside of life that he can be no help to those trapped in the mire.

Phoenix is an old, old man, and yet quite able to take care of himself. His limbs are long and thin, and his face bears deep wrinkles.

Play Phoenix like the old mystical coot he is. He should come off a bit creepy — not scary, but creepy, so the Storm Knights are worried about what sins the old guy might find lurking inside them.

Once the Knights are done explaining themselves, Phoenix says:

"I must examine you before I can help you. Will you let me do that?"

If the Storm Knights answer in the negative, he tells them to go away. If they try to force him, he fights back.

If they agree, he steps up to each

Storm Knight, one after another, and looks into their eyes. Go around the table and have each player generate a *Spirit* total, one after another. Phoenix stops at the first Storm Knight to generate a total of 15 or more. If no one generates a successful total he sighs, shakes his head, and goes back to the beginning of the group. He will do this until someone makes a successful roll.

Once someone does so, he will look at them and say, "Ahhh. You will answer for your group, yes?" He doesn't even wait for an answer and says:

"Does the good warrior traffic with evil?"

Let the player come up with a response for his character. If any other Storm Knight tries to feed the chosen one an answer, Phoenix hushes them with a wave of his hand. When the Knight has given his answer, Phoenix nods his head sagely.

If the Storm Knight answered in the negative (or a general trend of the negative, as the answer might be quite obtuse), Phoenix says:

"I will tell you this: you are in Los Angeles. It is a place far different from other cities, other realities. Here, sometimes the good warrior must walk down the road with a silver demon, for there is no other road available. But he must never behave like the demon. Do you understand?"

If the Storm Knights did not use force to obtain information from Charlie, cut to "The Warning."

If the Storm Knights used force against Charlie (a frightened, out-of-his-mind old homeless man), Phoenix says:

"Unfortunately, despite your words, you treated my informant to the demon's talons. You have proven yourself unworthy for my aid. You walk with the demons, but you also act like them."

At this point the Storm Knights can turn tail and leave in shame, or they can plead with Phoenix to help them. Pleading requires a *persuasion* roll. Phoenix's attitude toward the Storm Knights is *hostile* if they attacked Charlie.

If the Storm Knight answers "Yes,"

to Phoenix's question (or, again, the general inclination is positive) Phoenix says:

"Exactly. Especially in Los Angeles. It is a place far different from other cities, other realities. Here, sometimes the good warrior must walk down the road with a silver demon, for there is no other road available. But he must never behave like the demon. Do you understand?"

And then, as above, if the Storm Knights did not use force against Charlie, cut to "The Warning." If they did, they must *persuade* Phoenix to give his help.

The Warning

Read aloud or paraphrase:

"Very well," he says. "Here is what I know. The demons of Tharkold, under the command of their new High Lord, Jezrael, have attacked Los Angeles almost specifically to halt the progress of Kanawa Enterprises. The defeat of the Tharkoldu on Earth was engineered by Kanawa, and the techno-demons burn for revenge. At this point the two sides are fighting to a standstill. For people like you and me, this is a very good thing, for they waste their resources against one another, but do not grow in strength."

If anybody mentions the possibility of Garthak taking over the High Lord position from Jezrael, Phoenix says:

"Oh, now Garthak. That would be very bad. The only reason the techno-demons are successfully countering Kanawa's maneuvers is because of Jezrael. She is a schemer, like Kanawa. They are matched. There are few of the demons who could plan in such a way. Thratchen, perhaps, but of even him, I cannot be certain. It is not their way, you see. Theirs is the life of pain, of torment. There is no discipline."

After a moment of consideration he adds:

"For Garthak to threaten Jezrael, he would need the support of Tharkold's Darkness Device. I wonder how he will accomplish that?"



Phoenix has no more to offer, and asks them to leave so he can get back to work in the kitchen.

Flags

If a *True Identity* card is played, one of the Knights has seen Phoenix at a Rauru Block meeting, and recognizes him immediately in the diner.

Variables

If the Storm Knights decide to investigate the theft of the cross, they can do so. They will find that the house has already been picked clean of clues by the police, who have laid the case at the feet of the gangers. There's no other information available.

Cut To ...

If the Storm Knights haven't investigated the gangers and Compton yet, they may choose to do so now. If so, cut to Scene Five, "Gutterpunk Alley." If they're ready to accept Thratchen's deal, cut to Scene Six, "And the Heavens Weep ..."

SCENE FIVE: Gutterpunk Alley

The Situation

Standard. The Storm Knights turn to the local gangs to gather information on Garthak and his alleged plot to overthrow Jezrael.

Read aloud or paraphrase:

After checking around Los Angeles, you learn that the gangs of the city are as influential as Kanawa and the Tharkold demons, and almost as powerful. Their lack of organization, however, keeps them from wielding that power effectively.

Compton hosts a treacherous gang confederation know as The Posse that is trying to overcome this problem. The Posse brings gangs together and acts as a forum for disputes. Over the

last few days you've confirmed rumors that the Posse is particularly concerned about a demon pride in the area, run by a demon named Garthak. The pride rules an eight-by-eight block area on the east side of the city.

The Posse is currently at war with the red-jacketed Mercuries, who have sworn themselves as Garthak's slavegangers.

Informants have pointed you to a Posse safehouse—a three story apartment building. A casual glance reveals a teenager on the roof armed with an Uzi. Around you are empty buildings, their windows boarded up. Old cars rest on boxes, while next to them are parked shiny new sports cars.

Sitting on the steps of the building is a kid, maybe fourteen, dressed in a black jacket covered with patches of sports team logos. He's got shades on, and looks like he's got an attitude as thick as an edeinohide. Two more teenagers, maybe eighteen years old each, are leaning against lamp posts on either side of the building.

The Action

The Storm Knights have the chance to get some information about Garthak's pride from its neighbors. The Posse members are tough gang members who commit terrible acts of violence against demons, other gangers, and people in LA who really don't consider themselves part of the war. They'll try to cut the Storm Knights down in a second if it looks like it would profit them.

But they're pragmatic up to a point, and will let the Knights speak their piece if they have something gain by it.

Security

The safehouse is crawling with gangers with guns. Their positions are marked on the map. If the Storm Knights start an attack on the place, they guards open fire and fight for six rounds. During that time, everyone else in the building will take off through the back door. After six rounds

the guards retreat as well.

The guards also attack if the Storm Knights try to do anything they were specifically told not to, or if they don't do something they were specifically told to do.

Posse Gangers (20)

DEXTERITY 9

Dodge 11, fire combat 12 maneuver 10, melee weapons 11, stealth 12, unarmed combat 11

STRENGTH 10

TOUGHNESS 10

PERCEPTION 9

Find 10, trick 11

MIND 9

Survival 11, willpower 12

CHARISMA 8

Taunt 10

SPIRIT 9

Intimidation 12

Possibilities: none

Equipment: Uzi, damage value 17, ammo 11, range 3-15/40/100

Danger Danger

Sitting on the stoop of the building is a fourteen-year-old kid named "Danger Danger." He's the doorman for the safehouse. If the Storm Knights want to deal with the Posse, they'll have to talk to him.

Danger Danger

DEXTERITY 11

Dodge, 13, fire combat 12, maneuver 13, stealth 14, unarmed combat 12

STRENGTH 7

TOUGHNESS 9

PERCEPTION 10

Evidence analysis 11, find 13

MIND 10

Test 12, willpower 13

CHARISMA 11

Persuasion 12, taunt 13

SPIRIT 10

Intimidation 13

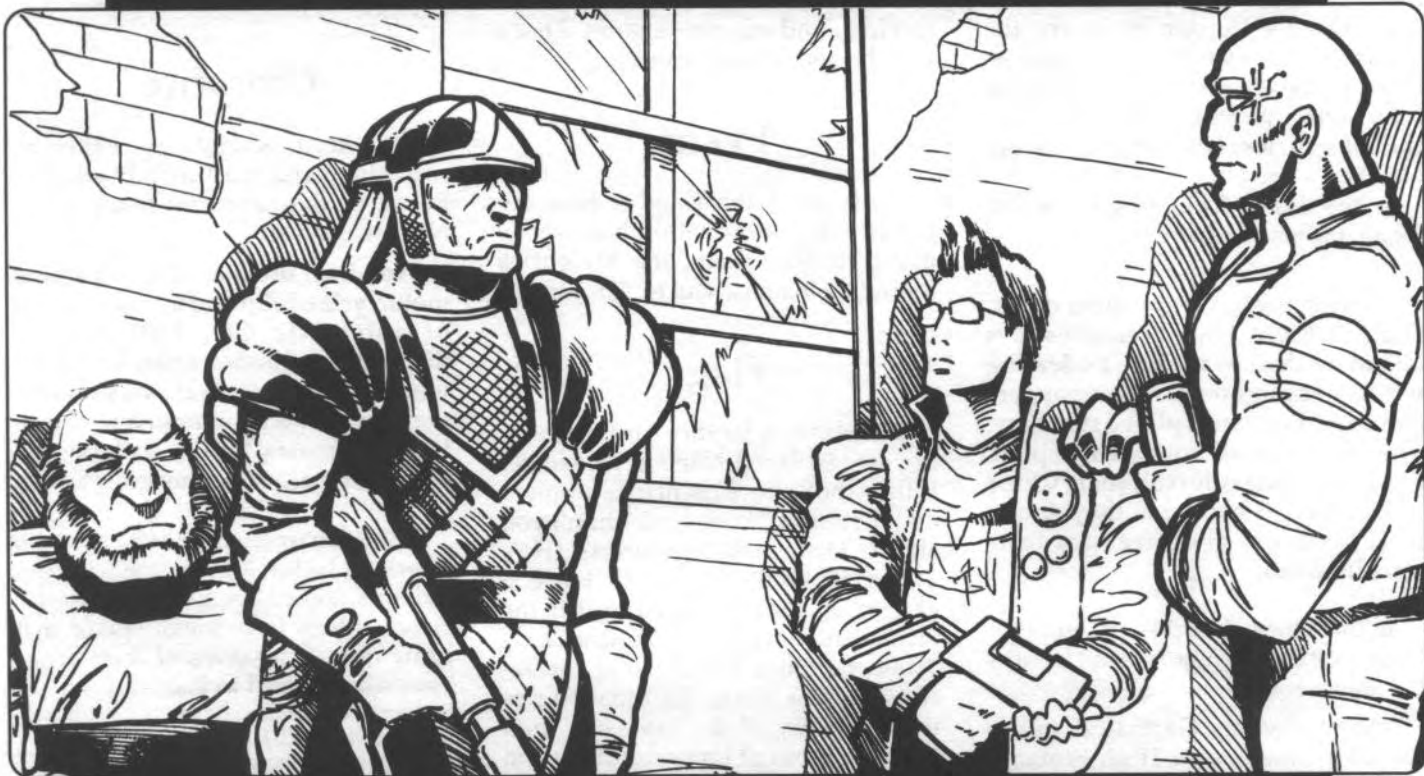
Possibilities: none

Equipment: Uzi, damage value 17, ammo 11, range 3-15/40/100

Description: Danger Danger wears dark glasses, and shows as little emotion as he can. Play him as a tough kid who is truly tough, and feels no need to show off

Like the other members of the Posse, Danger Danger wears a black jacket





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covered with fourteen sports patches, each placed in a particular spot on the jacket.

To either get information from Danger Danger, or to get into the building to meet with his fellow gangers, the Storm Knights need to get a *negotiated agreement* result on a *persuasion* roll. Danger Danger's attitude, as well as the attitude of all the gangers, is *hostile*. The Storm Knights' offer should entail exchanging information about the Mercuries or Garthak's pride.

If they do this successfully, Danger Danger says, "Come on, meat," leads them up the stairs to the front door, and lets them in. He gestures for them to enter the room marked "Meeting Room" on the map, and tells them to sit. He also makes it clear that they aren't welcome anywhere else in the building.

The meeting room is very dark. Drops of rain splatter through cracks in the boards in the windows. The only furniture is two-by-fours stretched out

over concrete blocks. The worn floorboards are covered with paint chips and rat feces.

Nanosec

After a few moments, Danger Danger returns with a huge eighteen-year-old. Danger Danger introduces the newcomer as Nanosec. Nanosec takes a position in the doorway, pulls off his shades, revealing his one silver eye, and folds his arms. "Yes?" he asks.

Nanosec

DEXTERITY 12

Dodge 13, fire combat 14, maneuver 13, stealth 14, unarmed combat 14

STRENGTH 13

Lifting 15

TOUGHNESS 13

PERCEPTION 9

MIND 9

Test 12, willpower 13

CHARISMA 11

Persuasion 12, taunt 13

SPIRIT 11

Intimidation 16

Possibilities: none

Equipment: Uzi, damage value 17, ammo 11, range 3-15/40/100; Cyberware: Neuracal, CSI Hotshot II; cyber value 7.

Description: Nanosec is a massive eighteen year-old pumped up on iron and steroids. His head is completely shaved, and his looks are arresting enough to catch the Storm Knights off guard. Like Danger Danger, he wears a black jacket covered with sports patches.

Before running this scene, look over the dialogue written for Nanosec. Most of the slang is referenced to computers, and when playing Nanosec, you should try to get this kind of feel into the way he speaks.

Nanosec is very low-key, almost gentle, despite his appearance, and as long as the Storm Knights don't give him a hard time, he won't give them a hard time.



The Storm Knights must once again make a *persuasion* roll, but for the moment Nanosec's attitude is *neutral*, since Danger Danger spoke for the group. The *persuasion* roll should be made in the context of the characters roleplaying questions about Garthak, the Mercuries, and trying to get Nanosec's trust.

If the Storm Knights get enough result points for a *neutral* result, he says:

"Sweat, yeah, I know them claws. Garthak. Right. Them Mercuries boys all hot for their 'ware, but it's dealing with the chrome devil. Them gangers gonna get their ends plated someday. The Mercuries all hot for some plan. Say they gonna rule it all soon. Chips ... Dead as all hell what they gonna be if I ever get my piece near their clackin' asses.

If the Storm Knights get enough result points for a *hostile* result he says the above and adds:

"Mercuries say Garthak is going for their claws's new High Woman, Jezrium or whatever. Or so the byte says. Now what's mean to you, sys op? You got a beads on this I missed? What're they up to?"

If the Storm Knights get enough result points for a *enemy* result he says all of the above, and adds:

"They say he's got some shard or something, a little extra meg Garthak's gonna use to get in good with some big mainframe back on Tharkold."

Translated, with some information Nanosec doesn't have thrown in:

1) The Mercuries are getting cyberware, but it's going to cost them. The Mercuries are bragging about being on the verge of gaining great power, but Nanosec doubts it'll amount to anything. And if he sees any of them, Nanosec will waste them himself.

2) The Mercuries also say that Garthak is out to kill Jezrael, or so says the word on the street. But Nanosec isn't sure about that one, and he wants the Storm Knights to give him some details.

3) The Mercuries say that Garthak has an eternity shard that he's plan-

ning on sacrificing to Malgest.

Note that Nanosec doesn't know much about High Lords, Darkness Devices, and eternity shards. That's why he gets the names wrong.

Event

As soon as the Knights have received what information Nanosec is going to give them, the Mercuries mount their attack. Cut to "Crossfire."

Flags

If a *Mistaken Identity* card or *Suspicion* card is played, Nanosec looks carefully at the Storm Knight for a moment and then asks, "Password. Didn't you slag RAM out of the Mercuries?" (He's asking if the Storm Knight killed a ganger out of the Mercuries.) If the Storm Knight says yes, Nanosec's reaction becomes *friendly*, and the results for the above information are made easier. If he says no, then Nanosec looks at him carefully again and the scene proceeds.

Variables

This scene sets up the living conditions of some of the inhabitants of Los Angeles and introduces the Storm Knights to some LA gangers. Play it to keep them off balance. Though they could probably take out all the kids in the safe house, they'll be better served by staying cool. This means playing by the rules of the gang.

However, since they don't know the rules, you should take the time to make them feel uncomfortable. For example, Storm Knights are probably used to people reacting to them with excitement, or fear, or something. Danger Danger doesn't shift his position when they saunter up. This fourteen year-old kid doesn't expect to live past the age of eighteen. He's seen too much already, and one thing he knows is you don't let your reactions show you're impressed. It marks you as meat.

If the Storm Knights get into a fight with the Posse, they'll lose the information they'd get from Nanosec, but they'll be able to get it from the Mercu-

ries following the battle. Have the Mercuries arrive three rounds after any fight begins with the Posse.

Crossfire

The Storm Knights are either already involved in a gun fight with the Posse, or they are conversing with Nanosec, when:

You hear the roar of approaching motorcycles, followed by rapid bursts of automatic fire. Bullets slam through the wooden boards over the windows and fierce rain washes into the room. You hear someone shouting, "Mercuries!" and then the sound of a great many machine guns firing.

The Mercuries are wired up with Tharkold technology. Some have got red eyes, some have silver hands with claws, others have metal spikes that grow out of the sides of their arms. They all wear red jackets.

Mercuries (20)

DEXTERITY 8

Dodge 10, energy weapons 9, fire combat 10, melee weapons 9, stealth 10, unarmed combat 10

STRENGTH 9

Climbing 10

TOUGHNESS 9

PERCEPTION 8

Find 10, land vehicles 9, tracking 10, trick 9

MIND 9

Test 10, willpower 10

CHARISMA 8

Charm 9, persuasion 9, taunt 11

SPIRIT 8

Faith (Tharkoldu Evil) 10, intimidation 10

Possibilities: none

Equipment: Nanocord; SlaveChip; darksight; talons, damage value STR+2/11; Cyber value: 6. 9/Gam automatic pistol, damage value 15, ammo 9, range 3-10/20/30

The Mercuries tracked down the Posse safehouse and sent twenty slavegangers on motorcycles to hit the place. The fight is a turf war between the Posse members and the Mercurials, and because of this the Storm Knights have a great deal of leeway as to how they respond to the fight.



- They can try to retreat from the combat. Although the gangers won't go out their way to keep the Storm Knights out of the line of fire, neither will either side pursue them.

- They can side with the Posse and try to take out the Mercuries. If they want information from the Mercuries, this makes the most sense.

- They can side with the Mercuries against the Posse, hoping to get in with the Mercuries. This probably won't work, but they won't know it at the time.

- They can try to take on both sides, and then pick through the wounded for clues when the smoke clears. They're Storm Knights. They could probably pull it off.

If the Storm Knights were talking with Danger Danger and Nanosec with the Mercuries hit the place, the two of them will whip out Uzis and rush to the windows to shoot down the rival gangers. They'll stay in those spots unless forced out of them or killed.

Gangs of Trouble

Although there are 20 gangers to a side, the Storm Knights won't be dealing with all of them at once, no matter which option they pick. During the fight there are little sub-fights around the building. Members of both gangs are all over the place — on the roof, in the back alley, hanging out windows, riding by on motorcycles (only five of the Mercuries actually stay on their motorcycles after the first pass — the rest get on foot to raid the building), hiding behind cars and so on.

The Storm Knights will probably make up their own sub-fight, or they may split up and form several sub-fights. In any case, in any given round no more than 10 enemy gang members (enemy as defined by the Storm Knights) are within combat range of the Storm Knights. For example, if the Storm Knights are attacking both gangs, they're able to fight five Posse members and five Mercuries each round. The other 30 gangers are off somewhere else shooting at each other.

After the third round of combat, one ganger from each side is assumed killed from damage inflicted by other



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ganger members in sub-fights the Storm Knights are not participating in. You should keep track of the number of dead on both sides. The tide of the battle is determined by the Storm Knights, for without them, the two gangs would fight to draw.

When either gang is cut down to 10 or fewer breathing members, that side retreats. The Storm Knights can pur-

sue if they wish, but the winning gang is content to sit on their turf and bask in their victory.

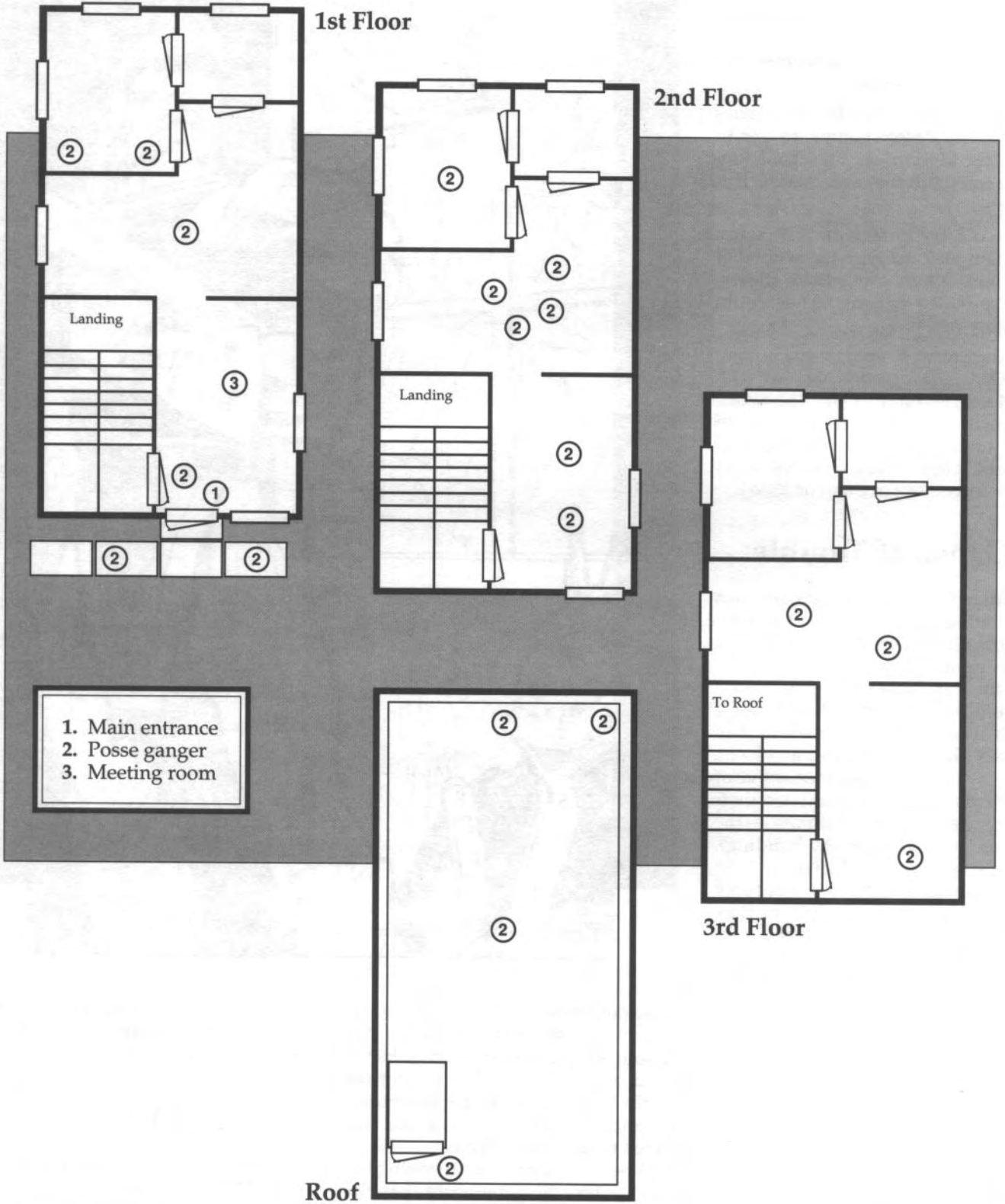
Event

During most of the battle, a ganger will think the Storm Knights are on his side as long as he sees them shooting





City of Demons: Map 3 Posse Safehouse



- 1. Main entrance
- 2. Posse ganger
- 3. Meeting room



at gangers from the other side.

But it's also possible that, during the battle, the Storm Knights might be attacked by gangers on the side they are defending. After all, the only ones who know them are Danger Danger and Nanosec. If you want, you can have the Storm Knights assaulted by gangers at their backs who just don't know any better.

To avoid this, if the Storm Knights are working with the Posse, they're best off hanging with Danger Danger or Nanosec. Other Posse members will assume the Knights are clean if they're with these guys.

Flags

If a *hero setback* appears at any time during the combat, one of the Storm Knights spots a mother and her son trapped in a small alcove doorway at the street level of an apartment building across the street. They have to get the two innocents to safety before stray bullets rake them down. If the Storm Knights don't act on the situation, the mother and son die in five rounds. The *setback* occurs because the Storm Knights will have to expose themselves to enemy fire to rescue the mother and son. If the Knights make no attempt to save them, subtract a Possibility from their award at the end of this act.

If a *Mistaken Identity* card or *Suspicion* card is played, one of the Mercuries gangers shouts at the Storm Knight, "It's the chip who magged RAM!" ("It's the jerk who killed RAM!") Needless to say, every one of the Mercuries is very upset about this, and will take special pains to nail that Storm Knight with automatic fire.

If a *Nemesis* card is played, the Storm Knight confronts a Mercuries ganger who will come back to haunt him later. In this scene they should end up away from the other combatants, and exchange blows for a while. Then the ganger should run off, to reappear in Act Three. Use the statistics for the slavegangers from Act Three for this character, not the slavegangers from this act.

Variables

This should be a nice, chaotic shootout. Make sure that the Storm Knight hear the spray of automatic weapons coming from the other side of the building, and the screams of gangers staking out their final piece of turf. The feel you should try to communicate is that in LA there is no single, clear fight. The fighting occurs all over the place, and you can't be everywhere at once. Spice it up with enemy gang members slipping in through windows, taking

rooms that were secure a second ago.

If the Storm Knights try to work with the Mercuries, the gangers will thank them, but WILL NOT offer any help. If the Storm Knights are insistent, they gangers will try to take off. If they want information from the Mercuries, they'll have to fight for it.

This is the common behavior of LA gangs. The Posse is a unique gang because it knows how to cooperate — other gangs don't. (Just like Thratchen, compared to other techno-demons.)

If the Storm Knights should cap-



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ture a Mercuries member and attempt to obtain information from him, cut to "Data Spill."

If the Knights do not grab a ganger to interrogate, see "Cut To ..." below.

Data Spill

The Knights have managed to capture a wounded Mercuries ganger for interrogation.

Read aloud or paraphrase:

He's a sixteen year-old kid with gleaming red metal eyes. The scarlet chrome nearly matches the bright red blood that flows out of a bullet wound just to the left of his collar bone. He glares at you like a wounded and dangerous animal.

The Storm Knights might hold several Mercuries prisoner, and each can be questioned separately, to increase the chances of getting the information below.

To ask the kid about Garthak, the Storm Knights need to *interrogate* him. The ganger is *loyal* to the Mercuries, Garthak's pride, and Garthak. The interrogation must generate 15 or more result points, as per the Interaction Results Table.

If the Storm Knights fail to crack him, he says:

"You might as well spike me here, chips, cause I ain't turning on my claws. They done things to meat I never want to scan again."

If the Storm Knights successfully interrogate him, he says:

"Hey, hey, hey, sweat. I'll hook you on line. Here's the biggest file I got for you. We dug up this cross, run? 'Cause Garthak, he says he thinks there's this thing nearby, a shard or some chip. We ripped it out of a fat meat's home. But Garthak, he goes on-line when he touches it. He does a data scan on it. It's a shard, whatever. Checks with some locals he's got by the claw, they says it's out of England, long time past. Big mojo. Garthak's gonna give it to his 100 Meg Darkness on Tharkold, and get enough juice to waste the new High Lady."

This is an important piece of information, because it tells the Storm Knights that Garthak's got an eternity shard he's planning on surrendering to Malgest. This, combined with some of the information Nanosec had to offer, gives the Storm Knights their own reason for helping Thratchen. He wants the demon pride, they want the shard. At this point they might well be ready to accept Thratchen's offer.

Flags

If a *Mistaken Identity* card is played, the Mercuries member the Knights are questioning mistakes one of them for RAM's killer. All *intimidation* rolls receive a +5 bonus modifier.

Cut To ...

If the Knights wish to confirm more of Thratchen's story, and have not yet encountered Phoenix, cut to Scene Three, "Looking for Trouble." If they're ready to accept the deal, cut to Scene Six, "And the Heavens Weep ..."

SCENE SIX: And the Heavens Weep...

The Situation

Dramatic. The Storm Knights travel to Griffith Observatory for a second meeting with Thratchen. When they speak the words, "Thratchen, come to us now so we can work together," Thratchen flies out of the surrounding trees. (Remember, Thratchen has been keeping an eye on the Storm Knights. He followed them up to the observatory, and waits for them to speak the words just to keep everything ordered.)

Read aloud or paraphrase:

You hear a beating of wings and look up to see Thratchen floating down to you from over the dome of the observatory. He wears a wide grin on his demonic face. When his feet touch the ground he smiles and says,

"So. We are, for the moment, allies?"

Suddenly, there is a rustling of leaves as a group of Tharkoldu demons fly out of the surrounding trees. They make a circle around you and Thratchen. The demons all but ignore you, their focus on Thratchen, their faces filled with fury. "So, Thratchen," spits out one of the demons, "You would betray our kind to these things?" and it gestures at you. "You would betray our one chance to remove the monkey from the throne of High Lord?"

Thratchen smiles coolly and says, "Ah, Vachab, you do not know the ways of the world. Times have changed. We are at war with forces we barely understand. The rules we lived by are useless now. I throw them out because I cannot afford them anymore. If I must ally myself with Storm Knights, I will. Because I know that the best chance our world has is to be ruled by Jezrael. Now, if you will forgive me, I must kill you ..."

The Action

There are three Tharkoldu techno-demons for each Storm Knight. However, the demons know that Thratchen is the biggest threat at the gathering. Two thirds of the demons attack Thratchen, and the other third attack the Storm Knights, so each Storm Knight battles one demon.

Tharkoldu Techno-Demons (three per Storm Knight)

DEXTERITY 10

Dodge 14, energy weapons 14, fire combat 12, flight 15, melee weapons 12 (15 defense), missile weapons 12, stealth 11, unarmed combat 15 (18)

STRENGTH 16

Lifting 18

TOUGHNESS 16 (21)

PERCEPTION 10

Alteration magic 13, divination magic 13, find 14 (17), first aid 11, land vehicles 12, tracking 14, trick 12

MIND 11

Apportation magic 14, conjuration magic 14, test 15, willpower 15

CHARISMA 9

Persuasion 11, taunt 13





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SPIRIT 11

Faith (Tharkoldu Evil) 16, intimidation 16, reality 15

Possibility Potential: some (45)

Arcane Knowledges: folk 4, entity 3, inanimate forces 2, living forces 2, water 1, metal 1,

Spells: *bullet, fog, stealth walk*

Natural Tools: teeth, damage value STR+2/18; talons (non-cybered limb), damage value STR+3/19; wing strike (*unarmed combat* to hit; damage value STR+7/23), flight speed 10.

Equipment: Nanocord; windsniffer (+3 to *Perception* or *find* skills using smell, noted above), balance-wires (+3 to skills using agility, noted in parentheses above), interdermal plate, armor value TOU+5/21; talon, enhance normal talons to damage value STR+5/21; cyberwings (+3 to push for *flight, lifting* while flying) speed value 10; life cyber; 3-slot chipholder. Cyber value: 16. Res-14/Alph lasers, damage value 25, ranges 3-150/400/2,000

Out of the corner of their eyes, even when engaged with their opposing demons, the Storm Knights see something quite terrible. Thratchen and the other demons attack each other with a fury the like of which few of the Storm Knights have ever seen. Read aloud or paraphrase:

Metal claws rend through cyberflesh. All of the demons are possessed by an apparently uncontrollable bloodlust. They never seem to stop moving. Never have you seen anything so well-suited to battle, nor so enjoying the act of killing.

Thratchen dispatches two of his demons each time a Storm Knight takes one out. If a free Storm Knight attempts to help him, he spits out, "Help your companions, fool!"

When the fight is done, Thratchen will look around at the mess, grinning

madly. Even an Orrorshan vampyre would be taken aback by the maniacal grin. Then he says:

"We have a few matters to discuss."

Target: Katana

First, Thratchen confirms that the Storm Knights still have the disk he gave them. If they lost it, or it was damaged, he gives them a copy. He then runs down the following information:

- Katana Security Systems' main offices are located on Santa Monica Boulevard in Santa Monica. The offices take up the fifth and sixth floors of the Morgan Building, which is currently owned by Kanawa Enterprises.

- The data and the program on Thratchen's disk must be loaded onsite. The portion of the data storage that must be affected is not on external data lines. This is why Thratchen needs the Storm Knights. He's not the first choice for going into a guarded facility and sneaking around (in addition to the fact that the building is a Nippon hardpoint). Everything must be done without Kanawa knowing about it, or the plan won't work.

- As the program is designed, it will take fifteen minutes for the information on the disk to load into the Katana computer system. The Storm Knights might be able to make it go faster if they have computing skills, but it's tricky.

- Of course, the Storm Knights cannot simply slip the disk in and leave. They've got to wait around to make sure the data loads properly, and then eliminate any traces of their intrusion into the building.

- The job must be done tonight. His sources say that whatever Garthak is

planning, it's happening soon. There is no more time available. (If the Knights accepted Thratchen's deal back in Scene Two, you can come up with a reason why the Knights had to wait until now to make the raid — perhaps there was additional security posted at the building, or it was being watched by members of Garthak's pride.)

Thratchen wishes them luck, and says he'll wait for them in Compton, on the border of Garthak's turf. There they will wait to see if the Nippon forces have taken the bait.

Variables

If the Storm Knights are defeated by the techno-demons, Thratchen can dispose of the lot of them. If Thratchen, too, is being defeated, he'll attempt to create a diversion and spirit the Knights to a place of safety. At this stage, it's too late for him to recruit another party of Knights — for good or ill, these will have to do.

Awards

Each Storm Knight should receive three Possibilities for completing this act. However, if the Storm Knights harmed or killed any innocents — including Charlie, and the women and her son in Compton, those responsible receive no points. Also, if the woman and her son were ignored by the Storm Knights, those who could have helped and did not also receive only two Possibilities.

Cut To ...

Once the Knights are ready to proceed to the Morgan Building, cut to Act Two, "Garbage In, Garbage Out."





Act Two

Garbage In, Garbage Out

The Major Beat

The Storm Knights break into the offices of Katana Security to plant Thratchen's program on the firm's computers. While there, they encounter a second group of industrial saboteurs, and must decide whether to work with them or risk a fight that could wreck their entire plan.

SCENE ONE: The Break-In

The Situation

Standard. The Storm Knights may wish to learn more about the Morgan Building and its security before they attempt to plant the false data. What they learn is, of course, determined by how they go about investigating and how successful they are at it.

All of the basic information about the Morgan Building is presented in this scene. This can be given to the Knights during the course of this scene, and should improve their chances of success in the next two scenes.

When they first approach the building, read:

You see a six-story building, an imposing edifice of glass and steel. The lower lobby is walled only by glass, supported at the edge of the building by exposed I-beams. At the center of the lobby is a central elevator block painted mat-black. Between the front doors and the elevator is a large desk. Two guards sit behind the desk.

The Action

This scene calls for the Knights to move quickly and quietly. If everything goes well, no one will know they have been in the building or what they have done while there. If they break into the building at night, there are only seven people they will have to avoid, so the odds are in their favor.

This scene should not be about things going wrong, but about things *almost* going wrong. Events listed below should be used to keep the tension level high and make them think things are about to blow apart.

Before getting into the Katana offices, the Knights must get into the building. Here's what the Storm Knights can learn about the building and ways they can go about getting the information. Keep in mind that this is also your listing of the building's security measures.

There are a number of ways the Knights can gather data about the building and Katana. It is possible that there may be floor plans of the building available in a city office, providing they were not shredded by Nippon agents. The Knights might also persuade or bribe an exiting office worker to give them info. Finally, Rauru Block connections (other than Phoenix) could probably help the Knights.

They can also glean some information casually. For example, if they watch the building from across the street in the evening, they'll see that the lights of the Katana offices are still on, and that there are people moving about inside. This will tell them that there are people working late at night.

If the Knights are conceivably within view of the lobby guards (across the street from the front of the build-



ing, etc.) have them generate *stealth* totals against the guard's *find*. If a Knight fails, one of the guards notices him. He will step just outside of the building and inquire what the Knights want, and inform them that the building is closed for the night.

The Morgan Building

There are three companies in the building. Floors one and two are taken up with Rising Sun, a Japanese public relations firm. The third and fourth floors are used by Tokyo Ltd., an import export company. The two top floors are taken up by Katana.

Both Rising Sun and Tokyo Limited are empty of staff between the hours of 6:00 pm and 7:00 am. Katana Security, however, has two shifts of a skeleton staff, four people on each shift, who are ready to coordinate data coming in at any hour. The shifts change at midnight. They also do number-crunching throughout the night.

IMPORTANT: Keep in mind that the Morgan Building is a Nippon hardpoint.

There are three entrances into the building: the main door, the emergency fire exit at the rear of the lobby, and the fire exit on the roof. The main door is open only during business hours, and it and the other two doors are locked at the beginning of this scene. *Lock picking* totals of 9 are required to get through these doors.

If the Knights wish to walk boldly up to the front doors and knock, they may do so — but they'd better have an awfully good story to tell the guards.

Both fire exits are equipped with electronic alarms. These can be circumvented using *science (electronics)* totals of 10 or *Mind* totals of 12. If they have not been disabled, a light will flash on the lobby guards' panel when they are opened — the Knights may need to create some kind of diversion to keep them from noticing.

If the Knights break in through the lobby fire exit, they will have to generate *stealth* totals against the guards' *find* values while they are trying to get into the elevators to keep from being spotted. If a guard should spot the Knights, he will try to apprehend them while his partner summons a Kanawa security squad (see below).

The exterior walls of the building are made of specially reinforced glass (*Toughness* 19).

The Knights can, of course, mount an assault on the building and take out the guards. But doing this will alert Katana officials that there was a break-in, and possibly ruin the whole plan. They must remember that *stealth* is more important than mowing down Kanawa minions.

Guards

Two security guards remain behind a large desk at the front entrance of the building day and night. All guests to the building must sign in. Guests are only allowed between the hours of 7:00 am to 6:00 pm.

There is a third guard who patrols the building. (The guards actually switch off for this duty.) If there are any disturbances, the guards call in to a Kanawa security base and a squad of Kanawa security guards arrive in five minutes.

This is not a high security building. It's an office building with some intrusion alerts — the guards, the cameras. While Kanawa wants to protect its property, there's a limit to what resources they have available since the Tharkoldu invasion. The offices of a public relations firm, an import and export company, and a security firm's data processing facility don't rate that high when compared with the local warehouses packed with Kanawa tech goodies.

The most important site in the building is where the Storm Knights are going — Katana's computer room. However, what is valuable is the data within, and it's guarded by sophisticated program defenses. No one expected anyone to *put* false data into the computer, and no one expected the computer intrusions to be as sophisticated as the work Thatchen did.

Morgan Security Guards

DEXTERITY 10

Dodge 11, fire combat 12, maneuver 11, unarmed combat 11

STRENGTH 10

TOUGHNESS 11

PERCEPTION 10

Find 12, trick (12)

MIND 10

Willpower 11

CHARISMA 9

Charm (12), persuasion 11, taunt 10

SPIRIT 9

Intimidation 10

Possibilities: none

Equipment: Chiang 67, damage value 16, ammo 8, range 3-10/25/50; walkie-talkie

Kanawa Response Guards (8)

DEXTERITY 9

Dodge 10, fire combat 12, missile weapons 10, running 10, stealth 12, unarmed combat 10

STRENGTH 8

TOUGHNESS 8 (15)

PERCEPTION 9

Evidence analysis 10, find 12, first aid 11, land vehicles 11, trick 11

MIND 9

Test 11, willpower 11

CHARISMA 8

Taunt 10 (15)

SPIRIT 9

Intimidation 11

Possibilities: none

Equipment: 13mm Chunyokai, damage value 18, ammo 9, range 3-10/40/50; Kyoto Police RKD, armor value TOU+7/15

Cameras

There are 20 security cameras distributed throughout the building, including one on the roof. Four cameras at a time can project their images on the monitors at the security station in the lobby, for a duration of 10 seconds. This means that once a set of cameras has finished projecting, forty seconds will elapse before their images will again appear on the monitors.

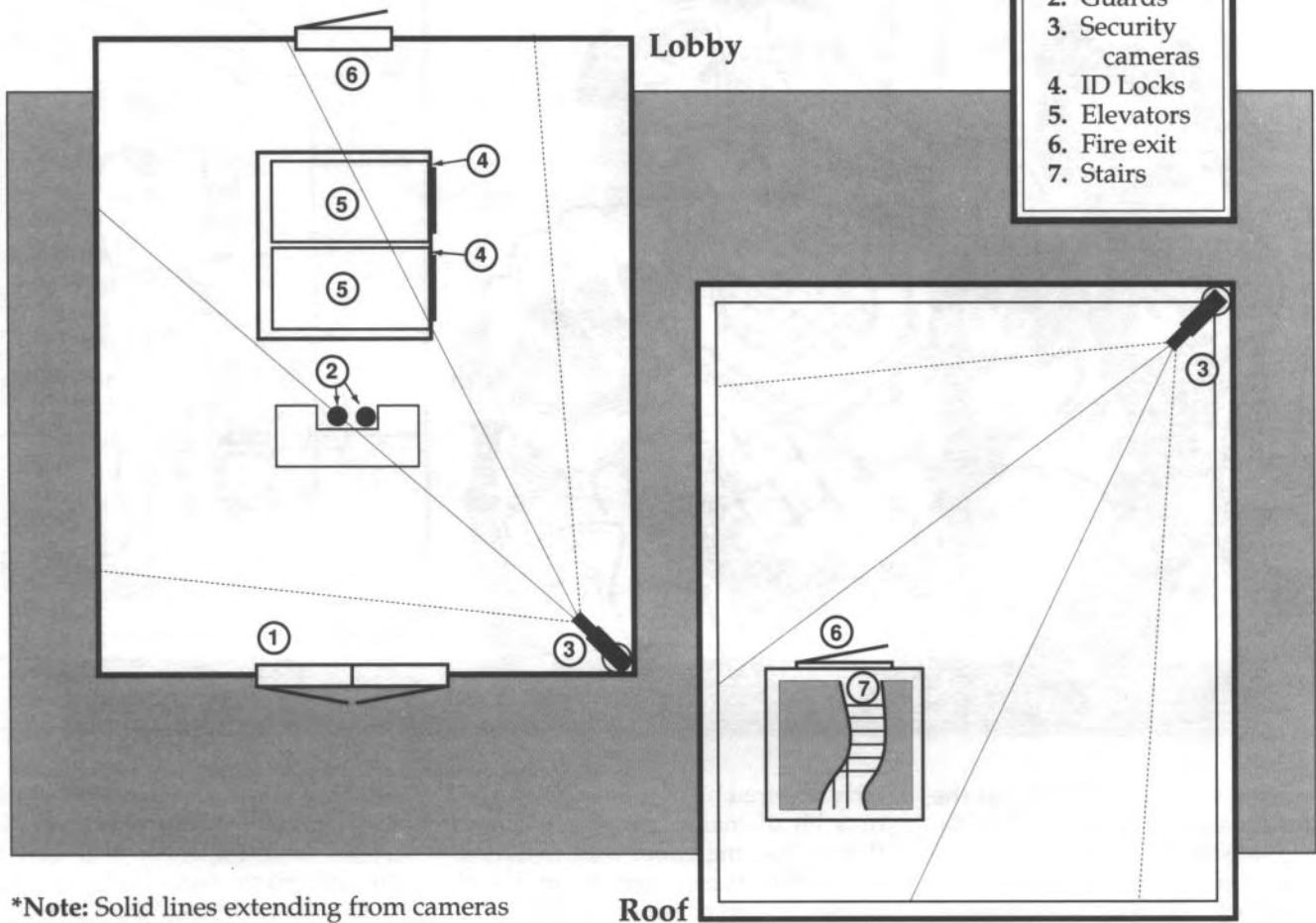
The solid lines projecting from the cameras on the map show the entire area covered by them. The devices pivot back forth to cover their section, and the the area within the dotted lines shows how much is in view at any given moment. Thus, the Storm Knights can sneak past a camera with ease if they are not in the area currently being viewed. (A simple mechanic to determine which camera is transmitting when is to roll the dice. On a 1-4, the camera by which the Knights are trying to sneak is sending an image to the lobby in that round.)

Spotting the cameras requires a *find* or *Perception* total of 9. Figuring out their timing cycle and knowing when





City of Demons: Map 4 The Morgan Building



1. Entrance
2. Guards
3. Security cameras
4. ID Locks
5. Elevators
6. Fire exit
7. Stairs

***Note:** Solid lines extending from cameras indicate field of vision at any one time. Dotted lines indicate sweep of cameras.

to slip past them requires an *evidence analysis* or *Perception* total of 11.

There is no way to judge, by looking at the cameras, whether or not their images are currently being viewed on the lobby monitors. If a camera is disabled, the lobby guards will know about it within four rounds, and dispatch the guard on patrol to investigate. If he does not report in within five minutes, they will send for the security team.

If the Knights are spotted by a camera, they'll send the patrolling guard to investigate. If the Storm Knight is clearly someone who shouldn't be in

the building — an *edeinos*, for example — the guards will immediately call in the Kanawa security squad. Otherwise, they'll give the guard five minutes to report in, and then call the security squad.

Flags

If a *Mistaken Identity* card is played and there is a Nippon Knight in the party, one of the lobby guards will mistake him for a friend of Rising Sun's CEO. The Knights can take advantage of this confusion to gain access to the building.

If a *Personal Stake* is played, one of the Knights once saved a relative of one of the guards from Yakuza. The guard will be willing to "look the other way."

If a *Connection* card is played, a Knight knows someone at Tokyo Limited who can be bribed into providing details on the building's security.

Variables

If the Knights were defeated by the ninjas in Act One, or one of the ninjas was able to escape them, Kanawa internal security has notified the mega-





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corporation's holdings in LA that the Knights are about and causing trouble. Descriptions of the Knights will have been faxed to the guards in the Morgan Building, and they will immediately recognize the Knights (particularly any unusual-looking ones) if they spot them.

Hitting the Target

Every employee of one of the three companies in the Morgan Building owns a photo identity card with a magnetic strip, used to unlock doors. The IDs open those doors specifically stated on the map to have an ID lock, as well as accessing the elevators. All guests are given guest IDs, which open only the elevator doors. The receptionist must buzz in any guests at the company's main doors.

The Knights can obtain an ID card by stealing one from an exiting employee. Guests IDs are kept in the security desk in the lobby, so a particu-

larly inspired bit of theft, a good *trick*, or a bit of magic can obtain one of those. Opening a door with an ID card is a *simple action* — opening an ID lock without a card requires the use of Dramatic Skill Resolution.

Play up the tension when the Knights are attempting this. There is always the chance someone will come along and see them while they are working to undo a lock.

Successfully "picking" an ID lock requires steps A, B, and C. All three require a *science* or *scholar* (*electronics*) total of 10 or a *Mind* total of 13. Each of the stops represents accomplishing the corresponding task:

A — Beating the lock's alarm system. The Storm Knights cannot proceed with the task until this is done. If the lock is tampered with while the alarm system is still intact, a red light goes on at the front desk, giving the guards the location of the break-in. If the lock is simply destroyed, the same thing happens.

B — Discovering the lock's unique

combination. (Each ID card's magnetic strip actually contains several electronic combinations, and can get through many doors.)

C — "Convincing" the lock that the proper combination has been entered, and it should swing open.

The Katana Offices

When the Knights reach the floors which house Katana Securities, they can begin searching for the computer room. Here are brief descriptions of some of the other sections:

Executive Offices

These rooms contain large wooden desks, book shelves, and two guest chairs. Most also sport a computer station, but these cannot be used to input the false data into the main banks. Note that a Katana staff member is present in one of the offices at the start of this scene.



Work Stations

These stations are where most of the employees work. There is a terminal at each station, but they cannot be used to input the false data into the main banks. Note that two employees are at work here at the start of this scene.

Office Supply Closet

This closet is filled with office supplies: paper, printer toners, staples, and other odds and ends. There is nothing of use to the Knights in here, but it is large enough for two people to hide in it, if necessary.

Cleaning Supply Closet

This closet contains buckets and mops and other janitorial supplies. It also contains two maintenance worker uniforms the Knights could don, and is large enough for one person to hide in.

Conference Rooms

These rooms contain large tables surrounded by eight chairs. An easel with colored markers stands at one end of the room. Note that a staff member is present in one of these rooms at the start of the scene.

Spiral Staircase

This staircase connects the fifth and sixth floors and leads to the fire exit on the roof. The door to the roof is kept locked, due to fears of possible break-in.

The Computer Room

This chamber has reinforced glass walls (*Toughness* 21) and its door bears an ID lock. It is kept cooler than the other rooms. Computer banks and file cabinets line the walls, so it is difficult to see movement within.

When the Storm Knights reach the computer room, cut to Scene Two, "Check and Mate."

Skeleton Crew

At night there are four people on duty in the Katana offices. The starting positions of these four people are marked on map. They can be moved

by diversions created by the Storm Knights, or by you, to create additional tension in the scene.

If the Storm Knights are wandering around the offices, they might enter an area with a Katana employee in it. Depending on the circumstances, they can either quickly hide, or talk their way out of the situation.

No one on the Katana staff will actively look for intruders, so do not make random rolls to see if they notice suspicious behavior on the part of the Storm Knights. The staff is here for you to use at your whim.

If the Knights gained entrance in disguise (as electricians or telephone repairmen, say), an employee may ask them to perform such a task ("As long as you're here, could you fix this?") This could create problems for an Aylsh Storm Knight who hasn't the slightest notion what a phone is, let alone how to fix one.

Katana Employees (4)

DEXTERITY 8

STRENGTH 8

TOUGHNESS 7

PERCEPTION 9

Evidence analysis 12, find 10, language (English) 10, trick 10

MIND 9

Science (computers) 12, science (statistical analysis) 12)

CHARISMA 8

Persuasion 9

SPIRIT 7

Possibility Potential: none

Equipment: Zamftech Monolith computer

Avoiding the Guards

The primary purpose of the guards, like the employees, is to give the Storm Knights people to avoid. The patrolling night guard should pass by the Storm Knights once every ten to thirty minutes of game time. There should be at least one close call where the guard thinks he hears something and comes searching for the Storm Knights. He eventually gives up if the Storm Knights maneuver themselves carefully enough.

If the Kanawa security squad is summoned, the guards will seal off the lobby doors, and the squad will begin a floor-by-floor search of the building.

They will begin on the first floor and work their way up. It will take them 10 minutes to reach the fifth floor.

Event

Feel free to inject as much suspense into this scene as you wish, using the events below and those you come up with yourself. Get a feel for how your players are enjoying themselves — if they're having a great time sneaking around the building, keep going. If it looks like they've gotten as much enjoyment as they can out of this scene, let them reach the computer room without further incident and cut to Scene Two.

If the Storm Knights are about to use the elevator when they aren't supposed to be in the building, they might see that the elevator has stopped one floor up (or down). Someone has gotten onto the elevator is heading toward them.

If the Storm Knights are working on the ID lock outside the elevator bank they could hear the elevator engines in the elevator shaft begin to grind, and know an elevator is moving up or down toward them. Will it stop at their floor?

While lurking about, the Storm Knights may hear two employees talking from a distance, getting closer and closer. At one point, one of the employees calls out, "Hello?" and gets up from his work station to investigate a noise. He might even add, "Who's there?" Then another employee might come out from his work station and ask, "What is it?"

"I thought I heard something."

"What?"

"Nothing, I guess."

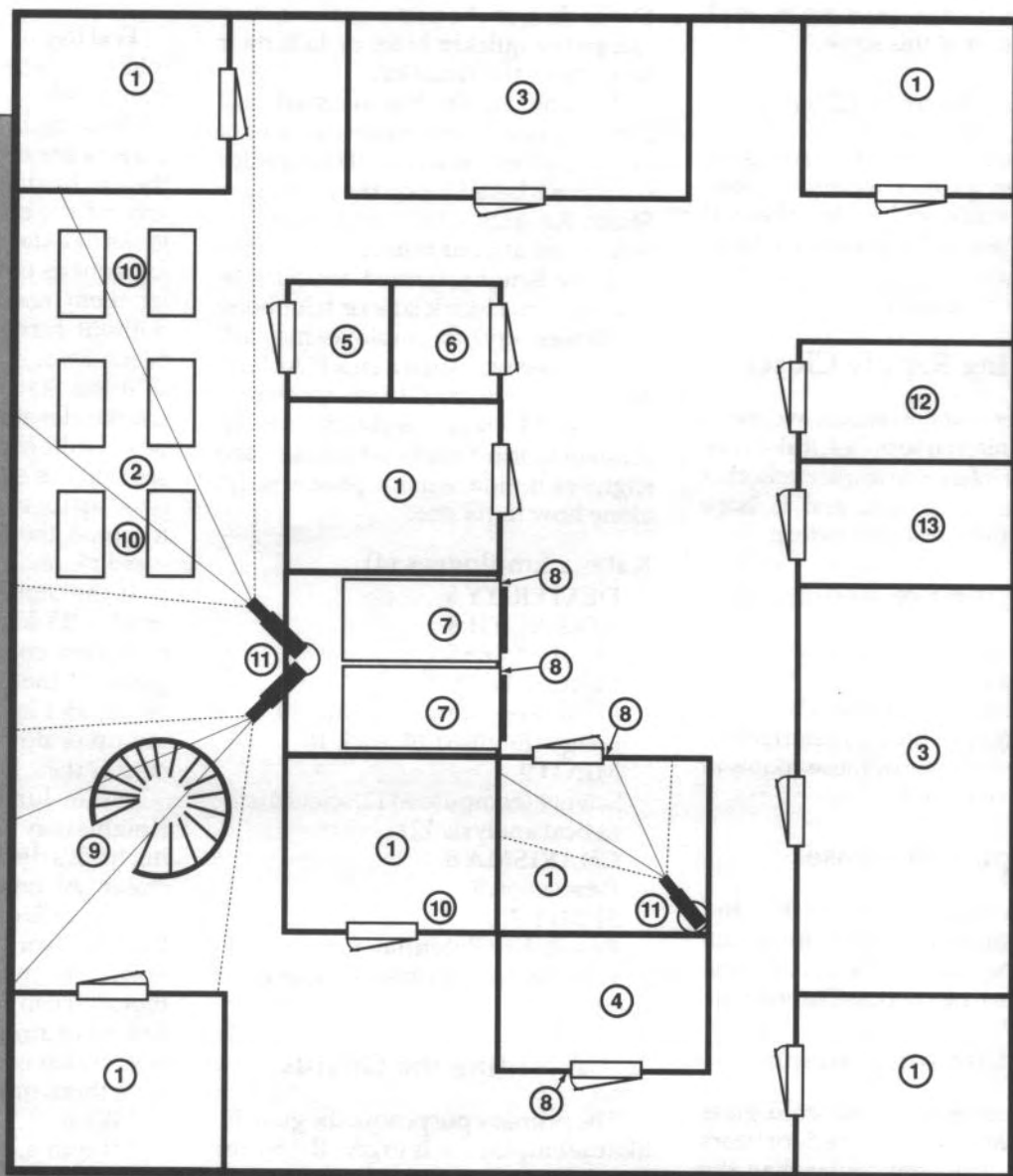
During this time the Storm Knights should be waiting, their breathing down to almost nothing, waiting to see if the employees will come closer. They probably won't, but let the employees take a few steps toward wherever the Storm Knights are hiding. The whole while they'll be saying things like, "Are you sure you heard something?" and "Maybe we should call the guards ..."





City of Demons: Map 5

The Morgan Building — 5th Floor



- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Executive offices | 7. Elevator |
| 2. Work stations | 8. ID lock |
| 3. Conference room | 9. Spiral stairs |
| 4. Computer room | 10. Staff member |
| 5. Office supply closet | 11. Security camera |
| 6. Cleaning supply closet | 12. Men's room |
| | 13. Women's room |

***Note:** All floors have identical floor plans.
 Solid lines extending from cameras indicate field of vision at any one time.
 Dotted lines indicate sweep of cameras.



Flags

If a *hero setback* occurs, someone enters the room the Storm Knights are in, catching them completely off-guard. They will either have to come up with a plausible explanation for their being there or quietly subdue the person (the former is far better in this situation).

If a *Connection* card is played, one of the Knights knows a local bartender. He serves drinks at a nightspot frequented by Katana employees — the Knights might be able to obtain an ID card there.

If a *Suspicion* card is played, one of the Knights suspects the quiet Katana offices are a trap waiting to be sprung upon him and his confederates.

Variables

There is every chance the Knights will be spotted and tagged as intruders before they can get to the computer room. If they can quietly subdue the person, the mission can still be salvaged. Magic or hypnotism could convince the inconvenient visitor that he never saw the Knights. It's also possible that the Knights could steal something from the computer room, making the whole operation look like a standard theft.

If the Knights are spotted and defeated, either by the lobby guards or the Kanawa security squad, they will be brought to the lobby. While some of the Kanawa guards search the building for other intruders, the Knights will be held under guard until additional security forces arrive to take them into custody. They will be taken by hovercraft to the Kanawa Enterprises building, where they will be held for questioning by MarSec. The Knights will have to make their escape to have any chance of succeeding at their mission.

The Kanawa eight-man squad will remain at the Morgan Building as extra security, making the Knights' job a little tougher. But if no one has discovered their true purpose in breaking in, they still have a chance to carry out Thrachten's instructions.

Cut To ...

When the Storm Knights have found the computer room, cut to Scene Three, "Check and Mate."

SCENE THREE: Check and Mate

The Situation

Dramatic. As the Storm Knights approach the computer room, read aloud or paraphrase:

You see a glass-walled room. There are no lights on within, but inside are several computers, keyboards, and terminals. The hallway is dimly-lit, and no one seems to be nearby.

If the Knights generate an *evidence analysis* or *Perception* total of 8 while looking at the door, they see that it has an ID lock.

When the Knights are preparing to enter the room (through whatever means), have them generate *Perception* totals. On a 13, they hear footsteps coming down the corridor from the opposite direction in which they approached. Allow the Knights to take



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whatever action they wish (hiding, etc.) and then read the following:

To your surprise, you see a small group of Asian men and women, clad in black body suits. Their body language indicates that they, too, are intruders. All wear night vision goggles, and one carries a large coil on rope around his shoulder.

If the Knights failed the *Perception* check, they hear nothing and are taken by surprise by the newcomers. In either case, the intruders will not attack the Knights, but wait for player characters to make the first move.

The Action

The Storm Knights are in an interesting situation, for they have encountered an elite industrial sabotage strike team from Asuga Hovercraft, a Marketplace mega-corporation. The Asuga agents, led by a woman named Mariko, have been sent to steal data from Katana. They have the presence of mind not to attack the Knights, for just as that group wishes to remain undetected, so too do the Asuga agents. Since both groups are after Katana, ideally a bargain can be struck where both sides work together against Katana, accomplish their goals, and then go their separate ways.

When the two groups first face off, there should be a moment of tension as neither side knows what to do.

If the Storm Knights take no hostile action, Mariko raises her hand, signaling for her people to stay their weapons, which they do.

If the Storm Knights draw their weapons or make a threatening move, all the Asuga agents but Mariko draw their weapons. Mariko raises her hand, as above, and her group waits.

If the Storm Knights attack, the Asuga agents dive for cover, but Mariko shouts in a harsh whisper, "Wait!"

Mariko's objective is to get the situation resolved peacefully. She has al-



City of Demons

Prop #1

File: Crime Report Appendices AA 32743945 BG343-9 HH-Pelagius's Cross
Primary Report Compiled by LAPD.

Additional information by Katana operative B. Yabu:

According to the owner of the cross, it belonged to a British monk named Pelagius, or the "Islander." This man preached a heretical doctrine of Free Will in Rome during the time of the Christian Church's early development. He believed that every person, regardless of religion, was responsible for his own conduct. His greatest conflict with the Church came with his claim that mankind is not cursed with Original Sin, as the Church believed mankind to be. He concluded that man was inherently good. He also asserted that every man had a right to be wrong, and that baptism, a ritual of cleansing, was not needed for Christian salvation. Pelagius was declared a heretic in 418 and banished from Rome.

It is impossible to believe that the gangers who stole the cross (see file Appendices AA 32743945 BG343-9 F-Mercuries) would have such knowledge and would have broken into the owner's home to steal an item that does not look particularly valuable. It seems they knew what they were looking for, most likely at the request of a Realm Raider. Thus, the conclusion that the cross is indeed an eternity shard seems the most sound.



ready figured out the Storm Knights are thieves. (She's wrong about the specifics, of course. The Storm Knights aren't here to steal anything.) She's willing to cut a deal with them rather than risk discovery by the Katana guards — a discovery that would inevitably take place if the two sides fought.

If no fight breaks out between the Knights and the Asuga agents, or it is stopped before a disturbance is created, cut to "Talking It Out." If a fight should take place, cut to "War With No Winners."

Mariko

DEXTERITY 12

Acrobatics 13, dodge 14, energy weapons 13, maneuver 13, martial arts 14 (Red Lotus — minor and major disciplines), melee weapons 13, stealth 15, unarmed combat 15

STRENGTH 11

Climbing 13

TOUGHNESS 11

PERCEPTION 13

Air vehicles 14, evidence analysis

14, find 14, first aid 14, land vehicles 14, trick 15

MIND 13

Science (computers) 16, test 14

CHARISMA 11

Charm 12, persuasion 13

SPIRIT 11

Intimidation 12, reality 14

Possibilities: 5

Equipment: hand laser, damage value 17, ammo 20, range 3-30/100/200; night vision goggles (+2 to *find* or *Perception* in darkness); retina pattern recorder; Niyoki camouflage suit; Sorobu gloves and boots; electronic safecracker; Allied microcamera

Description: Mariko is a loyal and dedicated Asuga agent. She is lithe and attractive, and her major strength is pragmatism — she will do what needs to be done to complete a job successfully.

While working, Mariko is all business. If the Storm Knights refuse to cooperate with her, she will at first become quite annoyed. One of her shortcomings is that she doesn't understand why people can't think the

way she does. She'll try to force the Storm Knights to be reasonable with logic, and then, if this approach fails, she'll try to kill them as quickly and as quietly as possible.

Asuga Agents (5)

DEXTERITY 11

Acrobatics 12, dodge 12, energy weapons 12, maneuver 13, martial arts 12 (Red Lotus — minor disciplines) melee weapons 13, stealth 12, unarmed combat 12

STRENGTH 11

Climbing 13

TOUGHNESS 10

PERCEPTION 11

Trick 12

MIND 10

Science (computers) 12, willpower 12

CHARISMA 7

Persuasion 9

SPIRIT 8

Intimidation 10, reality 10

Possibilities: 3

Equipment: hand lasers, damage value 17, ammo 10, range 3-30/100/200 throwing stars (5), damage value



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STR+3/14, range 3-5/10/15; night vision goggles (+2 to *find* or *Perception* in darkness); Niyoki camouflage suit; Sorubu gloves and boots; Allied microcamera; nylon rope

Talking It Out

If violence is prevented, either because the Knights have enough sense not to attack or through Mariko's intervention, the two groups have an opportunity to negotiate a temporary alliance. Mariko speaks for her group, and tries to keep as much information to herself as she can. However, for the purposes of the negotiations, she will let slip some things the Knights might wish to know.

Here's what Mariko will say, beginning with that which she will freely offer the Knights and ending with information she will only exchange for equivalent data from the Knights. The Knights can attempt to *charm* and *persuade* Mariko to part with the information — if they have taken no hostile action toward her or her group, she is *neutral* toward them. Information ob-

tained is dependent upon the type of success attained by the Knights.

Read aloud or paraphrase:

"I take it we are both here for the same purpose? We are employed by a rival mega-corporation to steal data from the Katana crime files."

This is far as Mariko wants to go. The Storm Knights should now be able to see that the Asuga agents and they are not in competition, she feels, and should be willing to work together.

If the Storm Knights press her, however, she will tell them more. She would rather give them information and win their cooperation than risk a fight that could result in the capture of her group by Kanawa security forces.

If the Storm Knights get a *negotiated agreement* result on a *persuasion* attempt, Mariko will add the following:

"We are employees of Asuga Hovercraft, a large firm on Marketplace. For reasons of its own, our company wishes us to obtain information from Katana's computers. Asuga would pay for the data we seek, but we don't want Katana, and thus Kanawa, to know we are inter-

ested in it. They may not yet recognize its value, and we would like to keep it that way."

Mariko will not explain why Asuga is working against a Kanawa-owned corporation. (In truth, she doesn't know. 7414, the CEO of that mega-corporation, wishes to undermine 3327's financial ventures and win for himself a place on the Triad. His agents have been instructed to keep their eyes open for any way to accomplish this.)

If the Storm Knights get a *yes* result on a *persuasion* attempt, Mariko will tell them:

"We believe some gangers out of Compton got hold of an eternity shard. They probably don't even know what it is."

If the Storm Knights get a *vow* result on a *persuasion* attempt, Mariko will go on to explain:

"The artifact was stolen from a collector of religious art. It is a cross, a small Christian cross, forged in Great Britain in the 5th century. The cross reportedly belonged to a British monk known as Pelagius."

Mariko knows no more about the shard than that, and was only given the name by her superior so she could find the relevant data on the Katana computers.

When both sides have stated as much as they want to state, they can attempt to reach an agreement. Mariko is willing to accept an offer of cooperation between the two groups until they are safely out of the building. Any other deal will require successful *persuasion* or *intimidation* attempts on the part of the Knights.

The Storm Knights may or may not have played out scenarios involving Nippon Tech in-fighting. But on a *Mind* total of 8, they remember hearing rumors of such things. Other information is available to them, depending upon the level of success they have achieved:

Minimal/Average: Ursan Industries, 3327's Marketplace mega-corporation, is one of the most powerful in that cosm. But it is certainly not the only one, and operations on Earth have weakened it slightly. This may



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embolden its competitors, like Asuga, to strike at it.

Good: Asuga Hovercraft is the parent company of Minase Security and World Perfect. These two companies have opened up shop in Los Angeles, and would obviously be interested in keeping tabs on the criminal and demonic activity in Los Angeles.

Superior: Like most of the Nippon Tech citizens, employees of Asuga Hovercraft are probably willing to make a deal when it suits their needs.

Spectacular: Gossip in Nippon states that 7414, Asuga's CEO, covets a seat on Marketplace's Triad. He may wish to financially ruin Ursan/Kanawa and claim 3327's spot. He is believed to be unaware of the true nature of the maelstrom technology and the true power of his rival.

War With No Winners

If everybody loses it and a fight breaks out, either at the moment of the encounter or during the negotiations, Mariko tries to calm both groups. If this fails, she'll join the fray.

If the fight lasts for more than three rounds, the guards hear the noise (certainly the employees do) and security back-up is immediately called. Things get worse from here on, for the Storm Knights will only have 10 minutes to dispatch the Asuga agents, accomplish their mission, and get out before the security squad arrives. See "Variables," below.

The Computer Room

Once the ID lock on the door is bypassed (see "Hitting the Target," above) the Knights (and the Asuga agents, if a deal has been struck) need only do their business. There are several terminals in the room, and both groups can do their dirty work simultaneously.

The Storm Knights' program will work fine when loaded into the computer. To do this, a Storm Knight needs to generate a *science* or *scholar* (computers) total of 12 or better. Each attempt to access the computer's files so the program can load requires five minutes. As Thratchen stated, the program needs fifteen minutes to load.

Electronic Peeking

While they are sitting at their terminal, working away, clever and sneaky Storm Knights might want to hack their way into the work of the Asuga agents. Doing this will either augment information they acquired from Mariko, or give them the full dirt if Mariko said nothing about her mission.

Tapping into the Asuga group's work without being detected requires a *science* or *scholar* (computers) total of 15 or better. If they get the total, tell them a screen full of text appears on their monitor, and hand them a copy of Prop #1.

If the Storm Knights fail the roll, the information comes up on their terminal's screen, but the Asuga agents are alerted to the intrusion. It will take them three rounds to suspect the Storm Knights. During that time they will assume that someone else in the building is trying to stop them with counter-hacking tactics. After that, one of the Asuga agents becomes suspicious and wants to check the screen the Storm Knights are working at. In this case, give the Storm Knights the prop to look at, but only for 15 seconds or so. If they want to look at it longer, they must stall the Asuga agents. If they delete the text from the screen, take the prop back.

If the Asuga agents spot the text on the screen, Mariko calms everyone down, smiles at the Storm Knights, and compliments them on their cleverness. She tells her people that it will not harm their mission for the Storm Knights to see the file.

Getting Out

If the Asuga group does not catch the Storm Knights tapping into their file, Mariko and her team leave with the Knights.

If they do catch the Storm Knights messing around with their files, Mariko pulls her people out as soon as they are done (about five minutes). If the Storm Knights object to this, Mariko points out that she is done, while the Storm Knights are still waiting for their work to finish. She then leaves. As soon as she is out of the building, she phones the guards and tells them about the Storm Knights, seeking revenge

for their duplicity.

With or without the Asuga agents, the Storm Knights can get out when their work is done (most likely the way they came, or via the roof). If they want to try to dig into the computer's files in a general search, they discover that they need *science* or *scholar* (computer) rolls of 16 or better. A failure will undoubtedly cause an alarm to sound. Thratchen's computer programs did a lot of the hacking for them.

Flags

If the *hero setback* occurs during this scene, a guard shows up after hearing suspicious noises. He might not find anyone, but he'll send members of both groups scrambling for hiding places.

If a *Romance* card is played, Mariko becomes attracted to one of the male Knights, and will try to convince him to join the Asuga team.

Variables

If a fight breaks out, the Knights have to finish their operation fast. The loading time of Thratchen's program can be cut to five minutes with a *science* or *scholar* (computers) total of 20. To divert suspicion from their true goal, they might steal some data from the Katana computers, making it look like the Asuga group came in, stole data, and then had an internal conflict. (Maybe it will work. You'll have to judge, depending on the plan the Storm Knights come up with. All in all, working with the Asuga team is the cleanest way to get everything done.)

Awards

Award each player character three Possibilities for successfully completing this act.

Cut To ...

When the Knights are safely out of the Morgan Building, and ready to rendezvous with Thratchen in Compton, cut to Act Three, "The Gauntlet."





Act Three

The Gauntlet

The Major Beat

The Storm Knights arrive in Compton, and find they must clear a path through the massive battle waged by Kanawa armored warriors and Garthak's demon pride. The entire eight by eight block area is a war zone, and the Storm Knights will have to make their way carefully through the neighborhood, avoiding crossfires and enemy pursuit.

If they take too long getting to Garthak's stronghold, Thratchen will be in control of the situation, close to ruling the pride and owning the eternity shard.

SCENE ONE: On Your Mark ...

The Situation

Standard. The Storm Knights wait at the edge of Garthak's turf, wondering if Thratchen — or the Kanawa assault he predicted — will ever come.

Read aloud or paraphrase:

It's a cold, rainy night. Compton looks like a war zone, but a still and quiet one.

From above you hear a familiar flapping of wings. Thratchen descends. He looks blissful and hungry, and you know he anticipates the bloodletting soon to come.

"Did you succeed?" he asks, scanning the skies.

Let the Storm Knights tell Thratchen as much as they want to about the time spent in Katana's offices.

When the talking is finished, read:

You look up and notice what seem to be hundreds of shooting stars hurtling over the city of Los Angeles from the north. As they get closer,

you see that the red flashes of light are the powerjets of Kanawa armored battlesuits. Nearly a thousand points of light fill the sky and begin their decent upon the area before you.

Already you see Tharkoldu taking to the skies and meeting the armored warriors. They cast *bullet* spells at the Nippon Tech warriors. The Kanawa warriors return fire with lasers built into their battlesuits. Some of the warriors stay in the air, while hundreds more fly down to street level. Explosions rip through the buildings beyond your line of sight. The battle is begun.

"Well," says Thratchen, looking beyond you, licking his lips. "Shall we begin our race to determine Garthak's fate?"

The Action

This scene sets up the rest of the act. It also gives the Storm Knights a chance to make last minute deals with Thratchen. (Remember that the original deal is over the fate of Garthak. If Thratchen gets Garthak to submit, Thratchen gets the pride. If the Storm Knights kill Garthak, the pride is disbanded. It's quite possible, and you should make this clear, that both the Storm Knights and Thratchen will end up pummeling Garthak, with Thratchen offering terms of surrender to Garthak the whole while. In effect, the Storm Knights will be helping Thratchen attain his goal. However, Garthak might die before he surrenders. It's a crap shoot.)

If Thratchen, for example, does not yet know about the eternity shard, the Storm Knights might wish to bargain to guarantee they get it. Here are Thratchen's responses to various offers.

•Sample Deal #1

Storm Knights: "We'll help you dominate Garthak. We won't try to kill him."





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Thratchen: "Thank you very much." (He's pretty certain he can beat the Storm Knights to Garthak and make the demon lord submit before the Storm Knights get there, so he won't offer anything in return.)

• Sample Deal #2

Storm Knights: "Garthak has an eternity shard. We want that. We'll promise not to try to kill Garthak if you promise that we'll end up with the shard."

Thratchen: "Oh, really. Well, our deal didn't cover a shard, just Garthak, and I'd like to keep it that way. Let's leave the shard as a surprise. Whoever gets the shard first can do what he wants with it. How about that?" Basically, Thratchen is going to stick with his original deal, which didn't involve the shard. Again, he thinks he'll get the shard, so won't negotiate for it.

Also, if the Storm Knights ask, Thratchen doesn't know where Garthak is, or where his stronghold is. He's never entered the area before, and he couldn't get that information. (He's telling the truth about this—but once he's airborne, it won't take him long to figure out from where all the techno-demons are emerging.)

When everything is set, Thratchen flies off. He only gets about a half a block in when a barrage of laser fire knocks him to the ground. He gets up and flies up to a rooftop where six Kanawa armored warriors are stationed. Several more warriors rush to the aid of their companion, and the battle is carried out of sight of the Storm Knights.

Event

If the Storm Knights helped the Posse gang defend itself from the Mercuries in Act One, Danger Danger or Nanosec, or both, show up at the end of the scene, before Thratchen's arrival. (Providing, that is, they through the assault.) They show up on bikes with a group of gangers. They saw the battlesuits arriving and came to check the situation out. If the Storm Knights ask, Danger Danger or Nanosec say they know where Garthak's stronghold is. One of them will offer to accompany the Storm Knights to the stronghold to help them nail Garthak.

War Zone

Place the large Compton map on page 45 on the table so all the players can see it. The Knights can begin in any square along one of the edges of the map. Read the following rules to the group:

Your group can move from square to square while moving through the eight by eight block area. You can move horizontally, vertically or diagonally through the squares. Remember that you'll be sneaking through ruined buildings, around ruined cars, and ducking behind ruined mailboxes to avoid being spotted by both demons and Kanawa warriors. Direct travel is tough, and

due to the weather conditions and severity of the terrain, you cannot move more than one square per round when walking or moving stealthily. If you wish to run, you can move two boxes per round, but increase the chances of your being spotted.

Storm Knight movement is limited in this scene due to the fact that there is a war going on around them. These movement rules will have to be modified somewhat if a character has the ability to teleport. For characters who have the flight skill or power, cut to "Come Fly With Me."

Each time the characters move a square, roll the die, rerolling on 10s and 20s. The Knights have an encounter on a 15 or above, if walking; an 18

S caling the Map

The race across Garthak's turf is intentionally designed to be as rules-light as possible, to allow for faster gameplay. However, it is possible that some gamemasters may wish to use a more complex version, one taking into account the varying movement rates of characters.

If that is the case, read the map as having a scale of 1 square equals 40 meters. To determine how far characters can move in a round, start with their movement limit value (running, flying, etc.) If they push, find the new value using the Speed Push Table.

Either way, find the final movement value on the scale below. Listed next to that figure is the maximum number of squares that character can move in a round. The character can move less than that number in a turn, if he so chooses. Keep in mind, though, that an encounter roll must be made for every square through which a character moves. If a character has an encounter, he must stop in that square until the encounter has ended.

Push and *stealth* attempt diffi-

culties vary depending upon how fierce the combat is in a given square. The base *stealth* difficulty is 13. See the Push/Stealth Chart below.

Turf Movement Chart

Final Value	No. of Squares
6	.5
7	.5
8	1
9	1.5
10	2.5
11	4
12	6
13	10
14	15
15	25
16	40
17	60
18	100
19	150
20	250

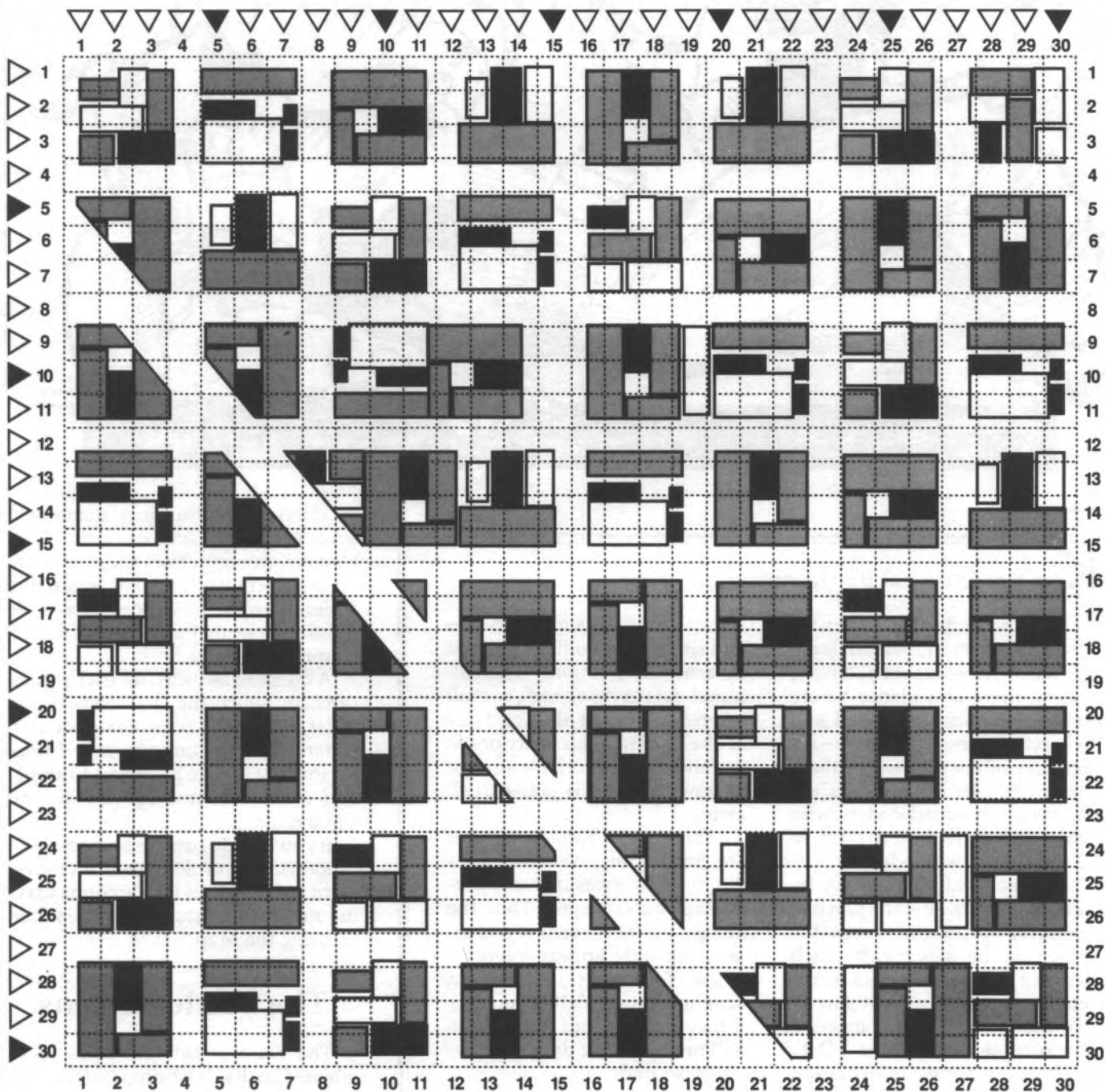
Push/Stealth Difficulty Modifiers Chart

Type of Encounter	Push Diff.	Stealth Diff.
Light	+0	+10
Medium	+5	+5
Heavy	+10	+0





City of Demons: Map 6 Garthak's Turf





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Katana Co. 6800 Battlecomputer

The 6800 Battlecomputer gives warriors immediate feedback as to the nature of a combat, telling them at a glance where reinforcements are needed and where patches of safety exist. Because of the expense of these units, the Battlecomputers are worn only by squad leaders, who then distribute information to their soldiers as needed.

The computer is driven by sensor arrays in all of the Kanawa Samurai Battlesuits across the range of the battlefield. Each warrior's suit sends data to the Battlecomputers, which then collate the data and form composite maps of the battle site. Data collated includes information gathered from motion and heat

sensors, as well as microphones and simple key codings entered by armored warriors. The collected data gives a quick, overall impression of the shifting tides of the battle. Thus warriors at one end of a conflict have a gauge of how the fight is going in all areas.

Although the Battlecomputers are functioning, Tharkoldu radio jamming measures are limiting their effectiveness. Thus, the images on the screens are accurate, but only appear intermittently. To reflect this, the Storm Knights can use a Battlecomputer if they get one, but the screens will only provide data once every 30 seconds.

or above, providing they generate a successful *stealth* total of 13; or a 12 or above, if running. The type of encounter is determined by what square the Knights are in, and how heavy the fighting is in that area (see "The Encounters," below).

A die must be rolled for each square through which the characters move. So if a Knight runs through two squares, the die must be rolled once for the first square he moves through, and a second time for the second square.

If you wish to run this scenario with a more complex rules system for movement, which takes into account varying movement rates, see the sidebar, "Scaling the Map."

The Battle Screens

The Knights can get clues as to where Garthak's stronghold is, and where the heaviest fighting is occurring, by using one of the battlecomputers some Kanawa warriors are



equipped with. Copy the six battlecomputer screens included in this act and cut them out. These screens, part of the Kanawa battlesuit, show the intensity of the combat in the eight by eight block area. If a square is dark gray, it means the combat is very heavy in that square. If the square is a lighter textured gray, the fighting is a medium intensity. If the square is lined, the fighting is light, or unknown. These three grades of intensity affect what kind of encounter the Storm Knights face when moving into a square. Thus, there are three listings of encounters below: one for heavy combat squares, one for medium combat squares, and one for light combat squares. The screen changes every three moves the Storm Knights make because the combat is shifting all around them.

Sometimes fighting is intense in one area, and then it will dissipate and move to another area. Sometimes the combat will move high into the air, and then it will come crashing back to street level. (The Battlecomputer actually only covers combat within the buildings and streets of the neighborhood, not airborne combat.) Note that because of the changing nature of the battle, it's possible the Storm Knights will be in a low combat area at the end of a move, and then suddenly find themselves in a heavy combat area.

Screen #1 will be used for the first three moves the Storm Knights make. After that pick randomly from Screens #1 through #5 for every five moves the Storm Knights make. After twenty or so moves, randomly draw from Screens #2 through #6 every three moves.

For further information on the battlecomputer screens and their use, see "Katana Co. 6800 Battlecomputer," and "Getting a Battlecomputer," below.

Come Fly With Me

Any Storm Knight in the air above the building level exposes himself directly to line of sight of demons and Kanawa warriors. He is considered within a heavy combat area—roll for an encounter. In such cases, ignore the combat encounters involving gangers.

For the advantages of flight in this situation, cut to "Seeking the Strong-

hold."

Invisibility will not be a great deal of help to Knights in this scene, primarily because the Tharkoldu have cybernetically-enhanced senses and the Kanawa warriors have infrared scanners in their battlesuits. Invisible Knights can ignore all encounters with gangers, however.

Seeking the Stronghold

The site of Garthak's stronghold is most clearly visible on Battlescreens 4-6. In the center of each is an area of combat, completely surrounding four squares in which no battles seems to be occurring. That is where the stronghold lies. (It is not marked on either the large map or the screens, as the players get the opportunity to see all of them.)

The goal of the Knights in this scene is to reach that stronghold, preferably before Thratchen. There are four primary ways they can discover the location of the demon's keep:

1. If the Knights encountered Nanosec and Danger Danger at the beginning of this scene, they can lead them to the stronghold. If they should be killed, however, the Knights will have to use one of methods 2-4.
2. A character with the *flight* skill or power can move up to three squares per round. On an *evidence analysis* or *Perception* total of 10, he'll see that a tremendous amount of the fighting seems to be centered around one block. In addition, Tharkoldu reinforcements seem to be pouring out of one of the buildings there. That should point to that area as being the site of the stronghold.
3. Capture and interrogate a Kanawa warrior (who may have seen Tharkoldu flying out of a building), a Tharkoldu, or a Mercuries ganger. Any one of these could probably give the Knights directions to the stronghold, albeit unwillingly. (The Tharkoldu will regard the Knights as *enemies*; the Kanawa warrior and the ganger will also, unless they have seen the Knights down one of their foes, in which case they'll be *neutral*.)

4. Obtain a Katana 6800, as detailed below in "Getting a Battlecomputer."

Getting a Battlecomputer

The first encounter on each of the three lists below (heavy combat, medium combat, light combat) is with one or more warriors in the Kanawa Samurai Battlesuits. At the start of the encounter, have the Storm Knights generate *find* or *Perception* totals. On a 7, they notice that one of the warriors is constantly checking a unit attached to his armored gauntlet. This might make them curious enough to check the device out when the battle is won.

If not, after the combat, have the Knights generate *evidence analysis* or

Samurai 68-D Battlesuit

The Samurai 68-D is the latest in personal armor from the Hachiman Arms labs. Designed by some of the same team responsible for the Rijato Battlesuit, the Samurai has the advantage of being Tech 24 and yet phenomenally powerful. Not as gadget-laden as the Rijato, the Samurai can actually be worn into battle, and has proven to be a potent weapon in the war against the Tharkoldu.

The Samurai features defense modulators, powerboosters, sensor packages, and devastating Sansu 500K lasers. The suits of squad leaders also feature Katana Battlecomputers built into their gauntlets, which intercept signals sent by other armored warriors.

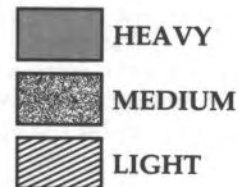
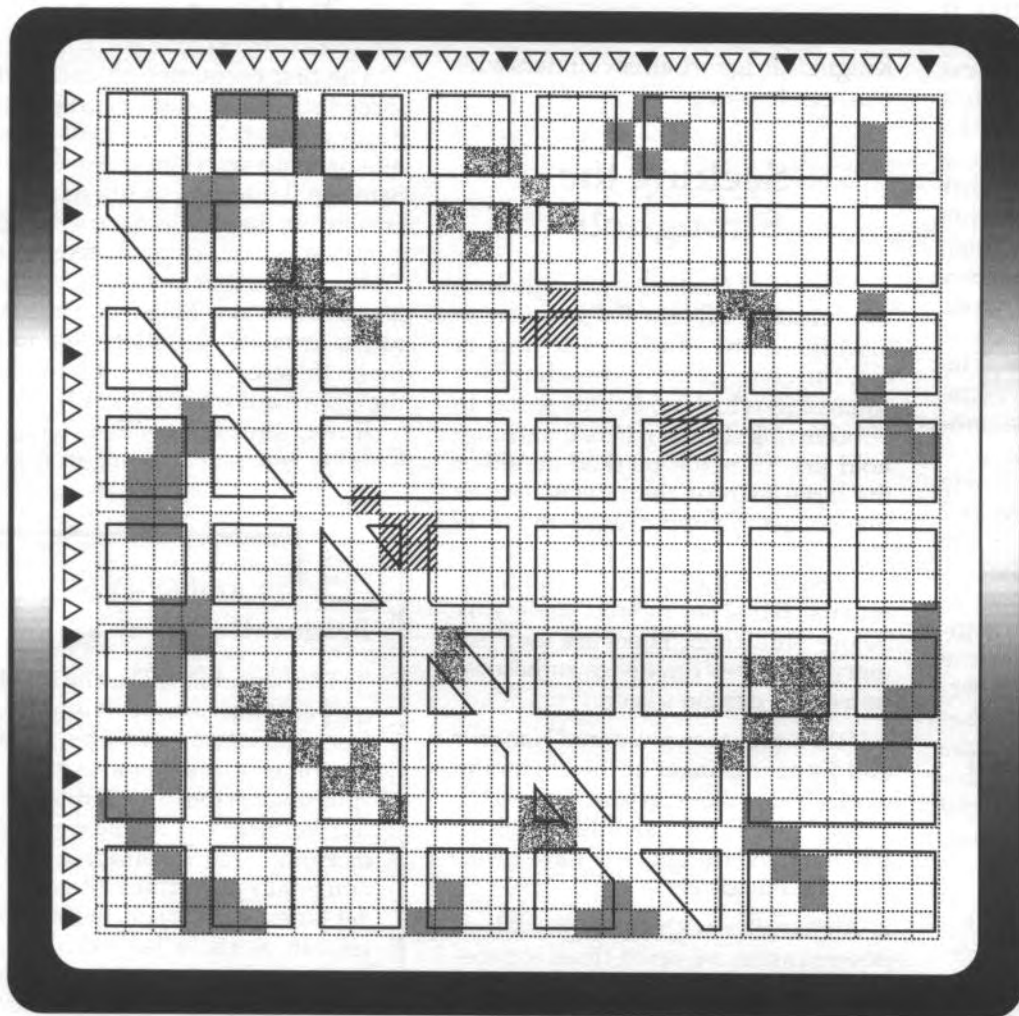
Although the suit cannot be cybernetically controlled from a distance as the Rijato can, each outfit is attuned to the brainwaves of its wearer. A *science (electronics)* total of 25 will be necessary for a Knight to reattune a suit so that it will function for him.





City of Demons

Battle Computer Screen #1



Perception totals. On an 8, the Knights will see a small glowing map on a box attached to the battlesuit's wrist.

Examination will reveal more. A *science* or *scholar* (*computers*) total of 8 allows a character to figure out the device's purpose (as described in the sidebar). A total of 12 or more gives the above information, along with the reason that the device only works intermittently. A separate *science* or *computer* (*scholar*) total of 12 lets the Storm Knights manipulate the device. Remember, however, that the battlecomputer only gives information once every three rounds.

The Knights need only remove the gauntlet and take it with them to have access to the battlecomputer. It will continue to display information even when separated from the rest of the suit. (The Knights can, of course, take the entire battlesuit, but it will not work for them, being attuned to the original wearer's brainwaves.)

When the Storm Knights have the computer, show them the current Battlecomputer Screen every three rounds. Hold it out for everyone to see and count to five. At the end of the count, pull the screen back out of their sight. Characters can generate *Mind*

totals of 10 to recall whether a particular square had some sort of combat going on within it. Otherwise, they will have to work from memory until three moves have passed, at which time they'll get another look at the screen.

See "The Battle Screens" above for the order in which to draw the screens.

Moving Through the Turf

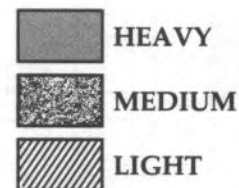
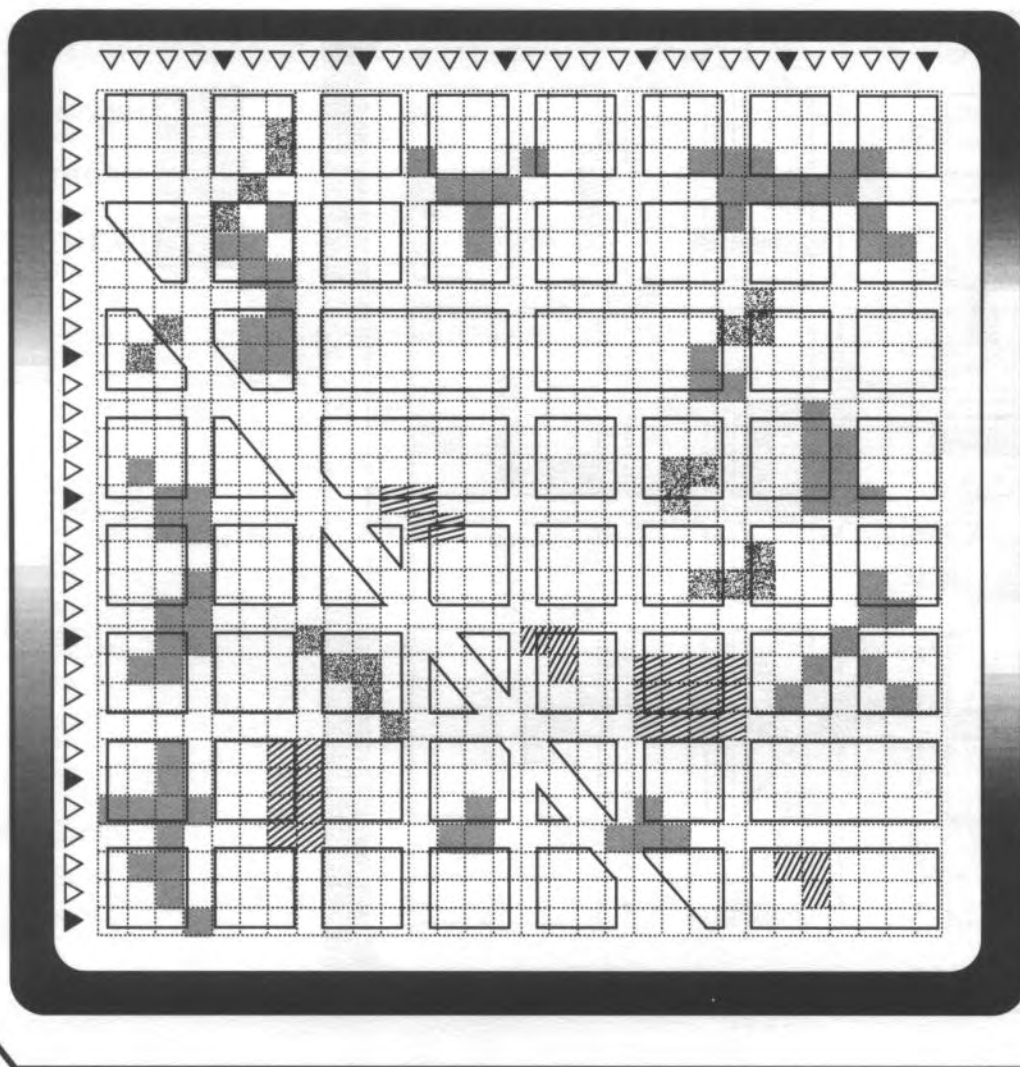
Most of the buildings on the Player's Map are apartment buildings. The original human inhabitants of the





City of Demons

Battle Computer Screen #2



buildings were killed by the demons, or fled the demons several months ago when Garthak and his pride settled the area. On occasion, you might want to vary the architecture a bit. Besides apartment buildings, a structure the Storm Knights enter might be:

A church; apartment buildings with storefronts on the first floor (laundromat, pizza place, bar, unemployment agency); grocery store; diner; restaurant; fast-food place; auto repair garage; gas station; post office; a police station; a fire house.

The entire area was in bad shape before the Tharkoldu took over, and

since that time... Well, remember that the Tharkoldu work and play rough, and then keep in mind 2000 techno-demons lived in the area for the last month. Walls are knocked down, roofs caved in, windows shattered, doors torn off the hinges. The walls, interior and exterior, are splattered with blood where the demons have "played" with their prey. The remains of people, some fresh, some rotted, litter the streets. Cars are flipped over, huge blocks of concrete, knocked down from buildings, stand in the middle of the road.

Use all of these details to give the players the feel of the battlefield.

Cover Chart

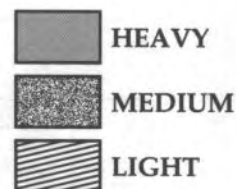
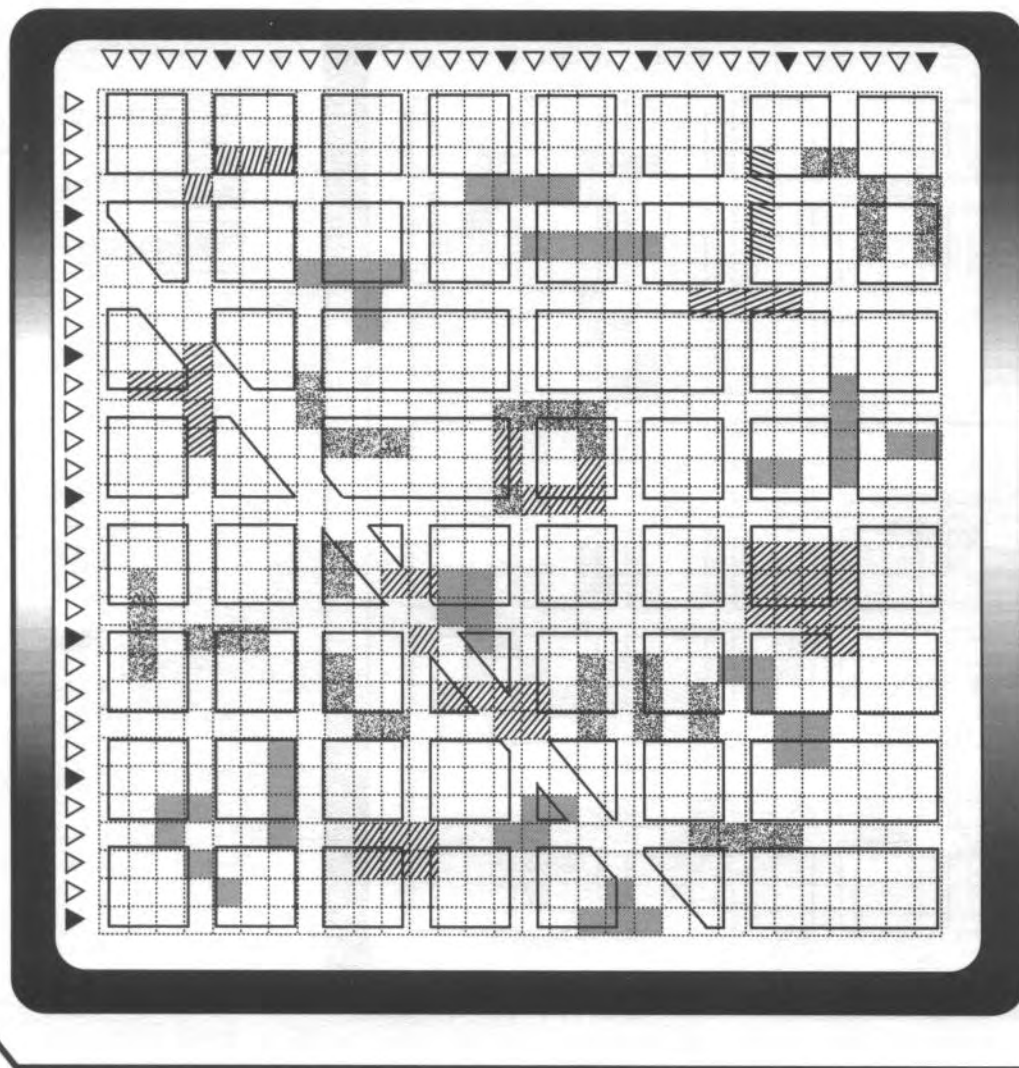
Die Roll	Cover
0-5	None
6-10	Light
11-15	Medium
16-20	Heavy
21-above	Target is completely lost from view





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Battle Computer Screen #3



The Encounters

Roll the die each time the Storm Knights move from one square to another. If they have an encounter, consult the relevant list below, depending upon how heavy the combat is in that square. If the Knights have an encounter in an unmarked square, some consequence of the overall battle occurs (masonry falls, a car explodes). Nothing that could really harm the Knights, just keep them on their toes. When you have gone through all the encounters in a list, go back to the top and start over again.

When the Storm Knights are in-

involved in a fight, they remain in the square until they either defeat or escape their opponents. (See "Escaping Encounters," below.)

Initiative and conflict lines on cards come into play only if the Knights have an encounter.

Aid and Comfort

A Storm Knight may attack a foe in an adjacent square, providing he has some sort of ranged weapon. Roll a die, rerolling on 10s and 20s, to determine how much cover the target receives as a result of the general confusion in the area.

Escaping an Encounter

The Storm Knights can fight their foes in any given encounter or try to escape. The dark streets are filled with debris, shadowy doorways, alleys, and other places to duck off to.

To escape an encounter a character must declare his attempt before the Drama Deck card is flipped. A character attempting to escape cannot perform any other action that turn.

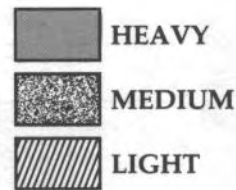
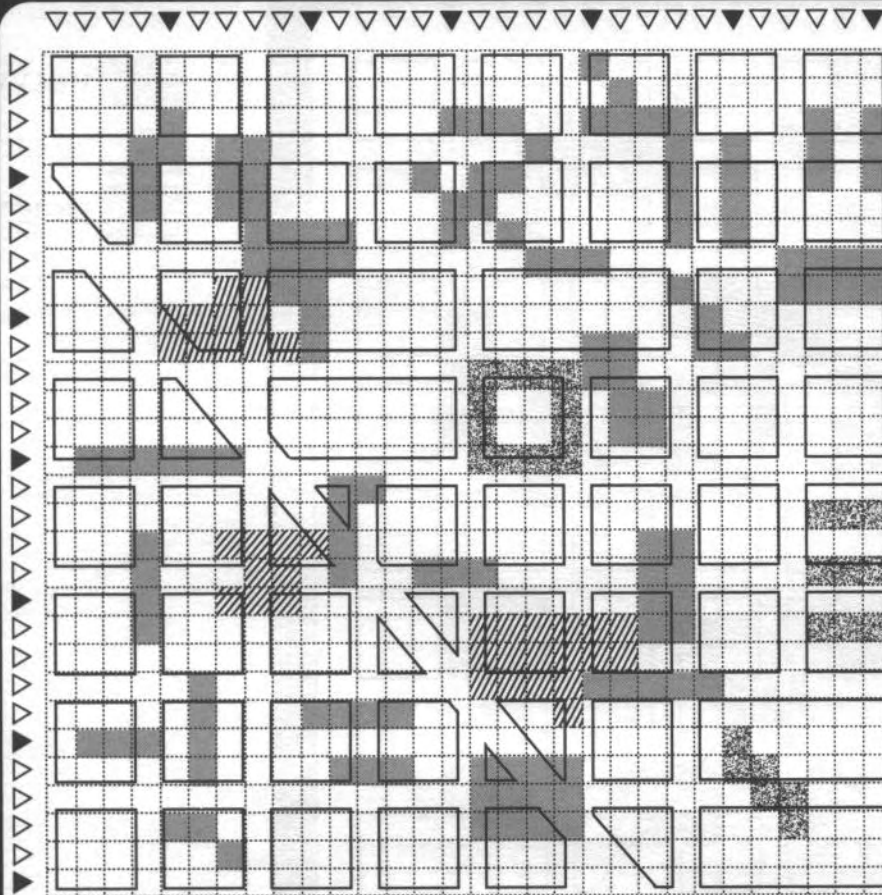
The character must generate a *stealth* total greater than the highest *find* or *Perception* among his opponents. It





City of Demons

Battle Computer Screen #4



doesn't matter if the opponent(s) is engaged with someone else, or distracted in other ways. The roll is needed to successfully duck out of the fight in such a way that the opponent(s) can no longer see the Storm Knight.

If the Storm Knight fails the roll, there is nothing lost but his action for that round. However, he can be attacked by foes that turn.

If he succeeds, he is still in the square on the map where the fight began, but he is safe from the combat. If a Storm Knight escapes a combat, he may choose to later return to the fight to help his fellow Storm Knights. In ad-

dition, a Knight who successfully escapes an encounter amasses only half the number of points he would normally have received for the incident. If *all* of the Storm Knights can escape from a fight in the first round of combat, the encounter does not count toward their total.

Successfully escaping an encounter using *stealth* counts as a *maneuver* on the Approved Action line.

Light Encounters

• **One Kanawa Battlesuit Squad Leader:** The warrior will take a few shots at the Storm Knights, and then

try to retreat when he realizes he's outnumbered.

Kanawa Battlesuit Warrior

DEXTERITY 10

Dodge 11, energy weapons 14, fire combat 12, flight 15, melee weapons 12, unarmed combat 12 (14)

STRENGTH 10 (15)

TOUGHNESS 11 (21)

PERCEPTION 10

Find 11 (13), tracking 11 (13)

MIND 12

Test 13, willpower 14

CHARISMA 9

SPIRIT 11

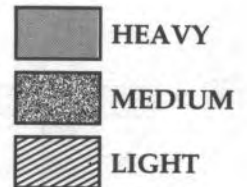
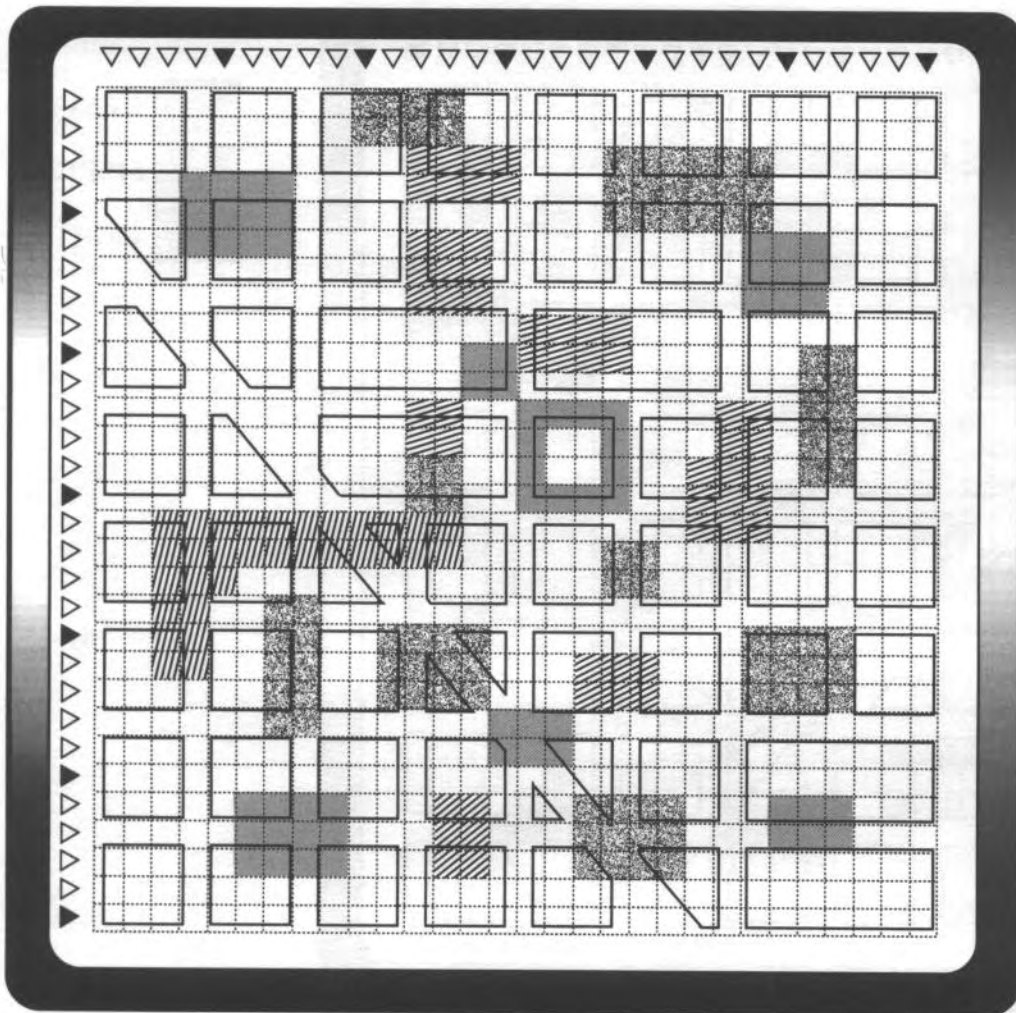
Intimidation 14





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Battle Computer Screen #5



Additional Skills: one at +2 adds

Possibility Potential: some (50)

Equipment: Samurai 68-D Battlesuit, armor value TOU+10/21; defense modulator (+2 to *unarmed combat* active defense); power boosters, STR+5; sensor package, +2 to find and tracking skills; Sansu 500K lasers, damage value 23, ammo 40, range 3-150/300/1200; Katana 6800 battlecomputer (squad leaders only); Flight speed value 9.

Description: All Samurai 68-Ds are linked to the brainwaves of their wearers, and so cannot be operated by anyone else.

• **One Tharkoldu techno-demon:** The Tharkoldu is in a battle frenzy and will attack until killed.

Tharkoldu Techno-Demon

DEXTERITY 10

Dodge 14, energy weapons 14, fire combat 12, flight 15, melee weapons 12 (15 defense), missile weapons 12, stealth 11, unarmed combat 15 (18)

STRENGTH 16

Lifting 18

TOUGHNESS 16 (21)

PERCEPTION 10

Alteration magic 13, divination magic 13, find 14 (17), first aid 11,

land vehicles 12, tracking 14, trick 12

MIND 11

Apportation magic 14, conjuration magic 14, test 15, willpower 15

CHARISMA 9

Persuasion 11, taunt 13

SPIRIT 11

Faith (Tharkoldu Evil) 16, intimidation 16

Additional Skills: one at +2 adds

Possibility Potential: some (45)

Arcane Knowledges: folk 4, entity 3, inanimate forces 2, living forces 2, water 1, metal 1,

Spells: *bullet, fog, stealth walk*

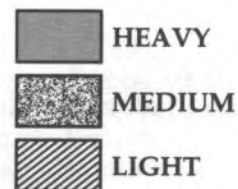
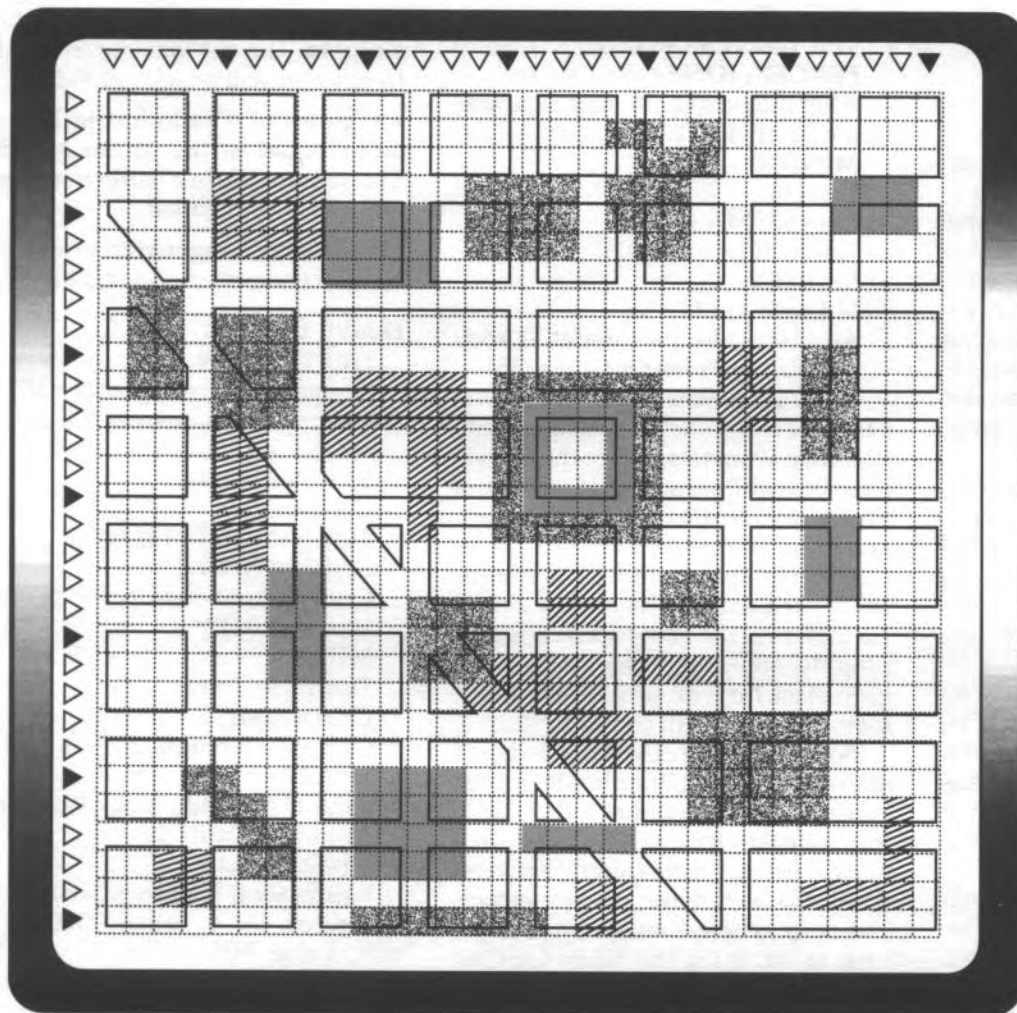
Natural Tools: teeth, damage value STR+2/18; talons (non-cybered limb),





City of Demons

Battle Computer Screen #6



damage value STR+3/19; wing strike (unarmed combat to hit; damage value STR+7/23), flight speed 10.

Equipment: Nanocord; windsniffer (+3 to *Perception* or *find* skills using smell, noted above), balance-wires (+3 to skills using agility, noted in parentheses above), interdermal plate, armor value TOU+5/21; talon, enhance normal talons to damage value STR+5/21; cyberwings (+3 to push for *flight*, *lifting* while flying) speed value 10; life cyber; 3-slot chipholder. Cyber value: 16. Res-14/Alph lasers, damage value 25, ranges 3-150/400/2,000

•**10 Mercuries Gangers:** The gangers attack and pursue the Storm Knights

until only five of their number are left.

Mercuries (10)**DEXTERITY 8**

Dodge 10, energy weapons 9, fire combat 10, melee weapons 9, stealth 10, unarmed combat 10

STRENGTH 9

Climbing 10

TOUGHNESS 9**PERCEPTION 8**

Find 10, land vehicles 9, tracking 10, trick 9

MIND 9

Test 10, willpower 10

CHARISMA 8

Charm 9, persuasion 9, taunt 11

SPIRIT 8

Faith (Tharkoldu Evil) 10, intimidation 10

Possibilities: none

Equipment: Nanocord; SlaveChip; darksight; talons, damage value STR+2/11; Cyber value: 6. 9/Gam automatic pistol, damage value 15, ammo 9, range 3-10/20/30

•**One Bloater:** A Storm Knight is ambushed by a bloater.

Bloater**DEXTERITY 12**

Acrobatics 16, dodge 14, long jumping 18, maneuver 14, stealth 20, swimming 12, unarmed combat 17

STRENGTH 12

Climbing 19, lifting 14

TOUGHNESS 15

PERCEPTION 11

Find 16, tracking 13, trick 13

MIND 8

Test 15, willpower 20

CHARISMA 8

Taunt (18)

SPIRIT 9

Intimidation (15)

Additional Skills: two at +1 adds

Possibility Potential: some (35)

Natural Tools: claws, damage value

STR+3/15; stinger, damage value

STR+6/18; poison, damage value 17

Description: A bloater is a crawling, five-limbed creature with a span of roughly 70 centimeters, and weighing about 20 kilograms. A bloater moves on four triple-jointed limbs, each of which ends in a serrated claw. A shorter, many-segmented stinger is located to the left-rear of the bloater. It climbs or scuttles with at a rate of 100 meters per round when running, 40 meters when climbing, but cannot maintain those speeds for more than five rounds.

The bloater attacks by dropping on its victim, then making a Many-On-One attack with its claws. If the bloater scores a K, O, or *wound* result, it has attached itself to its victim. Even if damage is erased with a Possibility, the creature remains attached.

The bloater will make an *unarmed combat* attack in the next round to inject its poison. Any damage inflicted will cause this to happen. The victim suffers damage value 17 in that round, and then once every six rounds until overcomes the poison or dies. Overcoming the poison requires a *Toughness* or *medicine* total of 25.

•**Two Tharkoldu Demons:** The Tharkoldu are in a battle frenzy and will attack until killed.

•**Two Kanawa Battlesuit Warriors.** The warriors will take a few shots at the Storm Knights, and then try to retreat when they realize they're outnumbered.

•**15 Mercuries Gangers:** The gangers attack and pursue the Storm Knights until only eight of their number are left.

•**Bochdogs:** The Storm Knights are attacked by a pair of bochdogs.

Bochdog

DEXTERITY 8

Dodge 10, long jumping 10, maneuver 11, unarmed combat 9

STRENGTH 19

Lifting 22

TOUGHNESS 18 (27)

PERCEPTION 5

Alteration magic 18, find 12, tracking 12, trick 7 (12)

MIND 4

Test (10)

CHARISMA 6

Taunt (10)

SPIRIT 6

Intimidation 15

Additional Skills: three at +1 adds

Possibility Potential: some (55)

Natural Tools: teeth, damage value STR+2/21; lightning, damage value 22, range 60 meters (the bochdog pair must be within 60 meters of each other to cast); inanimate forces armor, damage value TOU+9/27

Description: Bochdogs are ferocious pack animals that stand nearly 1.6 meters at the shoulder and weigh roughly 450 kilograms. Most have grey-black fur with streaks of red, and their fur sparkles in combat.

Bochdogs instinctive knowledge of alteration magic/inanimate forces gives them a high armor value and a form of *lightning* spell. To cast it, two dogs must get their quarry between them and then make yipping noises. The dogs generate an *alteration magic* total to hit, using the Many-On-One table.

By setting up a keening howl and generating an *alteration magic* total against the willpower of the target, the dogs can cause electronics and cybeware to stop working for the duration of the howl.

Once one dog is killed, its mate will flee.

Medium Encounters

•**A group of Kanawa Battlesuit Warriors (including one squad leader) equal to the number of Storm Knights.** The warriors fight until they have lost one third of their number.

•**A group of Tharkoldu techno-demons equal to the number of Storm Knights.** The demons are in a battle frenzy and attack until killed.

•**A group of 20 Mercuries gangers.** The gangers attack and pursue the Storm Knights until only five of their number are left.

•**A group of Tharkoldu techno-demons equal to the number of Storm Knights.** The demons are in a battle frenzy and will attack until killed.

•**A group of Tharkoldu techno-demons equal to the Storm Knights.** The demons are in a battle frenzy and will attack until killed.

•**Five Heavy Banger Mercuries gangers.** The gangers all attack until killed.

Heavy Bangers

DEXTERITY 9

Dodge 13, energy weapons 15, fire combat 15, maneuver 13, missile weapons 12, unarmed combat 10

STRENGTH 9

Climbing 10

TOUGHNESS 11 (16)

PERCEPTION 8

Find 10, land vehicles 9, tracking 10, trick 10 (12)

MIND 9

Test 10, willpower 10

CHARISMA 9

Charm 9, persuasion 9, taunt 11

SPIRIT 8

Faith (Tharkoldu Evil) 10, intimidation 12, reality 10

Possibilities: 2

Equipment: Nanocord, darksight. SlaveChip. Cyber value: 5. Kap/5 armor, value TOU+6/16; Thav-6/Nu plasma gun, damage value 30, ammo 20, range 5-50/300/500

•**One Darkfang:** The creature attacks until wounded.

Darkfang

DEXTERITY 8

Dodge 10, flight 10, maneuver 11, unarmed combat 9, stealth 25

STRENGTH 14

TOUGHNESS 11 (26)

PERCEPTION 11

Alteration magic 18, divination magic 19, trick 15 (20)

MIND 13

Conjuration magic 19, test 15 (20), willpower 20

CHARISMA 6

Taunt (10)

SPIRIT 6

Faith (Tharkoldu Evil) 16, intimidation 15

Additional Skills: one at +1 adds





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Possibility Potential: some (45)

Natural Tools: shadowfangs, damage value STR+4/18; claws, damage value STR+3/17; shadowfangs and claws are insubstantial until they contact flesh—ignore target's armor adds, unless armor is made of magical *light*. Darkthought venom, duration one minute or until dispelled; nightshroud armor, value TOU+15/26 (effective against everything but enchanted *light* attacks); wings, speed value 12

Description: Darkfangs are shadowy creatures that are made of magical darkness. They can assume two shapes: in their travel shape, they resemble jet-black manta rays (three meters long), and in their attack shape, they look like shark-toothed, lion-clawed ogres. In their travel shape, they can fly, but not attack. In their ogre shape, they are confined to ground movement.

In addition to tooth and claw, darkfangs can use *alteration magic* to animate shadows and cause them to hold their victims. Difficulty number is the opponent's *willpower*, and tethers have a *Toughness* of 12. *Strength* can be used to damage the tethers, but they must suffer a mortal wound before they collapse. Duration of the tethers is one hour.

A successful *unarmed combat* allows the darkfang to inject the victim with darkthought venom, which attacks the *faith* or *Spirit*. The duration of darkthought venom attacks is six rounds or until dispelled. Read the results on the *intimidation* column of the Interaction Table.

If the victim is *unskilled*, she loses all *faith* and *focus* adds (if any), in addition to being *unskilled*. If the target is *stymied*, she experiences nightmare visions which prevent her from taking any action (*willpower* or *Mind* of 26 to dispel). If the target is *setback*, evil visions drive her to attack her allies (*willpower* or *Mind* of 26 to dispel).

Darkfangs can also create illusory members of their species from the darkness. None of the illusion's attributes or values can exceed that of a real darkfang, nor can they exceed the *conjuratiion magic* total that generated them. Illusions last for an hour or until the target generates a *willpower* or *Mind* total of 15.

Heavy Encounters

- **A group of Kanawa Battlesuit Warriors equal to the Storm Knights.** The warriors fight until they have lost half their number.
- **A group of Tharkoldu techno-demons equal to the Storm Knights.** The demons are in a battle frenzy and will attack until killed.
- **A group of Kanawa Armored Warriors equal to one and a half times the Storm Knights.** The Warriors fight until they have lost half their number.
- **A group of Kanawa Armored Warriors equal to one and a half times the Storm Knights.** The Warriors fight until they have lost half their number.
- **A group of Tharkoldu techno-demons equal to one and a half times the Storm Knights.** The demons are in a battle frenzy and will attack until killed.
- **20 Heavy Banger Mercuries gangers.** The gangers all attack until killed.

Non-Combat Encounters

If the Knights should have an encounter in a square where no combat is currently taking place, one of the following may occur:

- the Knights see Kanawa warriors engaged in a fight with Mercuries gangers just down an alley they are passing;
- a demon drops from the sky, killed by Kanawa warrior in aerial combat. The demon's body falls and crushes a car the Storm Knights are hiding behind;
- the Knights see a squad of Kanawa warriors rushing down the street to help comrades in trouble;
- the Knights see a Kanawa warrior zipping down the street, pursued by a half dozen Tharkoldu, flapping their wings wildly;
- a building down the street collapses;
- the Knights see the flash of laser fire from the upper stories of apartment building as the Kanawa warriors clear out the demon hiding spots;
- the Knights see a group of demons clawing at a fallen Kanawa warrior,

tearing his armor off like so much tin foil, and ripping the man inside apart.

Keeping Track of the Encounters

The outcome of the race with Thratchen to Garthak's fortress is determined by how many fights the Storm Knights get involved with. The encounters score as follows:

Light Encounter:	+1
Medium Encounter:	+2
Heavy Encounter:	+3

Keep a running total of the encounters. This determines the starting situation in the final scene of this adventure.

Flags

If the *Suspicion* or *Mistaken Identity* card is played, and the Storm Knights encounter Mercuries slavegangers, they (of course) mistake the player character for the "Chip who magged RAM!" and try to kill him. If this Storm Knight tries to escape the slave gangers, the gangers get a +3 to their *find* or *tracking* value when following him. (They really want him dead.)

If the *Nemesis* card was played during the fight with the Mercuries in Act One, the Mercuries ganger who escaped comes back now and tries to waste the Storm Knight.

If the *Idea* card is played, and the Knights have the battlecomputer, one of them figures out that the battle seems to be swirling around one building in the center of the area.

Variables

The Knights may decide to simply follow Thratchen. If they do so, periodically generate *find* totals for him. Once he knows the Knights are behind him, he will try to lose them. He will not turn and attack them, as they may still be of use to him in distracting Garthak.

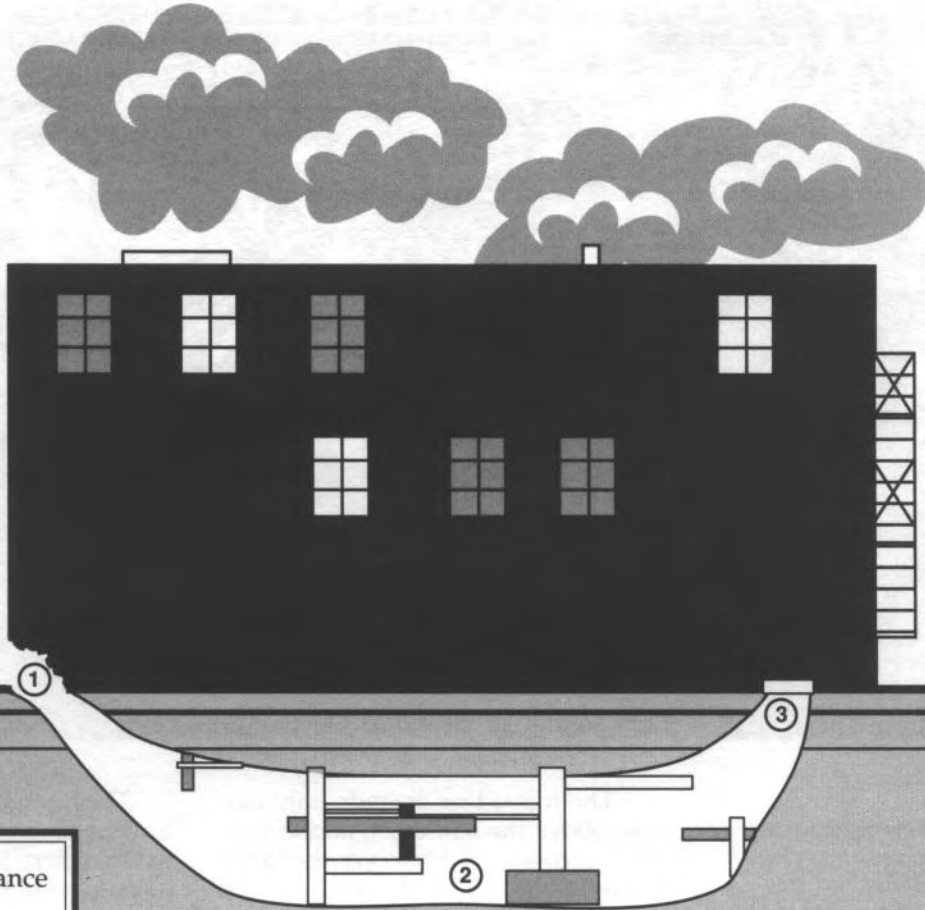
If the Knights attack Thratchen, he will try to escape them and find the stronghold. He has no time to waste battling Knights.





City of Demons: Map 7

The Tunnel to the Fortress



1. Tunnel entrance
2. Ghuls' lair
3. Tunnel exit

Cut To ...

When the Storm Knights are in any of the squares in the center building surrounded by Heavy Combat Markings on Battlecomputer Screen #6 (squares 13, 17; 13, 18; 14, 17; and 14, 18) they have found Garthak's stronghold. At that time the encounters from the previous scene are finished, and it's time to cut to Scene Two, "Storming the Stronghold."

SCENE TWO: Storming the Stronghold

The Situation

Standard. When the Storm Knights have reached the outside of Garthak's stronghold, read aloud or paraphrase:

Around you swirls the fiercest portion of the battle you've seen thus far. It's clear that the demons are struggling to defend the abandoned factory that stands before you. Its win-

dows are sealed with thick sheets of steel and the walls are layered with armor. The Kanawa warriors fire their powerful lasers against the walls, but their weapons have little effect.

Several stray laser shots blast the ground near you. You have to get in quickly, if only to avoid the melee around you.

The Action

The Storm Knights have reached their goal, and now must search for a way inside. The armor covering the walls and windows has been magically reinforced, and has a *Toughness*





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of 40.

There are two possible means of entrance:

The Tear in the Wall

Have each of the Knights generate a *find* or *Perception* roll. A total of 12 allows them to spot a crack in the metal of the outer wall, where a Kanawa warrior had crashed into it at full speed. The battlesuit is mixed in with other debris at the base of the wall, which is why no else has noticed the breach.

The metal tear extends only two feet above the battlesuit, and is only three inches wide. However, the Storm Knights could move the ruined battlesuit out of the way and then force the crack open more. Moving the battlesuit requires a *Strength* total of 12. Widening the crack requires a *Strength* total of 17. Up to four Storm Knights may coordinate on these tasks (coordination difficulty of 9).

If the Storm Knights manage to enter the building this way, cut to Scene Three.

The Hole in the Ground

If the Storm Knights fail to see the breach, or are unable to move the suit and force the tear open, they can examine more of the exterior of the building for an entrance. *Find* or *Perception* totals of 7 reveal a hole in the base of the building large enough for an edeinos to crawl through. The hole is tunnel-like and seems to lead beneath the building.

The tunnel is narrow enough that anyone entering it must crawl. After seven meters, the tunnel opens up into a small chamber, about 6.5 meters long, seven meters wide, and three meters high. The room and the tunnel are completely dark. A *find* or *Perception* total of 13 lets the Knights see that there is another small tunnel on the other side of the chamber, for faint light can be seen coming from beyond the chamber.

A 17 shows the Knights that inside the chamber are three ghuls, all former Nippon agents who were raised from the dead through the use of Relictin V. All of them had proven troublesome to Garthak at one point, and he felt resurrecting them to serve him a fitting punishment.

The creatures wait for the first Storm Knight to enter the chamber, and then attack. If the Storm Knights have a light with them, then the ghuls press themselves against the wall so as not to be seen as the Storm Knight approaches (*find* or *Perception* of 15 to

C onfrontation Table

Encounter Pts.	Confrontation
0-3	Confrontation A
4-8	Confrontation B
9+	Confrontation C



spot them). As soon as the Storm Knight pokes out his head or arms to get a better view of the chamber, the ghuls grab him and drag him into the chamber. The ghuls will fight until killed, and are all flesh-eaters.

Ghuls (3)

DEXTERITY 8

Dodge 13, stealth 9, unarmed combat 13

STRENGTH 13

Climbing 15, lifting 15

TOUGHNESS 15

PERCEPTION 1

Find (living beings) 12, track (living beings) 12, trick 12 (25)

MIND 1

Test 15 (25)

CHARISMA 3

Taunt (25)

SPIRIT 11

Intimidation 15 (25)

Possibilities: none

Natural Tools: teeth, damage value

STR+1/14

The Arsenal

After the ghuls have been defeated, a *find* or *Perception* total of 10 will lead the Knights to discover seven Res-14/Alphas lasers in the tunnel (*Tech* 26, damage value 25, range 3-150/40/2000). This area has been used as a secret arsenal by Garthak's pride, but most of the weapons have been taken by techno-demons involved in the combat. The Knights can take what remains, if they so wish.

Variables

The Storm Knights might have their own unique and amazing way of entering the building — which is just fine. When they get through, cut to Scene Three.

The Storm Knights might want to scale the walls of the building. Point out that there are a lot of demons and warriors flying about, and such a maneuver would put them in danger. If they insist on doing it, give them an encounter from the Heavy Combat list above.

Cut To ...

The tunnel on the other side of the chamber leads up into the stronghold. When the Storm Knights exit via this second tunnel, cut to Scene Three, "Confrontation."

SCENE THREE: Confrontation

The Situation

Dramatic. The Storm Knights are inside Garthak's stronghold. The exact situation varies, depending on whether or not the Storm Knights beat Thratchen to the building. Check the number of encounter points the Knights amassed in Scene One against the table below. Then cut to the relevant confrontation.

Read through all of the confrontations below, for each section contains information that might prove helpful in running the others.

The Action

Confrontation A

Read aloud or paraphrase:

You stand in a dark corridor. Fresh pools of blood are on the ground. You look up and see human bodies on meat hooks, swinging slightly on thick, metal chains. Light is streaming from down the corridor and you hear the deep growls of Tharkoldu voices.

Let the Storm Knights approach the room as they wish, and then read:

You see a large chamber lit by countless neon lights, gathered from all over the city. The remains of factory equipment is piled up to form a throne. Upon the throne sits a Demon Lord. Around his neck he wears a chain, and attached to the chain is a black box.

Speaking with the Demon Lord are two Tharkoldu. "Garthak," says one of them to the demon on the

throne, "We must take the shard now and go!"

Garthak fingers the box on the chain and says, "No, we must win this battle. If I leave my pride, I have nothing. None of my plans will amount to anything."

Inside the box, of course, is the eternity shard. At this point the Storm Knights have 20 rounds to act before Thratchen arrives.

If Thratchen arrives while the Storm Knights are still present, he will rush Garthak and demand that the Demon Lord submit to him. See Confrontation B to for how to handle this.

If the Storm Knights attack, Garthak defends himself, and his two demon companions help him. All of them fight to the death against the Storm Knights. None of them will surrender or submit to anyone but another Tharkoldu, which is why they are rebelling against Jezrael.

Garthak (Demon Lord)

DEXTERITY 15

Dodge 19, energy weapons 19, fire combat 19, flight 20 (23), melee weapons 19 (22 in defense), missile weapons 18, stealth 18, unarmed combat 19 (22)

STRENGTH 19

Lifting 22

TOUGHNESS 20 (26)

PERCEPTION 18

Alteration magic 23, divination magic 23, find 22, first aid 19, land vehicles 19, tracking 21, trick 21

MIND 19

Appotation magic 24, conjuration magic 24, test 24, willpower 25

CHARISMA 14

Persuasion 17, taunt 19

SPIRIT 18

Faith (Tharkoldu Evil) 25, pain weapon 23, intimidation 24, reality 22

Possibilities: 20

Natural Tools: teeth, damage value STR+2/21, alpha sense (*Perception* total), combat dominance 21, demon luck 21, status armor +2, wing strike, *unarmed combat* to hit, damage value STR+7/26. Swift flight, speed value 11.

Equipment: Nanocord, balance-wires (+3 to skills using agility, noted in parentheses above); interdermal armor, value TOU+6/26; both talons





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(enhance normal talons to damage value STR+5/24; Pain Staff (pain weapon) damage value STR+5/24)

Description: Garthak is certainly a traitorous demon, but he is somewhat clumsy about it. Unlike Thratchen, who is willing to risk all in his plans, Garthak is a bit of a coward. Against the Storm Knights alone, he will present himself full of bravado. If Thratchen threatens him, he will eventually surrender.

When playing Garthak, remember that he thinks anyone that looks like the monkeys he is familiar with is no better than an ignorant savage. Edeinos, werewolves, and such are worthy of a bit more respect, but not too much.

Garthak's Lieutenants (Great Alphas) (2)

DEXTERITY 14

Dodge 18, energy weapons 18, fire combat 18, flight 29 (22), melee weapons 18 (21 defense), missile weapons 17, stealth 17, unarmed combat 18 (21)

STRENGTH 18

Lifting 21

TOUGHNESS 19 (25)

PERCEPTION 15

Alteration magic 19, divination magic 19, find 18, first aid 16, land vehicles 17, tracking 20, trick 18

MIND 16

Apportation magic 20, conjuration magic 20, test 20, willpower 21

CHARISMA 14

Persuasion 16, taunt 18

SPIRIT 16

Faith (Tharkoldu Evil) 22, pain weapon 20, intimidation 21, reality 20

Possibilities: 5

Natural Tools: teeth, damage value STR+2/20; alpha sense (*Perception* total); demon luck 18; status armor +2; wing strike, *unarmed combat* to hit, damage value STR+7/25; wings, speed value 11

Equipment: Nanocord, balance-wires (+3 to skills using agility, noted in parentheses above); interdermal armor, value TOU+6/25; both talons (enhance normal talons to damage

value STR+5/23)

Description: These demons will stand by Garthak to the end. They are very loyal, and will probably end up dead before the day is over. They share Garthak's disdain for humans, and taunt any "monkey" Storm Knights.

The Eternity Shard

The Storm Knights might want to simply get the eternity shard and get out. This would be an especially appropriate behavior if Thratchen is already in the room and trying to get Garthak to submit (see *Confrontations Band C*, and remember that Thratchen will eventually show up in *Confrontation A*.)

To snap the box off the chain, or to snap the chain itself, requires a *Strength* total of 13. Only two Storm Knights at a time are able to coordinate on this task (*coordination* difficulty of 10).

Cross of Pelagius

Cosm: Core Earth

Possibilities: 40



Tapping Difficulty: 18

Purpose: To keep alive freedom of choice; to remind people that though there are guidelines for life, nothing can replace a man or woman's ultimate responsibility for his or her own actions.

Powers: Anyone who comes in contact with the cross is freed from any magical or technological enslavements. A person can still choose to follow his or her former master, but it is his or her choice.

If someone enslaved by technology or magic is touched by the cross, the person generates a *Spirit* total. If the total exceeds 16, the person is free.

Group Power: Shift Possibility

Restrictions: The cross' Possibilities may be used to augment *Spirit* skills only. Users must have at least one add in *faith*.

Confrontation B

Read aloud or paraphrase:

You stand in a dark corridor. Fresh pools of blood are on the ground. You look up and see human bodies on meat hooks, swinging slightly on thick, metal chains. You see light down the corridor and hear the deep growls of Tharkoldu voices.

Let the Storm Knights approach the room as they wish, and then read:

You see a large chamber lit by countless neon lights, gathered from all over the city. The remains of factory equipment is piled up to form a throne. Upon the throne sits a Demon Lord. Around his neck he wears a chain, and attached to the chain is a black box.

Speaking with the Demon Lord are two Tharkoldu. "Garthak," says one of them to the demon on the throne, "We must take the shard now and go!"

Garthak fingers the box on the chain and says, "No, we must win this battle. If I leave my pride, I have nothing. None of my plans will amount to anything."

Then you see Thratchen, peering into the chamber from another side passage. He sees you, smiles, and charges in.

The Storm Knights can react as they wish. Thratchen will bash on Garthak until Garthak finally submits. This is his primary objective. Thratchen is not trying to kill Garthak, but he has to hit him hard enough for Garthak to think he might die. Garthak will submit when his wounds reach *mortal* status.

Rather than have you generate totals for Thratchen's fight against Garthak, use the following guidelines:

On the fourth, eighth, and twelfth rounds of combat Garthak takes a *wound* from Thratchen. Thus, by the 12th round, Garthak has a *mortal*

wound. Assume that Garthak uses one of his Possibilities each round of combat to stave off damage from Thratchen.

Garthak's assistants will attack Thratchen, thinking him a greater danger than the Storm Knights. Thratchen pays them little heed, but kills one of them in the tenth round he's involved in the combat. If Garthak realizes the Storm Knights are going for the shard, he commands his helpers to stop them.

The Storm Knights might wish to attack Garthak as well, to prevent him from submitting to Thratchen. Apply



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their damage normally, letting it accumulate along with Thratchen's damage. As soon as Garthak suffers a *mortal wound*, he submits to Thratchen. To kill Garthak, the Knights will have to inflict a fourth wound upon him before he has the opportunity to submit.

The basics of Tharkoldu submission involve a verbal statement and a dance-like series of bows and prostrations before the dominant. Once Garthak has made the verbal submission, Thratchen will do everything in his power to protect his new slave.

If the scene started with Confrontation A, it might change to Confrontation B when Thratchen arrives. (He might be late, but it's still everyone attacking everyone else.) If Garthak suffers a *mortal wound* from Storm Knight blows, and then realizes Thratchen is here to attack him, he immediately submits to Thratchen.

The Eternity Shard

Thratchen's primary goal is to get Garthak to submit. Once that happens, he turns his attention to the shard. If the Storm Knights haven't told him about the shard, he may actually never find out about it. But when Garthak submits, he tells Thratchen about the cross in an attempt to gain favor. The information below assumes Thratchen has learned about the shard at some point in the adventure. If he doesn't know about it yet, you'll have to extrapolate Thratchen's responses from the data below.

If Garthak is still wearing the shard when he submits, Thratchen turns to the Storm Knights and says:

"It seems I have acquired the pride and the shard. And we both have stopped Kanawa's progress. Thank you. Now go."

Thratchen will not negotiate for the shard, and if the Storm Knights press the issue, he threatens to kill them.

The Storm Knights can, of course, try to take the shard. In this case, Thratchen fights the Storm Knights with all of his might. Once the fight begins, Thratchen does not stop battling until killed, or until the Storm Knights successfully retreat. Once the

Storm Knights retreat, he calls his demons together, as described below.

If the Storm Knights get the shard and Garthak is either killed or submits, Thratchen decides he doesn't want to chase the Storm Knights all over the city to get the cross. He says:

"We have all done well. I have the pride. You have the shard. And all of us are still safe from Kanawa's predations. Thank you for your help, Stormers, and good bye."

With that he grabs Garthak and flies up to the roof, breaking through the ceiling. Cut to "Aftermath."

Confrontation C

Read aloud or paraphrase:

You stand in a dark corridor. Fresh pools of blood are on the ground. You look up and see human bodies on meat hooks, swinging slightly on thick, metal chains. You see light down the corridor and hear the deep growls of Tharkoldu engaged in fierce combat.

Let the Storm Knights approach the room as they wish, and then read:

You see a large chamber lit by countless neon lights, gathered about from all over the city. The remains of factory equipment is piled up to form a throne. At the base of the throne, Thratchen is fighting three Tharkoldu. One of them is larger than the other two, and has a small box attached to a chain that hangs around his neck.

Thratchen concentrates his blows against this demon, and the demon says, "Spare me your domination, Thratchen. I have an eternity shard here I will give you in exchange for my freedom." Thratchen pays the demons no heed, and continues to claw him.

At this point in the fight, Garthak has suffered a *heavy wound*. The action proceeds along the outline in Confrontation B above. The Storm Knights must act quickly to keep the pride and the shard from falling into Thratchen's hands.

Cut to "Aftermath."

Flags

If a *hero setback* occurs, one of the techno-demons who had been battling the Kanawa warriors outside comes to make his report. When he sees what is happening, he attacks the Knights and/or Thratchen.

Variables

The Storm Knights might decide to simply grab the eternity shard and leave Garthak's fate in the hands of Thratchen. If they choose this course of action, Thratchen ignores them as they run off. Cut to "Aftermath."

Aftermath

This adventure might wrap up in several ways, of course, depending on how the Storm Knights deal with Thratchen and the eternity shard.

If the Storm Knights work things out with Thratchen and are there to see him depart, then they watch him crash through the roof (as above). They see Thratchen flying high into the air with Garthak, and hear Garthak call to his former pride, telling them that Thratchen now rules them. Thratchen then calls for them to follow him, and over a thousand Tharkoldu demons rise into the night air and fly toward downtown Los Angeles. From there, Thratchen and his pride will cross the Tharkoldu bridge so Thratchen can present himself to Jezrael.

If the Storm Knights hang around for a few more minutes, the area clears out and they can leave the neighborhood with little difficulty.

If the Storm Knights rush out of the fortress with the shard while Thratchen is still fighting Garthak, they should pick a path on the map to reach the outskirts of the neighborhood. Roll a die a few times to make them think they might be ambushed, and toss in a few more scenes of violence and combat for them to witness. However, the adventure is over, and you shouldn't pay any attention to the dice — no matter what you roll, no one comes to fight them.

When they reach the edge of the neighborhood, they see the same sight





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as above, and again, the adventure is over.

If the Knights managed to prevent Thratchen from winning the submission of Garthak, the Regent of Orrorsh will be philosophical (as much as a Tharkoldu can be, at any rate):

"You have won our little race, Stormers," Thratchen says, with more than a trace of menace in his voice. "But this failure means nothing, for Jezrael will never know of it, and I

will have other opportunities. I wish you good fortune in your efforts to escape this hell you helped create."

With that, Thratchen flies off through the ceiling and disappears amid the aerial combatants.

If the Knights attempt to attack Thratchen, he makes every effort to escape them — he has nothing to gain by combat now.

If the Knights leave immediately,

they will have to contend with more battles as they try to exit the area. If they wait three rounds or more before trying to make their way out of Compton, the battle will end as the Kanawa warriors withdraw in defeat.

If Thratchen should be killed, and Garthak survive, the Knights will still have to defeat the Demon Lord to accomplish their mission. If they do not, and merely attempt to escape, he will order his pride to hunt them down — Los Angeles will rapidly become very unhealthy for the Knights.

If both Thratchen and Garthak are somehow killed, the Knights have accomplished their mission and should be able to get the shard. Again, if they wait a few rounds, the battle will end on its own and they can make their way out of war-torn Compton.

If both the Knights and Thratchen fail to defeat Garthak, he will resume his plans for a coup against Jezrael. The Knights will become hunted men in Los Angeles, and Garthak's pride can be expected to resurface in the future.

Adventure Awards

For successful completion of this adventure, each player character receives seven Possibilities. Success is defined as keeping Garthak from having the means to lead an attack against Jezrael. If this was accomplished by letting the Demon Lord submit to Thratchen, the Knights receive no additional Possibilities. If the Knights defeated Garthak and prevented him from submitting, they receive two additional Possibilities.

If the Knights killed Thratchen (unlikely, but always possible) they receive an additional three Possibilities.

If the Knights acquired the eternity shard, they receive one additional Possibility.

If Garthak was neither defeated by the Knights nor forced to submit by Thratchen, the Knights receive no Possibilities for this adventure.



CITY OF DEMONS

By Christopher Kubasik

The Near Now™. The Possibility Wars™ have taken a new turn, as the techno-horror realm of Tharkold™ reigns in Los Angeles. Now the threat of a bloody civil war between demon prides forces the Storm Knights to ally with a deadly enemy — Thratchen, High Lord™ Regent of Orrorsh™.

A rebellious Demon Lord plans a rebellion against Jezrael, High Lord of Tharkold, a war which would leave the forces of Nippon Tech™ the only winners. Thratchen, in a bid to win Jezrael's favor, offers the Storm Knights a deal: aid him in his quest, and preserve the deadlock between Nippon and Tharkold.

This strange alliance leads the Knights to a daring attempt at sabotage, battles with ninja and undead ghuls, while Thratchen weaves an intricate web to snare both Kanawa and the demon pride.

In the end, the Storm Knights must race against time across a war-torn section of the realm to reach the Demon Lord's stronghold. The prize: the future of Los Angeles, and perhaps that of Thratchen, as well.



An Adventure for



Roleplaying the Possibility Wars™

ISBN 0-87431-326-0



Fantasy/Games

City of Demons is an adventure for *Torg: Roleplaying the Possibility Wars*. You need the boxed game to play. This adventure is for veteran characters. While the material in this supplement is set in Torg's Earth of the Near Now, many of the situations and adventure ideas can be incorporated into other game systems.

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