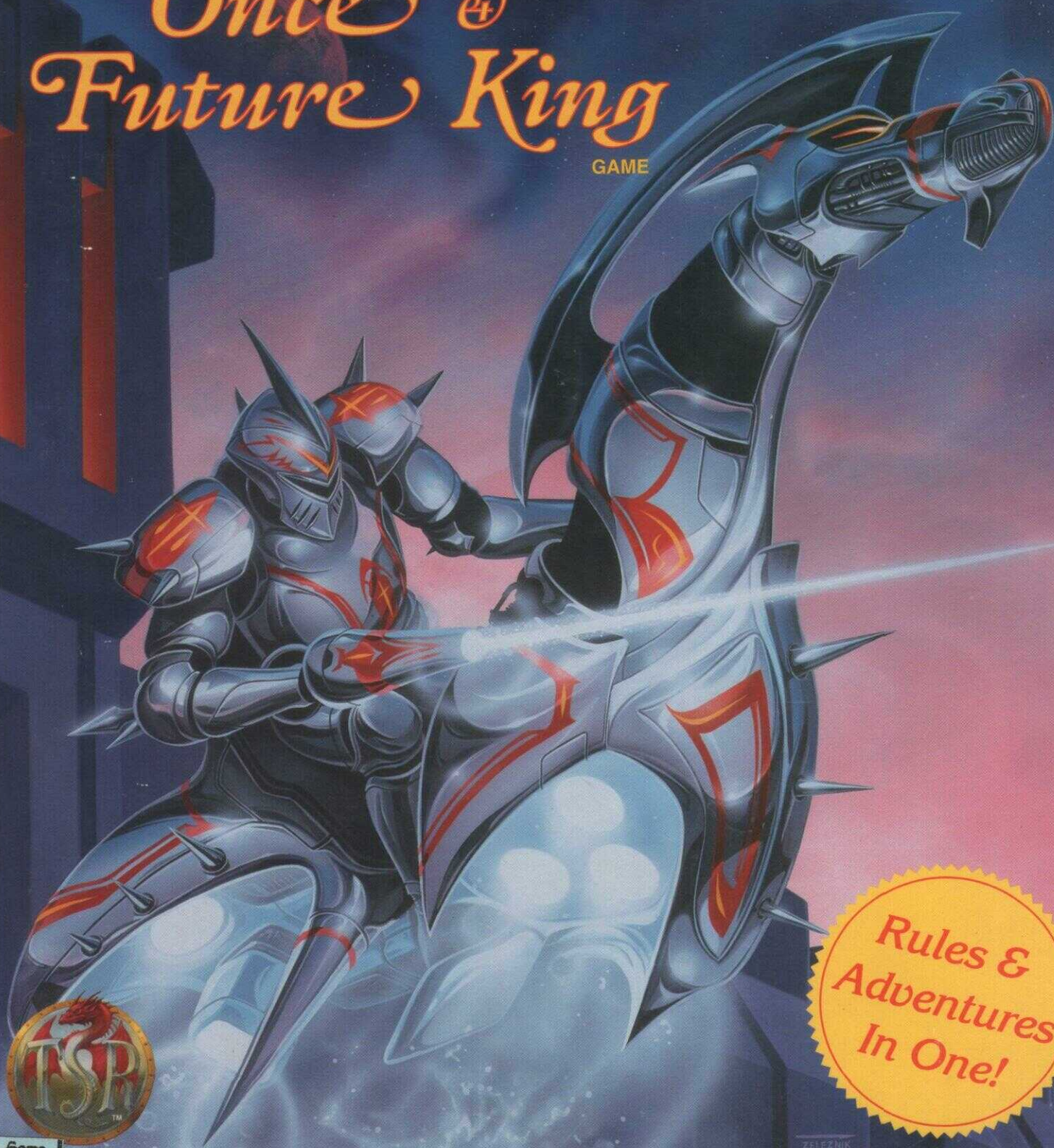


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ENGINE  
SYSTEM

# Once & Future King

GAME



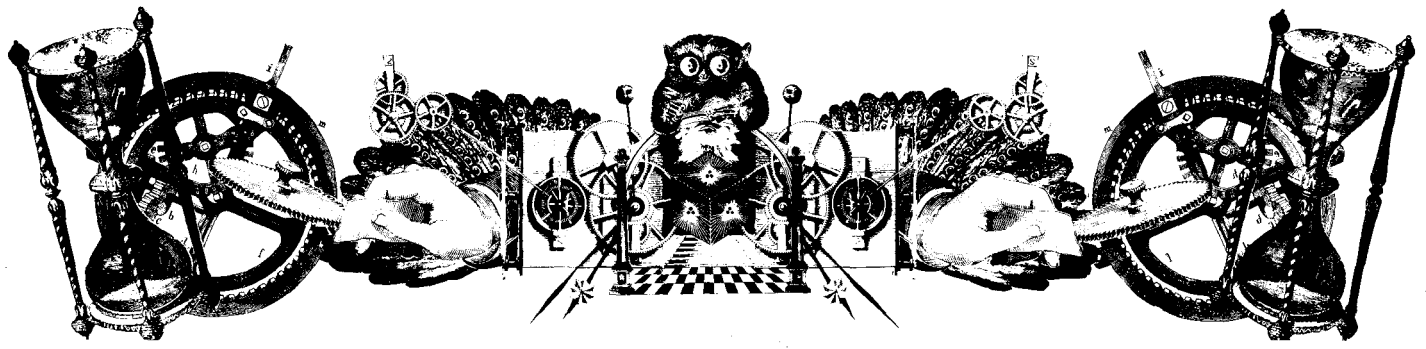
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Last Home

ZELEZNIK  
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An  
AMAZING ENGINE™  
Universe Book

# ***Once and Future King***

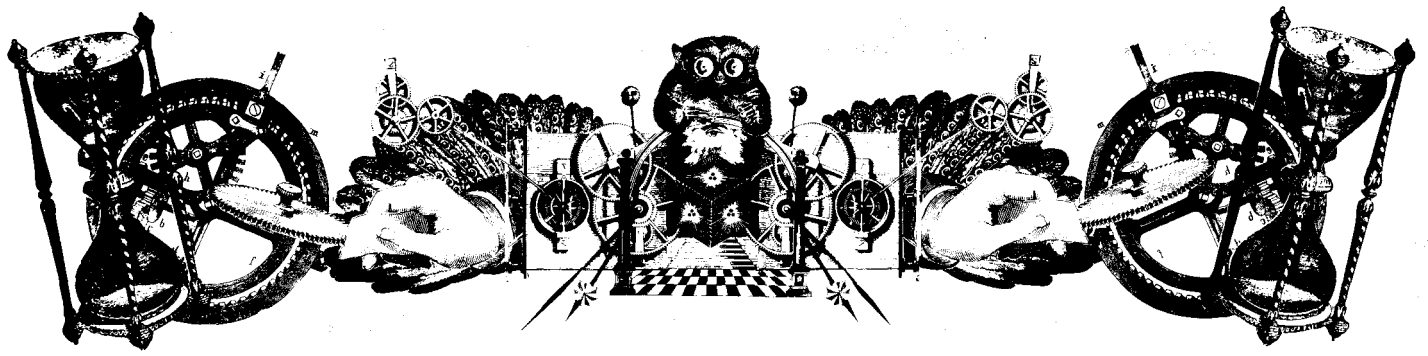
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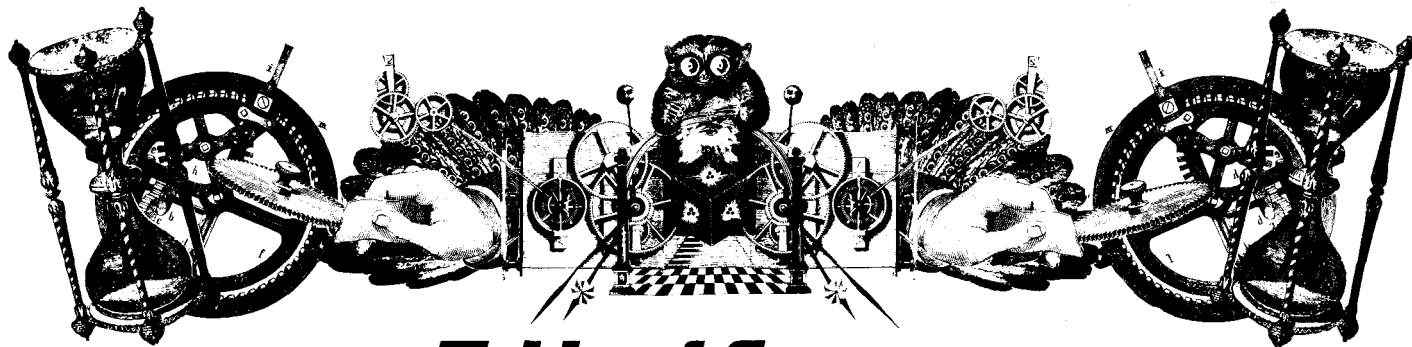
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This book is dedicated with love to my grandparents,  
Warren and Josephine Barker.

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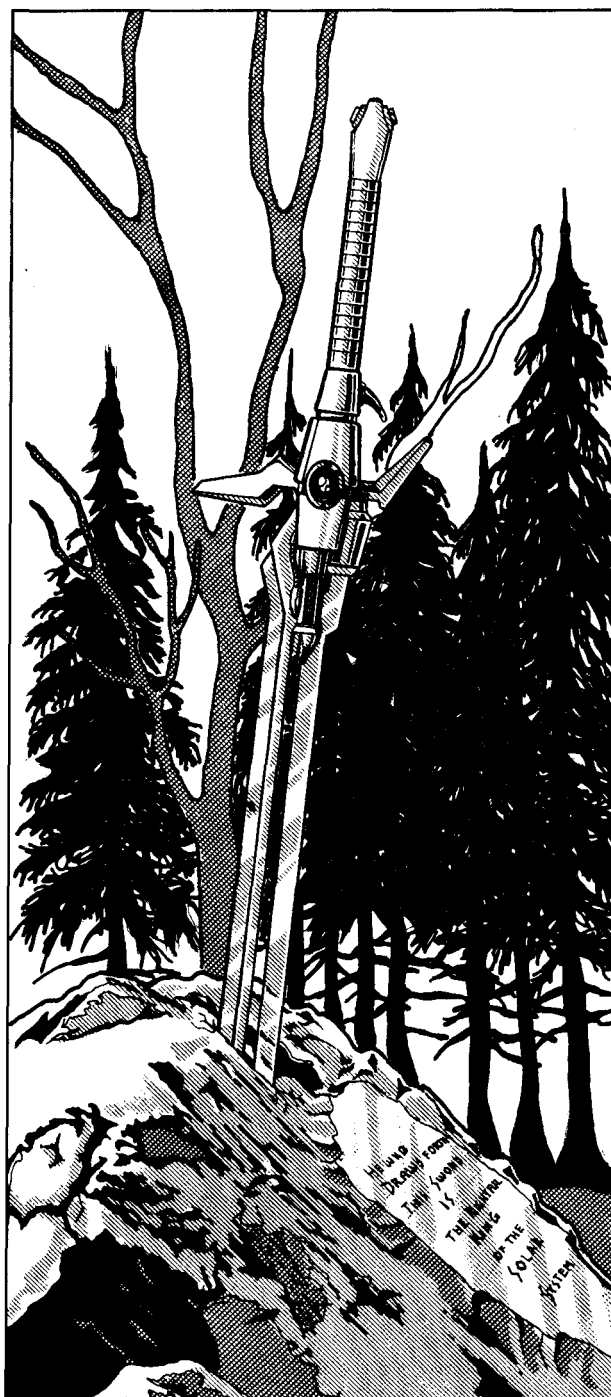
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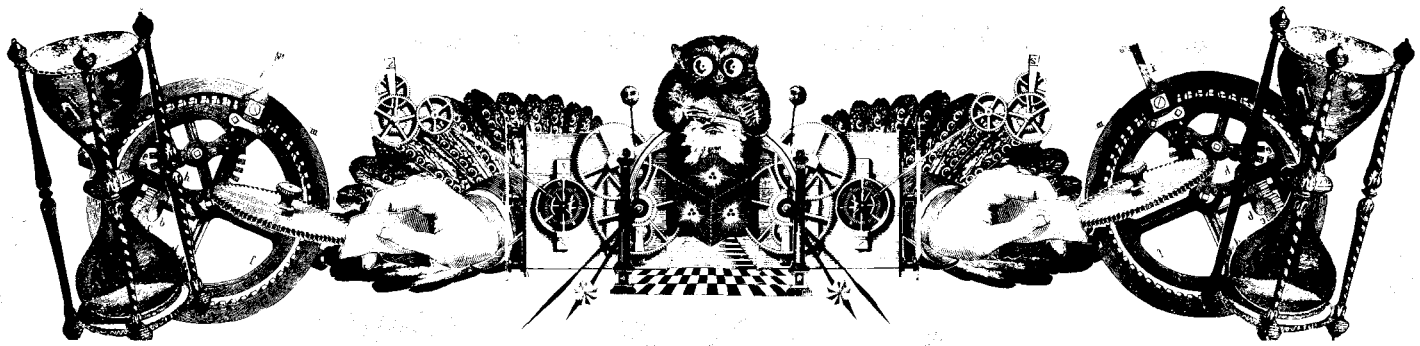


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# — The AMAZING ENGINE™ Role-Playing System —

Note: If you are already familiar with the basic rules for this game system, feel free to turn directly to the Universe Book portion of this product. Any rules modifications specific to this setting are included there.

The AMAZING ENGINE™ role-playing system is more than just a single role-playing game, be it fantasy world or science fiction universe. Instead, the AMAZING ENGINE system provides the basics for creating a wide variety of role-playing settings—anything from consulting detectives investigating fairy realms to deadly aliens stalking hi-tech space marines—and as much as can be imagined in between.

## System Guide and Universe Books

To do this, the AMAZING ENGINE system consists of two parts. The first part comprises the basic rules for creating player characters and having those characters use skills, fight, and move: the System Guide, which you are reading right now. These rules are found in all AMAZING ENGINE products. This section also details how players and GMs can change settings while transferring benefits player characters have gained from previous play.

The second part of the system comprises the rest of each Universe Book. Each Universe Book is a complete role-playing game. It is not necessary to buy every Universe Book to play in the AMAZING ENGINE system. Game masters can run campaigns in just a single universe, choose only science fiction or only fantasy, or play in both according to their personal whims.

The AMAZING ENGINE system is more than a mere collection of universes. In this system, the advances a player character gains in one universe can be used to help PCs in other universes. Starting in a new setting does not call for starting over from the beginning; this means players and GMs can experiment with the wide range of universes.

## The Player Core and Player Character

The heart of the AMAZING ENGINE system is the combination of the *player core* and the *player character*. The player core is the framework around which PCs are built. The same player core is used from universe to universe.

The PC is the actual collection of numbers, skills, and other abilities used to role-play in a given universe. A player will have a different character in each universe, but these characters may all be generated from the same core.

When creating player cores, the players must make certain decisions about the kind of characters they want. They can choose different emphases for the four different pools (see next page) that define a character: Physique, Intellect, Spirit, and Influence. These choices, made while creating the player core, reflect in all PCs created from that core. Each pool offers a pair of choices. Does a player want characters that are generally strong and influential, or ones who are intellectually superior and athletic? Physical characters can be either

muscular or quick; spiritual characters can possess great psychic potential or strong wills.

Of course, the same ability is not always the best in every universe. A muscular but psychically weak character who does quite well in the BUGHUNTERS™ game may be at quite a disadvantage in the MAGITECH™ game, where wizards needing strong psyches to manipulate magic are a common sight. Therefore, the same player character is not used in every universe. Instead, the player core allows each character to be tailored to the needs of each universe—within the limits of the player's original choices. Players who emphasized Physique will still have characters who are either faster or stronger than most others. Those who chose Intellect will have smarter characters, either in learned skills or intuitive understanding. The player core forms the archetype around which a single player's characters are all set.

## The Ability Pools

The player core consists of four different ability pools: Physique, Intellect, Spirit, and Influence. Each pool has two attributes that define the player character. When creating the player core, only the ability pools are used. When creating a PC, or playing that PC in a single universe, only the attributes are used. Once the first character is generated, ability pools never affect the actions of a PC and attributes never affect ability pools. The ability pools' corresponding attributes are:

*Fitness and Reflexes.* These attributes of Physique measure all things physical about the character.

*Learning and Intuition.* These attributes of Intellect define the character's mental power for learning useful skills.

*Psyche and Willpower.* These attributes of Spirit are the sources of the PC's mystical potential and strength of will.

*Charm and Position.* These attributes of Influence generate the values affecting the character's social interactions.

## The Attributes

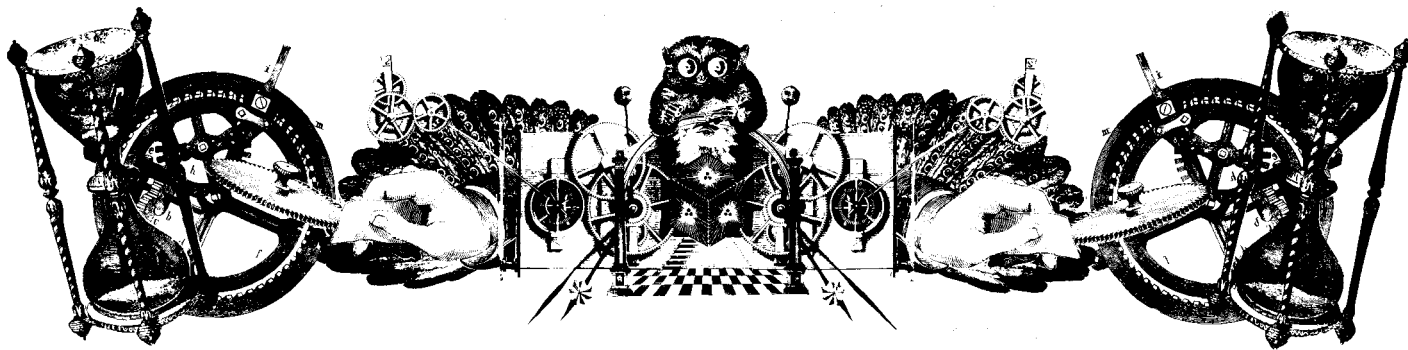
As noted, the eight attributes are more precise breakdowns of the corresponding ability pools, and they define a specific character in a specific universe. Beginning characters' attributes have values from 3 to 50, with 25 being the approximate average score. (Characters generated from the core later in a campaign may have higher scores.)

*Fitness.* A measure of bodily strength, Fitness reflects the characters' muscles and their ability to use them effectively. Fitness affects the amount of damage characters can cause in hand-to-hand combat, and the amount of body damage they can take.

*Reflexes.* This attribute measures characters' reaction speed and hand-eye coordination. It is used for scoring a hit in combat, and (along with Willpower) determines the amount of stamina damage characters can take.

*Learning.* This measures characters' knowledge in areas requiring long training or study. In some universes, it may represent a degree or period of schooling. Learning affects the number and kind of, and chance of success at, skills characters can have.





**Intuition.** This encompasses the characters' ability to remember random trivia, innate wit, street smarts, comprehension, and worldliness. Intuition is applied to skills picked up through observation and practice, without long periods of study. Like Learning, Intuition affects the number and kind of, and chance of success at, skills characters can have.

**Psyche.** The universe is filled with more things than can be measured or imagined by physical science—or at least an AMAZING ENGINE™ universe may be. Psyche represents the characters' potential to perceive and manipulate the spiritual and metaphysical world. In a given universe, this may determine the characters' magical ability, psychic powers, or plain old luck.

**Willpower.** As a measure of mental fortitude, this ability indicates how well the characters can endure pain (along with Reflexes, in the form of stamina points), block mental attacks, or resist psychic possession.

**Charm.** In RPGs, characters must interact. This attribute rates the characters' personalities and the way others are disposed toward them. Charm is used to influence reactions of NPCs and can affect the success of some magical and psychic skills.

**Position.** This attribute provides a rough rank for characters on the ladder of social advancement, whatever form the rungs take in a particular universe. Depending on the setting, Position may translate into military rank, fame (or infamy), wealth, title, class, or even occupation. Position is used to deal with officials, finance large purchases, and secure special resources, and also at special social functions.

## Generating the Player Core and Player Character

The process of creating the player core is woven into the steps of creating the first player character. As you create this character, you will have to make a number of choices for the core that will affect the character. In later steps, numbers rolled for the PC's attributes will affect the final results of the player core. Thus, the procedure for creating your first PC (and player core) is slightly different from that used when creating subsequent PCs from the same core.

The first task in creating a character is to decide what kind of character you like. You can do this even before knowing what kind of universe your GM is going to use. Do you prefer strong characters, able and ready to fight; charmers who can talk their way out of any situation; intellectuals good at solving problems; or magically-charged wonderworkers? Think about your ideal character.

The next step is to translate your ideal into game form by ranking the four ability pools of the core from best to worst. Using a sheet of paper (or the Player Core Sheet on page 18), write the numeral 1 (best) next to the pool for which you want the best chance for high scores. Then rank the remaining pools (2, 3, and 4), remembering that the one ranked lowest will usually have the lowest scores. Later die rolls do not guarantee anything.

In the third step, begin creating your first actual PC by choosing four of the eight attributes and rolling four 10-sided dice (4d10) for each

one. Add the four results, and note the total in the space next to the attribute name. (Do this in pencil, since the attributes may be modified in a later step.) The attributes chosen need not correspond to the ranking of attribute pools done previously. You can choose one, both, or no attributes of any given pool in this step.

Now, generate scores for the four remaining attributes by rolling 3d10 and adding the results. Note the totals in their appropriate places.

Once the basic numbers have been generated, modify the attributes based on the rankings you gave the ability pools (1-4). The rankings determine the number of points available to divide between the two attributes of that pool (15, 10, 5, or 0). You can divide these points however you wish, but no ability pool can have more than 50 total points.

Rank 1: 15 points

Rank 2: 10 points

Rank 3: 5 points

Rank 4: 0 points

The modified numbers are your PC's attribute scores.

With the PC attributes determined, you can now finish creating the player core by figuring your ability pools' dice ratings. Do this by adding the two attribute scores of each pool and dividing by 10. Fractions are rounded up to the next whole number. Write these numbers next to "Dice." Although this total has no effect on a PC during play, it is needed for creating other characters in other universes.

## Creating Characters from the Player Core

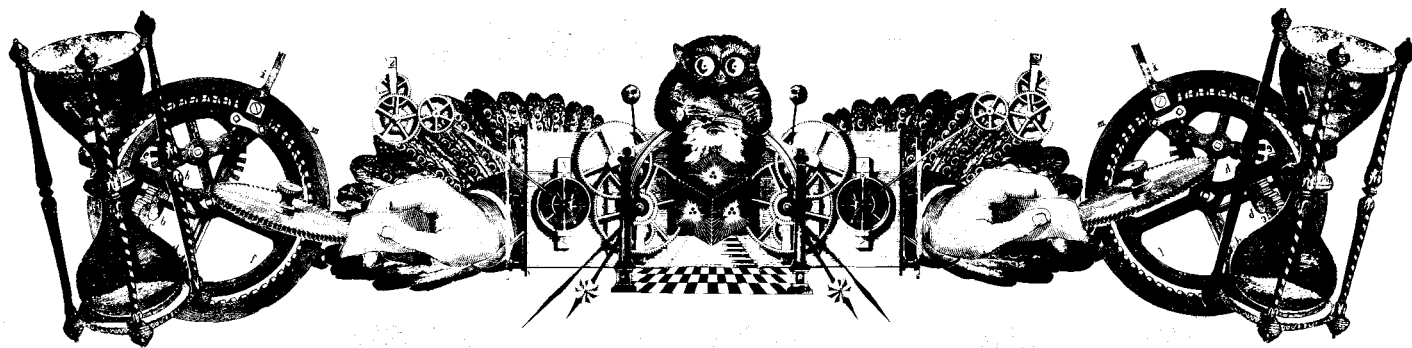
Once you have created a player core, you are ready to create new characters for other AMAZING ENGINE settings. These characters are made using the player core, and follow different steps from those you used for your first (or "prime") character.

You build PCs from the core by assigning dice to the different attributes. Each ability pool has a dice rating (this was the last step you performed in creating your prime character). These dice are divided in whole numbers between each pool's attribute pair. In addition to these dice, all new PCs have 7 "free" dice the players can assign as they see fit. However, unless stated otherwise by the universe-specific rules, no attribute can have more than 5 dice assigned to it. Once all dice have been assigned, the appropriate numbers are rolled and totalled, just as before.

After the dice are assigned, rolled, and totalled, the next step is the same as for your prime character from this core. Using the same rankings you assigned to your ability pools, use the points each rank gives (15, 10, 5, and 0) to modify your PC's attributes. As before, no PC can have an attribute rating higher than 50.

Once the attributes have been modified, the character creation process stops. Do *not* recalculate the dice ratings for the player core. The dice ratings can only be altered by spending experience points earned by the PCs created from that core.





Multiple characters can be created from the same player core. However, you should have only one character from the same core per universe. Multiple characters per core in the same universe would give you an unfair advantage over players with only a single PC per core. *You can create multiple cores, however, each with its own prime character;* use the rules for "Generating the Player Core and Player Character."

A detailed, complete example of creating a player core and a prime character is given on pages 14-15.

## Life and Death

A crucial part of any role-playing game is the risk of injury and death to the PCs. Every time a PC tries something dangerous or gets in a fight, she can suffer damage. This damage is measured in points, subtracted from a character's total. In the AMAZING ENGINE™ system, there are two types of damage: *stamina* and *body*.

Stamina damage is caused by the host of bruises, grazes, cuts, burns, jolts, and effort spent avoiding serious harm. A character who loses all her stamina points does not die—she falls unconscious. (This may result in her death, however.) Unconsciousness comes from the combined effects of blood loss, concussion, shock, pain, and just plain exhaustion. If an attack causes 10 points of stamina damage and your character has only 4 remaining, the excess points are ignored. Your character falls unconscious. However, all future attacks automatically cause body damage.

Body damage represents wounds and injuries that seriously threaten the health of your PC. These include bullet holes, stab wounds, broken bones, serious burns, bites, and other unpleasanties. When your character loses all her body points, she's dead.

Just how many stamina and body points your PC has varies from universe to universe. In some, such as that of the BUGHUNTER™ game, combat is one of the main activities. Here, your PC will need lots of stamina and body points. In others, like *For Faerie, Queen, and Country*, combat is a last resort when all others have failed. Characters in such a universe have lower stamina and body point totals to discourage players' desire to solve every problem with guns.

In all universes, however, stamina and body points are calculated from the same attribute scores. Fitness is used to figure body points. Characters with high Fitness scores will always have more body points than those with poor Fitness scores, no matter the universe. Willpower and Reflexes combined are the base for stamina points, so that those with high scores in these attributes will have more stamina points than those with low ones.

Injuries and wounds do heal, allowing your PC to regain lost stamina and body points. Because the two types of damage reflect different causes, each heals at a different rate. Stamina is regained in two stages; 1 point in the first 10-60 minutes (1d6x10), then 1d10 points per eight hours of light activity (2d10 per eight hours of bed rest or sound sleep). Body points heal at the rate of 1 per week. Rest, nursing, and hospitalization can increase the rate of healing; to what extent depends on the universe. After all, the hospitals of a pseudo-Victorian London are nothing like the sickbay facilities of a 23<sup>rd</sup>-century starship!

## Beyond the Player Core: Fine Tuning

In any AMAZING ENGINE universe, your PC is more than the sum of her attribute scores. There are many other choices to make; however, these depend on the universe in which your character is playing. While all the choices are defined for your character in the Universe Book section of this product, the range of options is explained here in general terms.

### Base Adjustment

Every universe of the AMAZING ENGINE system is different, so a suitable starting character for one may not be right for another. Therefore, a given universe may apply a *base adjustment* to certain of your PC's ability pools. This adjustment increases every affected attribute by the same amount. (A base adjustment of +30 to the Physique pool means you add 30 to the base Fitness score and 30 to the base Reflexes score.) The adjustment must be made *after* calculating your PC's base attribute scores.

### Species

Up to now, nothing has been said of just what your PC is, and from the examples it's easy to assume everyone's human. However, this need not be the case. In some universes, you may have the opportunity to create characters that are members of some other species. Your character could be an intelligent being evolved from dinosaurs, belong to an alien race from another star, be a combination of human and machine, or (comparatively simply) have fairy blood. The universes of the AMAZING ENGINE system have all of science fiction and fantasy to draw upon, so the possibilities are nearly endless!

### Gender

There is nothing in the player core that determines your PC's gender. In most universes, you can choose it freely. However, in some cases there may be special restrictions or different choices, particularly when playing an alien (nonhuman) PC. The Universe Book describes any such rules additions.

### Handedness

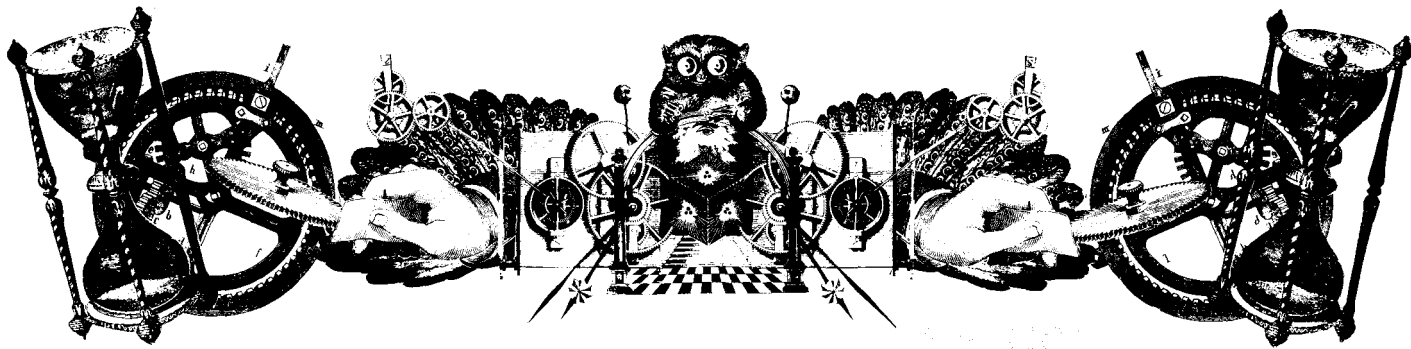
For convenience, your character uses the same hand as you do in real life. Of course, if you're playing a four-armed g'rax, special rules may apply.

### Appearance

Again, unless your PC is an alien, you can describe your character's looks however they please you. He could be tall and willowy, or she







could be short and blunt. It is recommended that you create a character description that matches the attribute scores. If your character has a miserable Fitness score, it doesn't pay to imagine him as strong and muscular.

## Professions and Skills

At some point in her imaginary life, your PC probably went to school, learned a trade, or at least got an education on the street. In the AMAZING ENGINE™ system, what your PC knows is defined by her profession. No matter the universe, every character has a profession, varied though they are. In a Victorian fantasy setting your PC might be a consulting detective, consul of the Foreign Office, Oxford don, navy ensign, or medium. A completely different set of professions exist in a world of high space opera; space freighter captain, alien spy, smuggler, and psychic are only a few possibilities.

Likewise, the exact benefits of a profession can vary from universe to universe. The Victorian consulting detective might know material analysis, chemistry, fisticuffs, craniometry (measurement of people's skulls), heraldry, and fencing; his counterpart in a world of modern magic could well possess flying carpet driving, spell analysis, handguns, karate, and empathy.

When you create a PC for a campaign, your character must be given a profession from those offered in that particular universe. The Universe Book lists these. Choosing a profession does not determine what your PC is currently; it only tells what she was, and therefore what she knows at the start of the campaign. From this basis, you can make of your PC what you want.

## Skill Groups

Note: Reference this Universe Book's skill listing as you read this section.

Every profession includes a listing of skill groups falling within that profession's purview. These skill groups form the basis of what a character can learn, given her profession. The skills categorized under each grouping are all related to that area of study or use, although the skills themselves may be quite different. For example, a scholarly character may have "Humanities" as a skill group. Checking the information in the Universe Book, you find the listing for Humanities. Under it are several different scholarly areas and skills that all have to do with the humanities (like Linguistics and Theology), though they are not always related to each other.

Certainly not every profession has the same skill groups. The scholar's studies in humanities would be ill-suited to the needs of a soldier in the 23<sup>rd</sup> century. Her skill groups would include things like Sidearms and Comm-gear. The skills of the Sidearms group are vastly different from those of the Humanities group.

In addition to organizing skills, the skill groups also show the skills' order and relevant attributes, both important to using skills in play.

**Skill Order:** In each list, skills are arranged in ever-smaller steps of specialization. Before a skill can be learned, your PC must know all preceding steps. For example, look at the following list.

### Sidearms (R)

- Coherent Beam (R)
  - Laser rifle (R)
  - Particle beam (R)
- Projectile (R)
  - Modern (R)
  - Antique (R)
    - Blunderbuss\* (R)
    - Rifled musket\*(R)
- Assisted (R)
- Energized (R)
- Flechette (R)

### General Medicine (L)

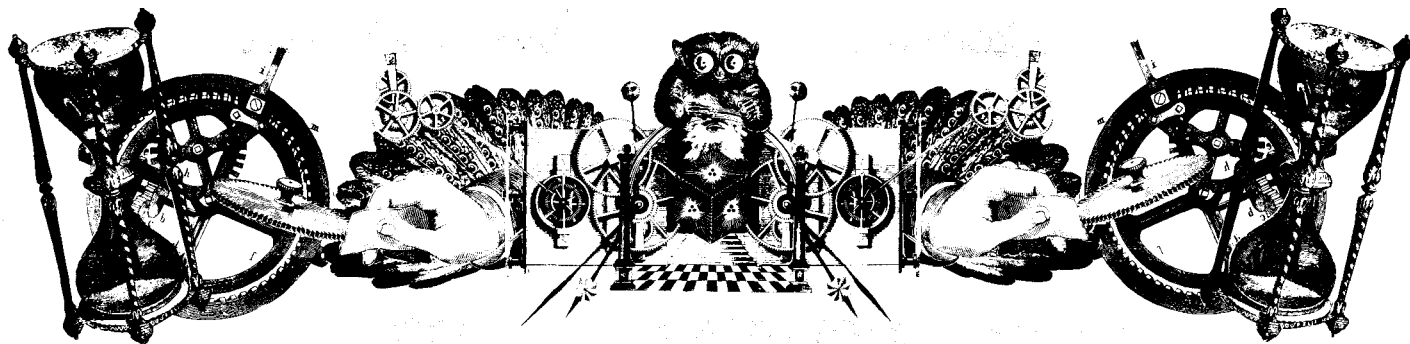
- Xeno-biology (L)
- Arcturean medicine (L)

Each level of specialization is indicated by indentation, just as in an outline. Once your PC has learned a skill (Sidearms or General Medicine, in the above listings), she has a basic familiarity with everything grouped below it, allowing her to attempt any of those specialties. However, your PC's chance of success decreases when attempting things of greater specialization than her training level. The degree of penalty depends on what the PC knows and what she's trying to do. She cannot know the Rifled musket enhancement unless she knows Antique weapons, which she cannot have until she has taken the Projectile specialization. (She need not know Coherent beam weapons before she can know Projectile; these two are at the same level, and thus are unrelated.) The precise penalty varies from universe to universe. A typical penalty is -10 to the PC's chance of success per each level of difference. (In the above example, a PC familiar with projectile weapons trying to use a rifled musket does so at a -20 penalty: -10 for not knowing the Antique specialization, and -10 for not having the Rifled musket enhancement.)

**Enhancements:** Some specialized skills do not require your PC to gain new areas of learning or technique, but only call for the refinement of existing knowledge. Your PC doesn't "learn" anything new; she only improves what she can already do. These specialties are called *enhancements*, and are noted by an asterisk (\*) on the skill groups.

For example, under Antique Weapons, *Blunderbuss* and *Rifled musket* are enhancements. The basics of loading and firing each are essentially the same, and the same goes for any other antique weapon (the larger skill category). The differences are that a character skilled in Blunderbuss is more familiar with the particular quirks of that weapon. The same does not apply when comparing Antique Weapons to Modern Weapons, or General Medicine to its specialty Xeno-biology. In these





cases, the skills involve new learning, new techniques, and new facts that must be mastered in addition to the basic understanding of Sidearms or Medicine.

Knowing an enhancement gives a PC a bonus (typically +10) when using that particular skill—but only that skill. A PC who knows the Blunderbuss enhancement and uses that weapon gains a +10 bonus to her skill roll. She does not gain that bonus when using a rifled musket, however, even though both weapons require the Antique Weapons specialty.

The bonus for an enhancement does not accumulate across levels the way that penalties for lack of a specialty do. For instance, a character with the Blunderbuss enhancement gains only one bonus when rolling against the Sidearms skill, despite the fact that there are two levels between the skills.

**Starting Skills:** After you have chosen a profession for your character and noted down the skill groups, you can select skills for your PC. The number of skills your PC can have depends on her Learning and Intuition scores.

First, you must choose those skills dictated by your PC's profession: the things that allow her to operate effectively in whatever career she has chosen. You can choose any skills from the skill groups named by that profession. Your PC can have 1 skill for every 10 points of Learning (or fraction thereof, rounded up). Specialized and sub-specialized skills can only be chosen if the preceding skills are also learned.

After you have chosen those profession-based skills, you can pick other skills from any skill group regardless of the PC's profession. These skills represent your PC's general knowledge, interests, curiosity, and hobbies. Select one skill (from any skill group) for every 15 points of Intuition your PC has (ignore fractions in this case). Additional skills gained may be within the PC's profession or completely outside it. As before, your PC cannot learn specializations or sub-specializations unless all previous skills are known.

As you select skills, note the names and relevant attributes (noted in parentheses after each skill) on your character sheet.

## Skill Checks

Although your PC may know how to apply a skill, this is still a long way from using the skill correctly and successfully. As a real person, you might "know" a foreign language, but could still make an error when talking to a native speaker. Furthermore, not everyone is equally adept; not every first-year French student speaks first-year French equally well. The same is true, of course, for your PCs.

Every time your PC attempts to use a skill, you must make a skill check to see if the effort succeeds. This entails rolling percentile dice, applying any bonuses or penalties as required, and comparing the result to one of your PC's attribute scores. The relevant attribute score is noted in parentheses after the listing in the skill group: Fitness, Reflexes, Learning, Intuition, Psyche, Willpower, Charm, and Position.

If the (modified) die result is less than the PC's attribute score, the

attempt succeeds. If the (modified) die result is greater than the score, the attempt fails. A skill check always fails on a roll of 95-00, but there is no corresponding chance for automatic success.

**Easy and Difficult Tasks:** Skills are applied to tasks of varying difficulty. For your PC with mechanical skill, fixing a stubborn lawnmower is just not the same as rebuilding the engine on a sub-orbital jet. The former is a task of basic simplicity, the latter a highly demanding and complicated job. Clearly, your PC's chance of success in each endeavor should not be the same.

A skill check is not required every time your PC does something skill-related. For example, driving to the supermarket does not require a skill check. A character trained as a spaceship pilot need not make a skill check every time he travels through space. It is assumed that every skill provides a level of basic understanding. Thus, skill checks can be ignored for simple and familiar tasks.

When the result is uncertain, a skill check must be made. Characters with Firearms skill can handle a gun without a skill check, but they may not hit the target—a skill check is required to find out. If the check succeeds, your PC performs the action successfully: hitting the target, whatever. If the check fails, the action fails with appropriate consequences.

Your PC can also attempt actions of even greater risk and skill, so much that a normal skill check is still too easy. She may want to shoot an item from a person's hand, or calculate an obscure scientific formula. Based on the situation, the GM can reduce the chance of success to reflect the difficulty of the action. Guidelines for the modifiers are given as appropriate in the Universe Books.

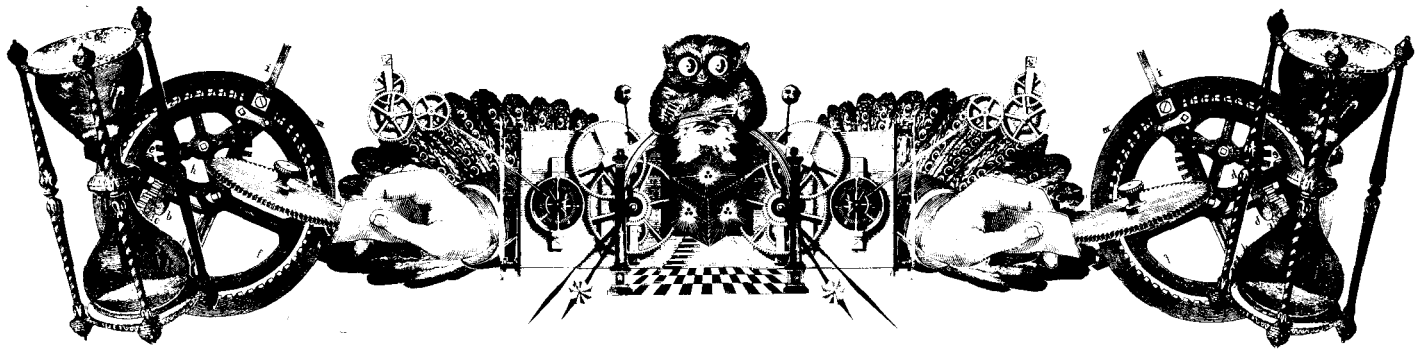
At other times, your PC may attempt something more specialized than she is trained for. In this case, even the simplest task requires a skill check (with the penalty for not knowing the specialty applied), since any specialized knowledge is assumed to be beyond your PC's basic understanding. Tasks that would require a normal skill check become extremely difficult for those without the proper background, while things difficult for a specialist become nearly impossible.

**Unskilled Characters:** No matter how well-rounded and prepared your PC is, there are always times when she is faced with a problem for which she is simply not trained. Faced with such a situation, your PC may have little choice but to try her best.

Whether your PC can even hope to succeed depends on the skill normally required to perform the task. If this is a Learned skill (one that uses the Learning attribute for skill checks), the task is impossible. Computer programming, biochemistry, and surgery are all examples of Learned skills. Without the proper training, your PC simply has no clue about what needs to be done. For example, she cannot repair a malfunctioning high-energy gas laser. The only thing she's likely to do, without the proper training, is increase the damage.

Actions based on nonLearning skills can be attempted by even those lacking the proper training. In this case, the PC has a default chance equal to half the appropriate attribute score. Even the most basic actions require a skill check (there is no automatic success), and the





attribute score is halved for the attempt. The other penalties, for specialization and difficulty, still apply.

## Margin Ratings

In most cases, the actual outcome of a skill check doesn't change, regardless of how well or poorly the PC did, so you can simply translate the skill check into story details. Roll well below the success number, and your PC did the task extremely well. Roll high—close to failing—and it was a struggle, but she succeeded. Roll drastically greater than the success number, and your PC botched things royally.

For example, your PC, Anya, and her companion, George, are trying to jump across a pit, with a villain in hot pursuit. You roll a 17 (needing a 54 or less), while George's player barely rolls below the necessary number (69 out of 71). Right behind your PCs, the villain attempts the leap. His roll is a 93, well over the 51 needed. In this case, the GM might say, "Anya, you clear the pit easily, then bend down and help George, who nearly failed and is clinging to the edge by his fingertips. The thug chasing you slips just as he starts the leap. There's a horrid scream as he falls out of sight." Both player characters succeeded and there was nothing gained by doing better, while the thug failed and would have fallen in any case. If Anya had not been there, George would have simply hoisted himself over the edge to safety.

At other times, you need to know not only if your PC succeeded or failed, but to what degree. These are known as critical successes or critical failures. Skills that require them are defined in the *Univetse Books*. In *For Faerie, Queen, and Country*, Louis the forger is altering a will. A successful skill check results in a will that fools most people, but Louis needs a critical success to dupe the court's handwriting expert. In the *BUGHUNTERS* game, Harmon, the demolitions man, is faced with a complicated time bomb. Success obviously defuses the device, but there is the risk he pulls the wrong wire. This would be a critical failure, causing the bomb to detonate immediately.

Critical successes and failures are defined by *margin ratings*. Success margin ratings are noted as S#: S2, S5, etc. Failure margin ratings are noted as F#: F8, F7, etc.

In such instances, the success or failure margin is found by reading the Is digit of the skill check roll. For a critical success, the skill check must be successful *and* the Is digit must be equal to or less than the success margin. For a critical failure, the check must be failed *and* the Is digit must be equal to or greater than the failure margin.

For example, Louis has a 45 on his attempt to forge a signature. The skill notes a success margin of 1 (S1) for a perfect forgery. Louis's player rolls the skill check, and the result is 40. Louis succeeds! Not only that, but it's a critical success, since 0 is less than 1 (the success margin rating). If Louis's player had rolled a 29, the forgery would have been successful but imperfect. On a roll greater than 45, the forgery would have failed completely.

Note that, statistically, margin ratings give characters with higher attribute scores a greater chance of amazing successes and a lower chance of horrible failures at any particular task than characters with

lower attribute scores. In effect, success and failure margins serve as fractions of a character's skill, so as that skill increases, the margins become automatically more beneficial. Applying them to the Is digit of a skill check simply makes it very quick and easy to identify them during play.

## Movement

Character movement is divided into three speeds: walking, running, and sprinting. Each is defined by a speed in meters/turn and a duration of minutes or turns.

## Measurements

To ease the transition from one universe to another, this game system uses a consistent set of measures for figuring game time, movement, and weight.

In this game system, all distances, volumes, and weights are given metrically. Although unfamiliar to some, the metric system is best suited to meet the needs of universes ranging from high fantasy to hard s-f. Distances are given in meters and kilometers, weights in grams and kilograms, etc.

Game time—the imaginary time spent by PCs to do anything, as opposed to the real time you spend describing your PC's actions, rolling dice, thinking, etc. while playing—is organized into turns, minutes, hours, and days. A turn is roughly equal to 10 seconds of action, and is used for combat and other time-important actions. Minutes, hours, and the rest are self-explanatory. A given universe may have weeks, months, and years equivalent to those of our Earth, or may use a quite different system (especially in s-f settings).

## Speed

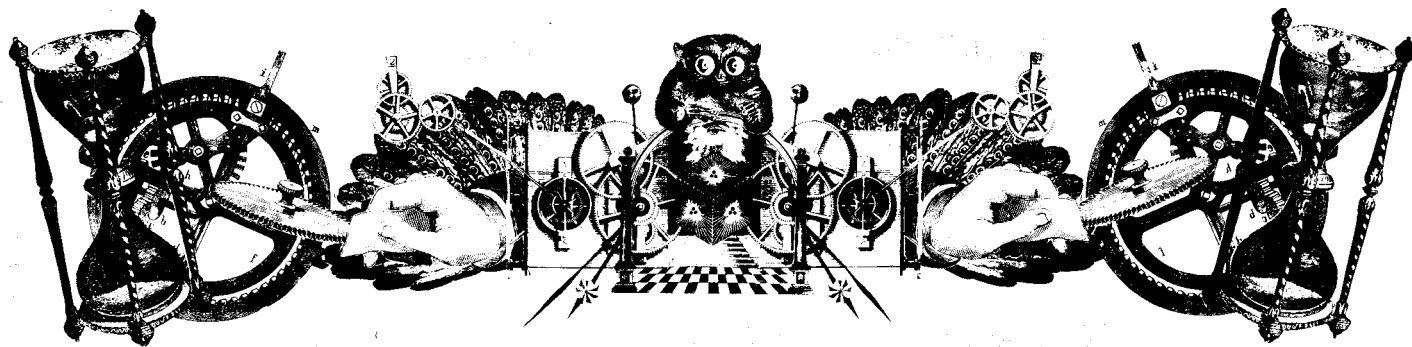
*Walking* is the slowest and most common movement. A person walking can cover up to 15 meters per turn. (In general, people unconsciously adjust their strides to those of their companions to walk at a uniform rate.) Characters can walk for an indefinite amount of time, although the houtly movement rate of 5,000 meters should be used if PCs travel for longer than 30 minutes at a time.

*Running* is a brisk jog or long, loping stride, good for covering considerable distances at a quick pace. It is not as flat-out fast as your PC can run, since your PC is trying to conserve some strength for the long haul. Most PCs run a distance equal to their Fitness in meters per turn. A character with a Fitness of 32 could run 32 meters in a single turn. Notably unfit characters (those with Fitness scores of 14 or less) run and walk at the same speed: 15 meters per turn. A character can run for a time in minutes equal to his or her Fitness rating.

*Sprinting* is a burst of speed, in which your PC tries to cover a short distance as quickly as she or he can. Each turn your PC can sprint a distance in meters equal to twice his or her Fitness score. (A PC with a Fitness score of 32 can sprint 64 meters in 10 seconds.) Sprinting can be maintained for turns equaling one-tenth the PC's Fitness score (Fit\_







10), rounded down. Amazingly unfit characters (those with Fitness scores of 7 or less) cannot sprint or run, although they still walk at normal speed.

## Carrying Capacity

Another important modifier for your PC's speed in any situation is the weight she is carrying. The movement rates given assume the PC is not loaded down with excess goods that would slow her pace.

Your PC can carry goods equal to her Fitness score in kilograms without penalty. A PC with a Fitness of 21 can carry 21 kilos (about 46 lbs.) of gear and supplies without significant difficulty. When carrying up to twice this weight, the PC's running and sprinting speeds are halved. At three times the base weight, the PC cannot sprint or run, and may only walk meters equal to her Fitness score before having to rest.

If a player tries to tax her PC's Fitness by spending experience points (so she can lift a greater-than-normal weight), the benefit lasts until the PC fails a Willpower check. Like an Olympic weightlifter, the PC puts her legs and back into a heroic effort to lift the great weight. Every muscle in her body strains until her Willpower finally gives out. When the PC fails this check, she suffers 1 point of stamina damage. Players can use experience points to tax their PCs' Willpower to improve their chances of passing this check, too.

## Pushing the Limits

It is possible for PCs to run and sprint faster or farther than their normal allowances by taxing their Fitness scores and making attribute checks.

Any PC can sprint faster than is normally allowed in a given turn by taxing his ability. The player must spend experience points to increase the Fitness score. However, a PC can never increase his speed by more than 50% in this way (he cannot add more than half his Fitness score). This increase is only effective for a single turn. The player must continue to spend experience points to maintain the PC's pace on subsequent turns.

Any PC can also try to exceed his duration. At the start of each turn, when sprinting, or minute, when running, during which the PC wants to run longer than his normal duration, the player makes a Willpower check with percentile dice. If the result is lower than the PC's Willpower score, he keeps going for that turn or minute; otherwise, he must stop since he's exhausted. PCs who fail the check suffer 1-2 points of stamina damage. Note that players can spend experience points to increase their PC's Willpower for this check.

For more information on taxing attributes, see "Taxing Attributes" in the "Experience" section of these rules.

## Resting

Flat-out sprinting and long-distance running make for exhausting business, and your PC must rest at the end of any dash. PCs must spend

time resting in minutes equal to the minutes spent running or turns spent sprinting. Sprinting three turns requires resting three minutes. Characters resting cannot run or sprint, but can walk up to 10 meters per turn.

## Vehicles and Special Movement

Since the AMAZING ENGINE" universes can encompass anything from lizard-drawn chariots to anti-grav sky-sleds, rules for vehicle movement are part of the Universe Books. In addition, a Universe Book may present unique movement rules to reflect any special conditions of that universe. Heavy gravity, magical terrains, other dimensions, and weightlessness are all possible complications unique to specific universes.

## Combat

Sooner or later, fighting becomes part of every role-playing game. The AMAZING ENGINE system is no exception, although the emphasis on fighting (and just how dangerous it is) will suit the story needs of the universe. For example, combat in *For Faerie, Queen, and Country* is an infrequent thing, and dangerous when it occurs. A character can be killed with a single shot. At the other extreme, battles are frequent and heroic (and often magical in nature) in *The Galactos Barrier*, a swash-buckling universe of high space opera. The BUGHUNTERS" game, where characters are the elite of the interstellar armed forces, is almost entirely combat-centered.

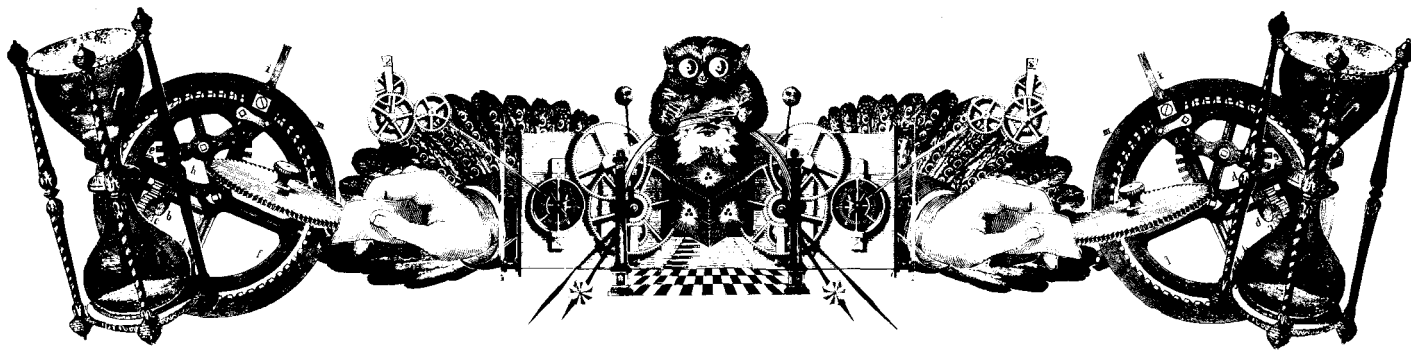
Because of the differences among universes, the things described herein are basic procedures that do not change from setting to setting, such as the differences between ranged combat and melee, and how to make an attack roll. *Every Universe Book contains additional combat rules*. At a minimum, these include weapons available in that universe; a maser rifle just won't be found in a world of armored knights and dragons. It could appear in a world of cybernetic knights and chrome steel dragontanks, however.

Some universes, such as that of the BUGHUNTERS game, place a greater emphasis on combat than others. Accordingly, the combat rules for these universes incorporate detailed rules for things like special combat maneuvers, penetration, knock-back, and recoil. Other universes may keep the combat rules to the barest minimum in favor of other role-playing aspects.

## The Combat Sequence

Because combat can be a confusing event with six or seven characters to a side, each trying to do something different, the AMAZING ENGINE system (like most RPGs) organizes combat into a series of steps, each complete sequence taking one turn, each turn being roughly 10 seconds of time (allowing the GM flexibility in resolving combat actions). Each turn repeats the sequence of events until one side is defeated or manages to escape.





- I. Determine advantage (1st turn only)
- II. Players declare PC actions; GM decides NPC actions
- III. Determine initiative
- IV. Resolve actions

**I. Determine Advantage:** This is the "jump" one character or group might have on another when the encounter begins. It is used in situations such as two groups (friend and foe) stumbling onto each other unexpectedly, a group being betrayed by someone the members trusted, or the party walking into an ambush. The character or party who has the advantage automatically gets the first action and may have a bonus on chances to hit the targets.

Advantage is checked at the beginning of any encounter, before any actions are taken. After the first combat turn, advantage is normally no longer checked, since both sides are perfectly aware of what the other is up to—at least in general terms. In some instances, however, additional advantage checks may be called for: a new attacker appearing from an unexpected direction, or an event unanticipated by one or both sides.

The basic method for determining advantage is for both sides to roll percentile dice and compare the result to the highest Psyche score in each party. If the check passes, the group is forewarned, however slightly. If the check fails, the group is unprepared and the other side gains the advantage. If both sides succeed, no one is caught unprepared. If both sides fail, everyone is caught flat-footed. If either side rolls a 95-00, that group is *surprised*—caught completely off guard—and is particularly vulnerable. The "Advantage Outcomes" table appears on page 18. (The properties, equipment, and situations of different universes can modify a PC's check. Some possibilities include thermal sensors to spot what is normally unseen, or psionic powers to detect thoughts. Any such modifiers will be noted in the Universe Book.)

The side with the advantage automatically goes first on the opening turn of combat. Its members gain a +5 modifier on any attack or action opposed by the other group. The side without advantage goes second, and suffers a -5 modifier on any like action.

If one party is surprised, they essentially do nothing for an entire turn during which their opponents have the freedom to move, attack, talk, run away, or whatever (with the +5 modifier) without a reaction from the surprised group. In the next turn, the surprised group is considered unprepared while their attackers have the advantage (they act first and gain the +5 modifier, while their opponents act second and suffer a -5 modifier).

**II. Declare Actions:** Except for situations of advantage and surprise, you must declare what action your PC will take *before* knowing in what order both sides will act (the same applies to the GM). Tell your GM what action your character will take in the coming turn. Try to be as specific as possible, given that you don't know the intentions of the other side. For example, if your PC attacks, state her target in advance. The GM has many things to track, so the more you can help, the quicker and more exciting the game will be.

In general, it is best to keep actions short, ideally things that can be

completed within 10 seconds. Not only does this help prevent confusion, it also means your PC is ready to react to new situations in the next turn. You should also be ready to say quickly what your PC will do, since the GM can penalize your PC for your hesitation. Combat requires snap judgments and you should be ready to play the part accordingly. Reasonable questions are allowed, but delaying the game while you try to make a decision is apt to result in your PC losing her action that turn.

**III. Determine Initiative:** If neither side has an advantage or surprise in combat, you need to know in what order everything happens. This is done by determining initiative at the beginning of every combat turn, unless one side has advantage over the other (because of die rolls or GM's ruling). A single initiative is normally determined for the entire group, although universes with detailed combat rules may require each individual to roll initiative.

Check initiative by rolling IdIO and modifying the result. The modifier equals 10% (for simplicity, the 10s digit) of the best Reflexes score on each side. A character with a Reflexes score of 37 adds 3 to the die roll. Only those PCs present and active in the combat are considered in this initiative roll. The side with the higher modified die roll acts first.

In addition to PCs, any thing or event beyond the control of either group has its own unmodified initiative roll. If the enemy lobbs a grenade at your PC's feet, at the start of the next turn the GM secretly rolls IdIO for the grenade's initiative (to see when it explodes). Your PC may have a chance to throw it back, or dive for cover—or she may not.

Prepared actions, like holding a gun on someone and demanding surrender, are special initiative situations. Normally, the prepared PC (or NPC) automatically goes first ("Move and I shoot, you ugly bug."). However, your PC can try to beat out the opponent if you roll a successful Reflexes check. (The GM may apply modifiers to your chance of success.) If you succeed, your PC can take an action before her challenger reacts. Fail, and she just wasn't quick enough.

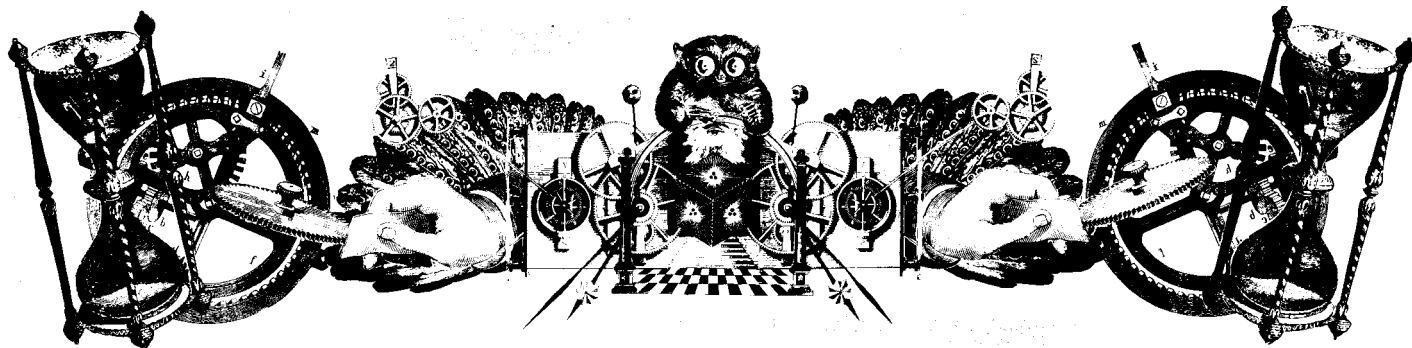
**IV. Resolve Actions:** Most often, this involves playing out some kind of combat. So, you'll need to know how you go about. . .

**Hitting Your Target.** Whenever your PC attacks (or is attacked), actually hitting what she aimed at is no guarantee. Virtually all attacks require a die roll to determine a hit or a miss. Only the inescapable are exempt from this rule.

In melee and ranged combat, your PC's base chance to hit equals her Reflexes score. However, this chance is modified according to the target area and the mitigating circumstances. If the roll is equal to or less than your PC's modified Reflexes score, the attack hits the target and damage is determined. If the roll exceeds the score, the attack misses.

**Target Areas.** Anytime your PC (or anything else) makes an attack, you must specify one of three target areas: general, nonvital, or vital. Different chances to hit apply to each area, and successful hits result in different damage effects.





General targets are anywhere on the opponent's body; your PC is just trying to land a fist or make a shot without concern for pinpoint accuracy. General targeting allows your PC to use her full Reflexes score before other modifications, and does not alter the damage done by the attack.

Nonvital targets are those areas of the opponent that if hit will stun, wound, or injure, but are unlikely to result in a kill. Trying to knock someone out or wing him in the arm calls for a nonvital target. Your PC's Reflexes score is halved when making a nonvital attack, and the chance of body damage is reduced by 2.

Vital targets are just the opposite: vulnerable areas that could lead to sudden death if hit. On humans, for example, these include the area around the heart and the head. Attacks on vital areas are particularly difficult, and so the chance of hitting is only 10% of your PC's normal Reflexes score (rounded up). The chance for body damage, however, is increased by 3 on a vital attack.

The "Target Modifiers" table appears on page 18.

**Ranged Combat.** Ranged combat (attacking with a weapon that shoots, flies, or is thrown) has special rules. While many of these depend on the universe (and its technology), certain features are common to all.

In each Universe Book, missile weapons (if any) are listed with their ranges and damage. Ranges are divided into *short*, *medium*, and long categories (some universes may also have *extreme*), measured in meters. When shooting at targets beyond short range, your PC suffers a penalty on her chance to hit. The exact penalty depends on the universe, since weapon effectiveness changes with each technology.

Furthermore, every character has a sighting range, normally 50 yards. Characters can see beyond this distance, of course, but when firing at targets beyond the sighting range, only general targeting can be used.

## Combat Modifiers

Few battles are straight-up matches where heroes and villains duke it out toe-to-toe. Most are moving affairs with unique situations: things to get in the way, things to hide behind, and armor to wear. These situations are handled by combat modifiers, which are given in the Universe Books. In general, things that modify combat include:

**Movement.** Movement affects ranged combat, making targets harder to hit, but has no effect on hand-to-hand (melee) combat.

**Armor.** Depending on the universe, characters may have some kind of armor, be it the leather and metal of fantasy or the spun-fiber body armor of s-f. Most armor reduces the amount of damage caused by a hit. However, a few types—particularly things such as magnetic force fields or slippery suits—may make the PC physically harder to hit. These types of armor modify the attacker's chance to hit.

**Cover.** The most common kind of protection is something to hide behind—preferably something solid, so your PC can't be hurt. Cover is

divided into *soft* and *hard* types. Soft cover is anything your PC can shoot through that still conceals the target: tall grass, bushes, curtains, leaves, even smoke are all types of soft cover. Soft cover reduces the attacker's chance to hit. Hard cover is anything solid that conceals the target: tree trunks, sandbags, rocks, and walls, for example. Hard cover has modifiers like soft cover, and may limit the target areas that can be chosen. What can't be seen, can't be shot.

## Damage

Every weapon in a given universe, be it accelerated magnetic field rifle firing depleted uranium flechettes, enchanted saber, or fist, is rated for damage.

Damage is given as two numerals: a die range for the points of damage caused, and a *lethality rating*. For example, in *For Faerie, Queen, and Country*, the service revolver's damage is 2d6/5. It causes 2—12 points of damage per hit and has a lethality rating of 5. Whenever a hit is scored, the dice are rolled and that amount is subtracted from the target's stamina or body points.

**Lethality Ratings:** It is possible to seriously injure someone with anything, but it is a lot easier with some weapons than others. A hit from a club hurts, but most often only raises ugly bruises, while a shotgun blast tends to have far more fatal effects. The differences between weapons are reflected, in part, by their lethality ratings: the chance that any hit causes body damage instead of the usual stamina damage.

Each time you roll for a hit, you must note not only whether your PC hit or missed, but (if she did hit) what the 1s digit on the roll was. If this number is equal to or less than the lethality rating of the weapon (modified by the target area chosen), the damage caused by this hit is subtracted from the target's body points. Otherwise, all damage comes from the target's stamina points. Lethality ratings can never be less than 1 or greater than 10 (0 on the die).

## Experience

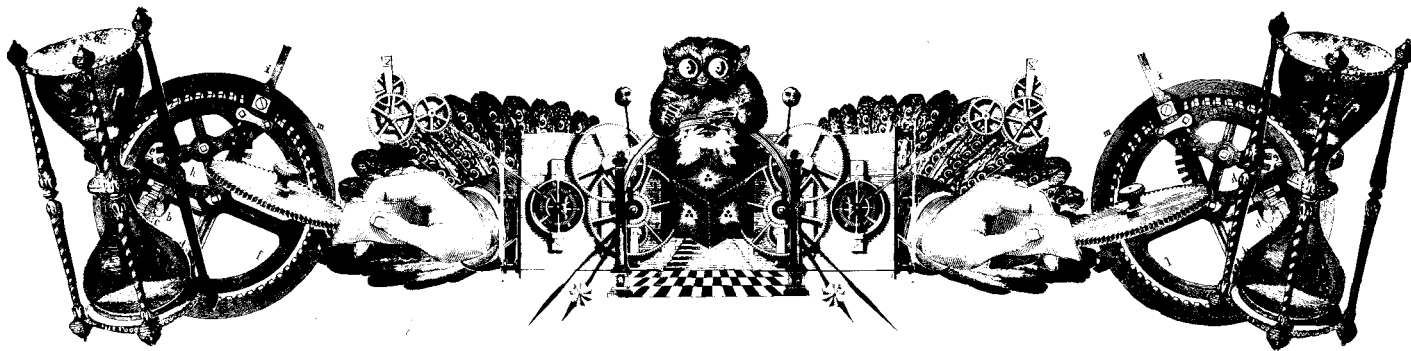
Part of every RPG is improving your character: increasing attribute scores and adding skills. This is done by earning experience points (*xps*) to be used by the character. Experience points are a simple way to measure all the intangible things your PC gains from surviving dangerous adventures, risking heroic perils, and "living" an everyday life through your role-playing. After all, it stands to reason that when your PC talks her way past a spaceport customs inspector, survives a dangerous shootout, or uses her skills, she improves. Her hand-eye coordination might get a little better, her confidence might grow. Experience points are a way to measure these slow improvements.

## The Goals of the Game

Experience points are not the be-all and end-all of role-playing. If you hope to be a good player (or already are one), then your reasons for playing should go deeper than merely earning more experience points







and making your PC more powerful.

A role-playing game is a *game*, first and foremost, and games are meant to be fun.

This should be obvious, but too often it is easy to lose sight of this fact in the pursuit of more experience points for your PC. Good players don't focus on the powers and items their PCs possess, whom they have defeated, or what they might control. Naturally, they strive for these things, but they also act out their character's personality, get involved in the stories, and work with the GM and other players. For these players, it is perfectly possible to have an exciting, enjoyable game session without ever once earning a single experience point for their characters.

Place the following goals above the mere "earning" of experience points. If you do, rewards for you and your character will come automatically.

*Have a good time playing.*

*Act the part of your character.*

*Don't let your good time ruin everyone else's fun.*

## Awarding and Earning Experience

It is not the place of this rules section to list everything a PC can do to earn experience points. In fact, because the AMAZING ENGINE™ game system has so many different universes, a single list is impossible. Your PC can't earn experience for fixing a computer when you're playing in a fantasy setting of faeries and bogarts.

Each universe has its own list of experience point awards, designed to suit the needs of that universe. In a setting where high-tech space marines battle hideous aliens, combat is important. Players can expect characters to be rewarded for showing tactical skill, surviving battles, and defeating enemies. At the other extreme, another universe casts the PCs as ambassadors and detectives in a fairy-filled England. Shooting an attendant of Queen Maeve's court or blowing up a fairy ring with a keg of gunpowder is not the goal of that universe. Instead, players are rewarded for talking their way through sticky situations, preventing wars, and solving problems. The experience awards for the former setting will not work for the latter. Nonetheless, all share some general features.

Successful adventures. In any universe, a successful adventure warrants some experience points. "Success" depends on the universe and the adventure. Sometimes, it's enough to survive; in other cases, a specific foe must be defeated or a problem solved.

Using skills. People learn by doing. In the AMAZING ENGINE system, this is noted by rewarding characters with xps for using their skills in ways relevant to the adventure. "Relevant" means your PC can't just spend the day shooting at bottles to increase his Combat skill; bottles don't shoot back, after all. (If the skill were Target Shooting, it'd be a different story.) Using the skill has to involve some real chance of failure or risk for the character.

Role-playing. This is the object of the AMAZING ENGINE system, so good role-playing is rewarded with xps. This is a highly subjective GM call. It depends on the personality you have established for your

character, the GM, and the situation at the moment. Good role-playing also means keeping what you as a *player* know separate from what *your character* knows. As a player, you know that sticking your hand into a fire is a Bad Idea, but your PC, Oog the caveman, discoverer of fire, hasn't learned that lesson—yet.

## Experience and Multiple Universes

In most RPGs, you play only a single character at a time, and so only have to track the xps earned by that character. In this system, however, situations are often different. The most common possibility is that you will play in one universe, where your PC earns some xps, and then change to a different universe. What happens to all the xps your PC has earned to date? Few players want to give up all their advantages and start over. In this system, you don't have to.

Whenever your PC earns experience in an AMAZING ENGINE universe, *you must immediately assign the xps to either your current player character* (the one who earned the xps) *or to the player core* from which that character was created. Points assigned to the core are forever beyond the reach of your current player character. These points can only benefit characters created from this core in future sessions. Points assigned to your PC are available for immediate use, but cannot be given later to another PC in a different universe.

Within these two areas—player core and player character—you have four options for assigning experience points. With points assigned to the player character, you can *tax* the character's attributes, spending xps during play to temporarily increase attribute scores; or, you can use these xps to make permanent improvements to your existing character. With the points you give to the player core, you can buy extra dice for that core, thereby improving future characters created from it, or transfer xps to a new character in the same (or different) universe.

## Taxing Attributes

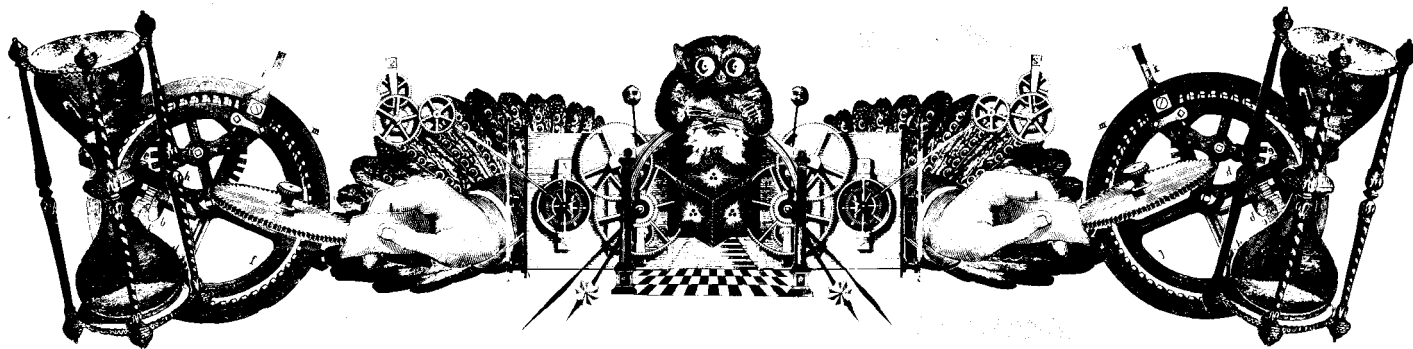
The most immediate use of experience points is spending them during the course of play to temporarily increase an attribute score. This is called *taxing* your PC—forcing her to think a little more or strain a little harder. Taxing can increase her chance of success with a skill: pour on that extra burst of speed in a chase, or make a heroic effort to lift a great weight, for example.

When you want to tax your character, you must tell the GM *before rolling any dice*. Once the dice are rolled, your chance has passed, so be ready to decide quickly. At the same time, you should tell the GM how many xps you want to spend in the effort.

There are three limitations on how many xps you can use to modify the character's attribute score.

1. Your PC must have unused xps to spend on the attempt. (This applies to all uses of xps. There is no such thing as "negative experience.")
2. Experience points are spent in increments of 5: 5, 10, 15, etc.
3. Experience points spent in a taxing attempt cannot exceed 50% of the original attribute score. This means that the modified score





cannot exceed 150% of the original. Numbers are rounded down, to the nearest multiple of 5. For examples, see "Pushing the Limits" under "Movement," and "Example: Taxing an Attribute," under "Tables, Charts, and Examples."

Experience points spent to improve an attribute check are subtracted from the PC's xp total, regardless of the check's success or failure.

## Improving Your Character

A more permanent method of improving your PC is buying points to add to your character's attribute scores. Unlike modifying an attribute score (taxing), these purchases are permanent. They are also more costly. The cost of these improvements varies from universe to universe. In one, it may cost 3 xps to raise an attribute 1 point; in another, the same change might cost 10 xps.

There are two limitations on buying increased attribute scores.

1. No attribute score can be increased beyond 90.
2. Permanent improvements cannot be bought during the course of an adventure. They can only be purchased after your PC has had time to reflect on her accomplishments.

Increases bought in this way are permanent for your character. Erase the old attribute score and write down the new one, then subtract the xps spent from the character's total.

Players can also buy new skills for their characters, improving their PCs by increasing the range of their knowledge and ability. The xp costs for buying skills can vary widely from skill to skill and universe to universe. Costs and procedures are described in each Universe Book, as needed.

## Improving the Player Core

For long-term planning, you can look beyond your immediate character and instead assign points to your player core. With these points, you can buy additional dice for your ability pools. The purchase of additional dice has no effect on current characters; it only helps those created from the improved core in future universes and game sessions.

Each die of improvement to an ability pool costs 100 xps. Since improvements to the player core have no effect on your current PC, this kind of purchase can be made at any time.

Although theoretically the number of dice you can buy for a single ability pool is limited to 10 (allowing you to assign 5 to both attributes, the maximum allowable), a specific AMAZING ENGINE™ universe may set different ability pool or attribute limits on characters in that universe. It is best to check with the GM before over-investing in an ability pool for your character.

Without special Universe Book modifications, it is possible (eventually) to purchase dice for each ability pool sufficient to negate the use of the 7 "free" dice. However, this requires many, many game sessions' worth of xps, which must be assigned to the player core and not the PC who earned the xps. In general, we suggest that player cores reaching this limit (and the PCs created from them) be retired permanently, and that players create new cores and new prime characters. This

eventuality is not covered within these rules. GMs are free to design their own rules to deal with this situation, when and if it occurs within their campaigns.

## Transfer to New Characters

One unique feature of this game system is the opportunity to role-play in a variety of universes. In other RPGs, this means giving up any experience your character has earned. In essence, all the time you spent playing comes to naught when you start in a new world.

That is not the case in the AMAZING ENGINE system.

Each time you create a new character from an existing core, you can transfer xps from the core to the new character, with the following limitations:

1. The new character must come from the same core as the previous character (the one that earned the experience).
2. The two characters cannot be active in the same universe. A new PC from an existing core can appear in the same universe as a previous PC from the same core *only if the previous character is dead or permanently retired.*

Thus, in the MAGITECH™ game universe, your new PC could profit from the adventures of that marine sergeant from that old BUGHUNTERS™ game. Treat the transfer like a withdrawal from a bank account. The points you assign to the new PC cannot be "redeposited" later on, but new xps can be earned by the new PC and assigned to the player core (or to the new player character, as you choose). See "Example: Assigning Experience Points," later in this section.

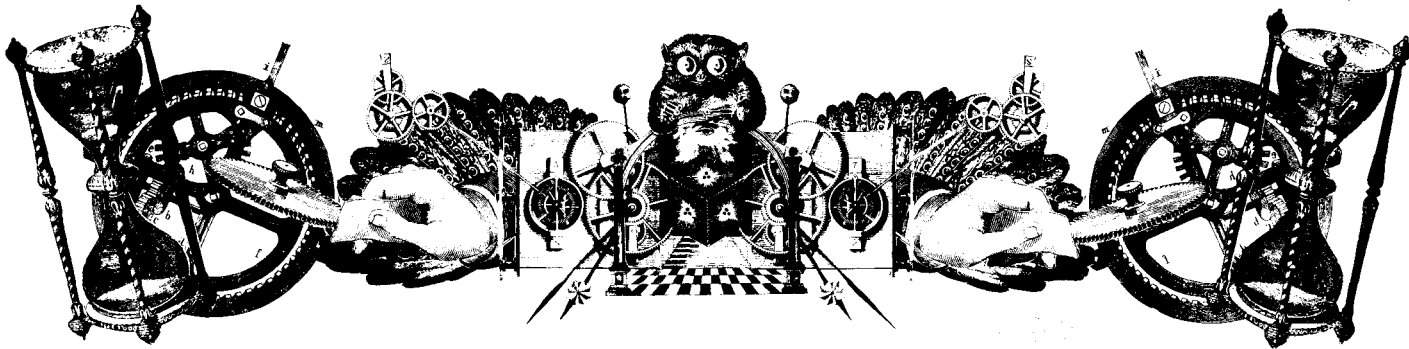
## Experience and Character Death

Unpleasant as the thought is, your PCs can (and will) die. When this happens, any experience assigned to that player character is lost, assuming you haven't used it all trying to keep the PC alive. Experience points assigned to the player core are *not* lost. These can be used by future characters created from the same core.

## Tables, Charts, and Examples

The remainder of the rules section contains a complete example of character generation; reference tables and charts for the player core, movement rates, and carrying capacity; and text examples of various game-play situations showing application of taxing, skill checks, and more. You can use this section in several ways: read it in its entirety now, before continuing with the rest of the book; read only the parts that interest you, saving the rest for when you really need them; or ignore it, and turn to it later when you've become hopelessly lost. Seriously, though, if you need clarification on any of the points covered in the previous pages, the answers are probably in this section.





## Example: Character Generation

Wolfgang is ready to create his first character for an AMAZING ENGINE™ game, and so he spends a little time thinking about what he wants. Having just read an interesting story about thieves, Wolfgang decides he would like a confidence man, a smooth-talking, quick-fingered individual with a modest chance for magical skill.

Based on his ideal con man, Wolfgang must decide how to rank the four ability pools. Since he wants his PC to be a very smooth talker, somewhat light-fingered, with a smattering of mystical ability, he rates the pools like this:

Physique: 2 (+10 points)  
 Intellect: 4 (+0 points)  
 Spirit: 3 (+5 points)  
 Influence: 1 (+15 points)

Remember, the pool rated 1 has the best chance for high scores; the pool rated 4 has the lowest chance.

Wolfgang now selects four attributes as his primary concerns. Since he really wants to have a personable character, he chooses Charm. To ensure his light-fingered abilities, his second choice is Reflexes. After pondering, Wolfgang realizes his character could end up short in street smarts, so he chooses Intuition, even though it is in his lowest-ranked ability pool (Intellect). For his fourth choice, he decides to take a chance and selects Position, so he can have a sophisticated con artist. He then rolls 4d10 for each attribute, with the following results:

Reflexes: 31  
 Intuition: 28  
 Charm: 17  
 Position: 23

Wolfgang now fills out the remaining attribute scores by rolling 3d10 for each and noting the numbers. When he is finished, his sheet looks like this:

Physique	Intellect	Spirit	Influence
Rank: 2	Rank: 4	Rank: 3	Rank: 1
Dice:	Dice:	Dice:	Dice:
Fitness: 16	Learning: 23	Psyche: 21	Charm: 17
Reflexes: 31	Intuition: 28	Willpower: 7	Position: 23

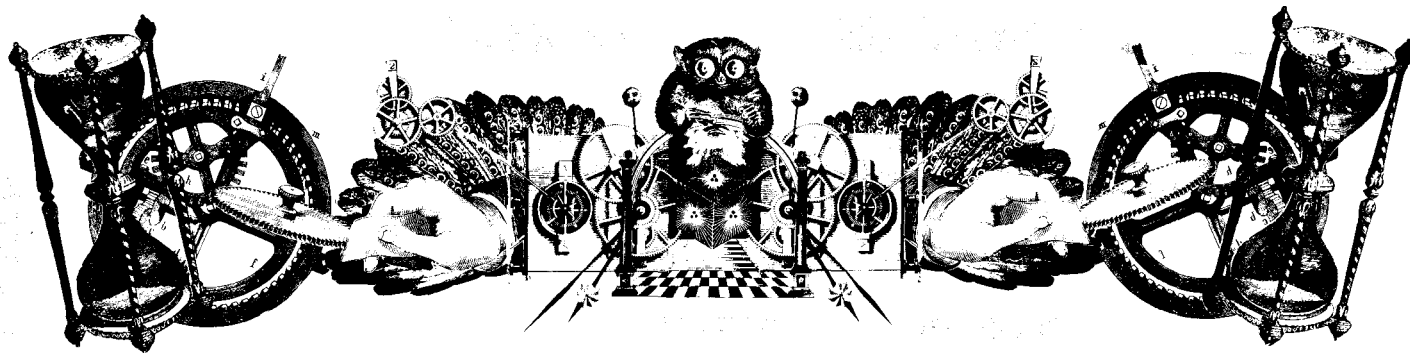
Now, it's time to add the die modifiers according to the ability pools' ranking. Wolfgang starts with his first-ranked pool, Influence. He had bad luck rolling for Charm (and he really wants a personable character), so he adds all 15 points to Charm. In Physique, Fitness is a little low, so he splits the 10 available points between Fitness and Reflexes, 5 each. Under Spirit, the character's Willpower is dangerously low, so Wolfgang feels he has no choice but to add all 5 points to that score even though he would like a better Psyche. He rolled well for his Intellect attributes, which is fortunate since he cannot modify either score (it's the fourth-ranked pool, which gains no modifiers).

Physique	Intellect	Spirit	Influence
Rank: 2	Rank: 4	Rank: 3	Rank: 1
Dice:	Dice:	Dice:	Dice:
Fitness: 21	Learning: 23	Psyche: 21	Charm: 32
Reflexes: 36	Intuition: 28	Willpower: 12	Position: 23

Looking over his character's final attributes, Wolfgang decides the PC is nimble-fingered (high Reflexes) and smooth (good Charm), with a good sense for danger (from his good Intuition). His character is not the strongest or healthiest (only average Fitness), and he needs to work on his psychic abilities (only average Psyche). Finally, with a Willpower of 12, Wolfgang decides his con man is something of a craven fellow, who more often than not "runs away to live to fight another day."







Having created his PC's statistics, Wolfgang now finishes creating the player core by assigning the dice ratings to each ability pool.

Physique	Intellect	Spirit	Influence
Rank: 2	Rank: 4	Rank: 3	Rank: 1
Dice: 6	Dice: 6	Dice: 4	Dice: 6
Fitness: 21	Learning: 23	Psyche: 21	Charm: 32
Reflexes: 36	Intuition: 28	Willpower: 12	Position: 23
$(21+36)/10=5.7$	$(23+28)/10=5.1$	$(21+12)/10=3.3$	$(32+23)/10=5.5$

After running a fantasy campaign for some time, Wolfgang's GM decides to switch to a science-fiction universe. Since there is no magic in this s-f setting (and since he's getting tired of playing thieves and scoundrels), Wolf once more chooses a role he might like to play. Knowing from his player core that his PCs will tend to be strong in Physique and Influence, Wolf decides to try for a hard-bitten smuggler captain. Checking his player core's xp total, he sees that there are 150 points he can work with. Since his Spirit pool tends to be weak (just because of bad dice rolls), he decides to purchase 1 additional die for that pool. He crosses off 100 xps (the cost of 1 improvement die) from the player core's total, and adds 1 die to the dice rating for his core's Spirit pool. Then, he divides his pool dice according to the dice ratings, and then assigns his 7 "free" dice to Fitness (2), Willpower (3, because it was very low), and Position (2).

Physique	Intellect	Spirit	Influence
Rank: 2	Rank: 4	Rank: 3	Rank: 1
Dice: 6	Dice: 6	Dice: 5	Dice: 6
Fitness: 5 dice	Learning: 3 dice	Psyche: 3 dice	Charm: 4 dice
Reflexes: 3 dice	Intuition: 3 dice	Willpower: 5 dice	Position: 4 dice

After all the dice are assigned, this PC's Fitness and Willpower attributes have the maximum number of dice allowed (5). Wolf rolls and notes the totals for each attribute score, with the following results:

Fitness: 26	Learning: 18	Psyche: 23	Charm: 24
Reflexes: 13	Intuition: 29	Willpower: 17	Position: 25

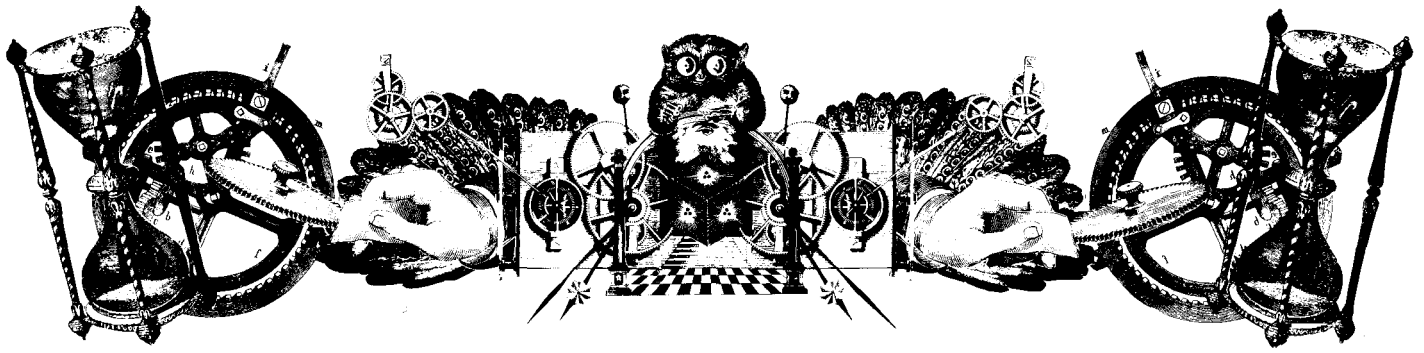
Once again, he rolled incredibly well for Intuition and not so hot for Willpower. Looking at his new character, he starts with the first-ranked ability pool, Influence. For this universe, he wants an important character and so puts all 15 points toward Position. In the second-ranked Physique pool, he puts 4 points to Fitness and 6 to Reflexes, while for the third-ranked Spirit, he gives all 5 points to Willpower.

Fitness: 30	Learning: 18	Psyche: 23	Charm: 24
Reflexes: 19	Intuition: 29	Willpower: 22	Position: 40

Wolf decides to transfer the remaining 50 xps from the player core to this new character, making those points immediately available during play (for taxing attributes, just in case). Wolf might also choose to use some of those xps to purchase some new skills for this PC, after his first adventure is completed. He notes the 50 xps on the new character's sheet, and subtracts them from the player core's total.

With these adjustments, Wolfgang's new character is ready for play.





## Movement Rates

Movement Type	Distance per:		Duration	Fitness Check
	Turn	Minute		
Walk	15 m.	90 m.	Indefinite	None
Run	Fitness	Fitness x 6	Minutes = Fitness	Yes
Sprint	Fitness x2	Fitness x 12*	Turns = Fitness/10	Yes

\* If character has sufficient duration.

## Carrying Capacity

Kilos Equal to:	Effect on Movement:
Fitness score	No effect
Fitness score X 2	Sprinting and running halved
Fitness score X 3	No sprinting or running allowed, must rest after walking meters = Fitness score

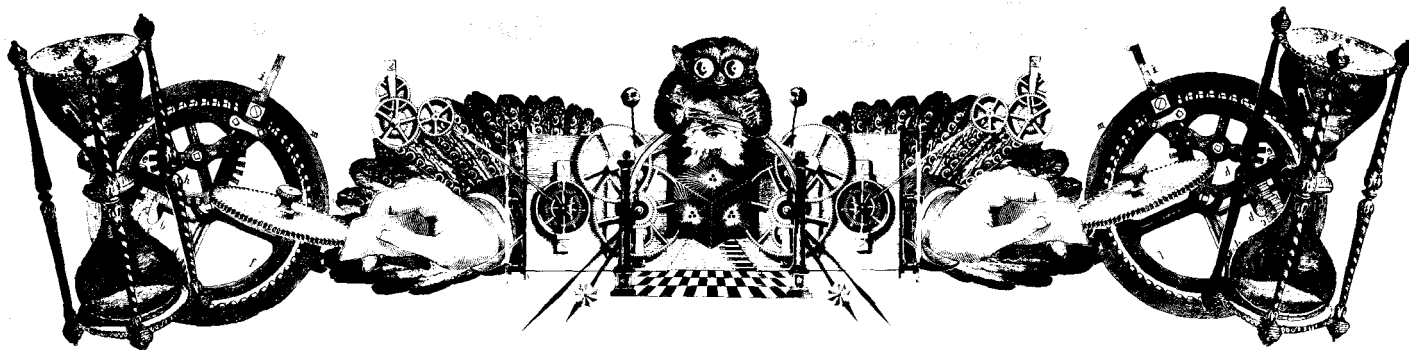
## Target Modifiers

Target Area	Chance to Hit	Dam. Effect
General	Reflexes	None
Non-vital	50% Reflexes	-2 to type
Vital	10% Reflexes	+3 to type

## Advantage Outcomes

Condition		NPC		
		Successful Psyche Check	Failed Psyche Check	95-00
L A Y E R	Successful Psyche Check	No advantage	Player has advantage	Player has surprise
	Failed Psyche Check	NPC has advantage	No advantage	No advantage
	95-00	NPC has surprise	No advantage	No advantage





### Example: Skill Checks

Karen's character, Leonardo "Big Shark" Accardo, needs to make a hasty getaway from the law. Flying Carpet skill, which Leo has, is Reflex-based. Karen knows Leo's Reflexes score is 36.

Wasting no time, Leo jumps onto his Mach flying carpet, recites a quick incantation, and zips into traffic on Michigan Avenue.

**No skill check required.** Starting and flying the carpet is a common enough action, one Leo does every day, hence no skill check is needed.

As he weaves through the late rush hour traffic, Leo looks back. Chicago's finest are in hot pursuit. Leo's in trouble! He can't outrun a police special carpet, especially not in this traffic. His only hope is to lose them with some quick turns. A gap in the traffic appears just ahead, so the Big Shark commands his carpet to pour it on. He darts across the lanes and whips onto a side street faster than is safe.

**Skill check required.** Karen is having her character take a chance, the equivalent of skidding around a corner during a high-speed car chase. She rolls percentile dice and gets a 21, which is (ess than Leo's Reflexes score. The move succeeds, and Leo doesn't crash his carpet.

White-knuckled, Leo careens around the corner, narrowly missing an oncoming bus golem and the plate glass window of Bessom's Department Store. Unfortunately, the cops make the turn too, and are now gaining on him. Still speeding, Leo banks his carpet again, this time aiming for an alley. Just as he begins the turn, a giant steps from a service entrance, blocking the opening! It's too late to change course, so the only thing Leo can do is try to shoot between the fellow's legs.

**Modified skill check required.** Taking the turn too fast already required a skill check, so the GM assigns a-10 penalty for the added trick of trying to steer between the giant's legs. This reduces Leo's Reflexes score to 26 for this skill check. Karen rolls 57 on percentile dice. The check fails; Leo doesn't make it.

Oh no! Startled, the giant instinctively moves to protect himself, closing the gap Leo was aiming for. Too late to stop, the carpet hits the brute right at his knees, and crumples like a limp rag. As Leo is flung from the crash, he hears the howls of the police as they, too, bank into the pileup.

### Example: Skill Check with Penalty for Nonspecialization

Leo has a tip on a shipment of smuggled magical artifacts stored in a warehouse near the trainyards, just the evidence he needs to spring his client. All he has to do is break in and get a few pictures. That night at the back door, Leo figures he ought to check for burglar alarms before forcing his way in. Leo knows the basics of glyphs (Glyph Analysis skill), but is no expert in burglar alarms (Protection Glyph specialization). Checking the door for alarms is pretty basic for a specialist, but for Leo a skill check against his Learning score (which is only a 23,

with an additional -5 for nonspecialization) is required. The check is rolled, and the result is a 12: Success! Sure enough, the door is enchanted.

Now, Leo tries to deactivate the alarm. This requires a skill check for a specialist, and so is very difficult for Leo. The check is made with a -15 applied to the attribute score (-5 for nonspecialization, -10 for the action) for a total chance of success of 8 or less. Amazingly, Karen rolls a 04! Leo manages to temporarily dispel the alarm.

### Example: Attempting an Unknown Skill

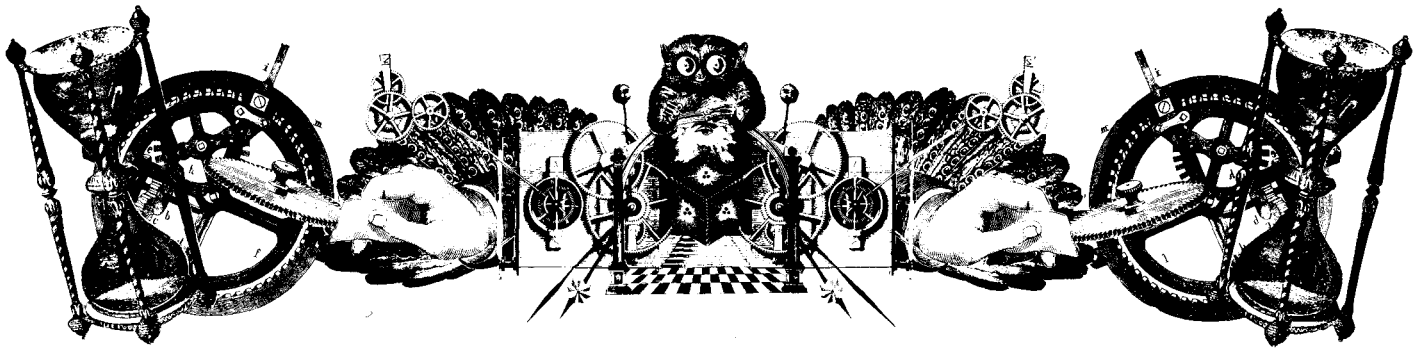
Once inside the warehouse, Leo begins searching through the crates. Suddenly, just as he finds a suspicious one labeled "Excalibur," a foot-step scrapes behind him. Leo spins, pulling his gun as he does, to find himself facing a centaur thug. A quick hoof kick sends Leo sprawling, his gun clattering across the floor. A second blow just misses, shattering the crate next to his head and spilling the contents—the sword—half out of the box. In desperation, Leo grabs the sword and pulls it from the box. "Ain't the same as bullets, but you'll have to do." As he clumsily swings the sword up over his head, it begins to glow.

Karen never thought her character would need a sword, so Leo doesn't have Fencing skill. However, since Fencing is a nonLearning-based skill (one that uses Reflexes), Leo can attempt swordfighting—but at an 18, half his normal Reflexes score.

### Example: Taxing an Attribute

In a campaign of *For Faerie, Queen, and Country*, Karen's character, Colonel Sir Jameson Pickering, K.C.M.G., ret., suddenly senses a wave of magical power while attending an important diplomatic ball. Frantically looking about, he sees the villainous sorceress, Countess Angevin, standing in the shadows on the portico. Their eyes meet and before Sir Jameson can warn anyone, a magical paralysis creeps over his limbs as the countess imposes her seductive will. The situation is dire, so Karen decides it's time to tax Sir Jameson's Willpower to break the spell. The normal attribute check to resist possession is equal to the Willpower score halved. Sir Jameson's Willpower is 46, halved to 23 for the check. Karen looks at the available xps assigned to Sir Jameson, and decides to spend the maximum (50% of the original attribute score, or 20 points) to bring the relevant attribute score back to 43 for this check only. The dice roll is a 32; with strain, Sir Jameson breaks the countess's gaze and makes his way into the drawing room for a cigar.





### Example: Assigning Experience Points

Michele's character, Pit. Sgt. Adrian 2 Selinko, United Terra Reconnaissance and Peacekeeping Force, has just returned to the "booze barge" (as UTRPFers refer to their HQ on Earth's L-5 station) from a bug-hunting mission on a mining outpost at Barnard's Star. The GM awards experience for that mission, and Sgt. Selinko receives 75 xps for repulsing a swarm of chitinous predators. Michele must assign the xps immediately, so she adds 50 points to Adrian's xp total (the player character) and the remaining 25 to the Player Core XP line on her character sheet.

The 50 points assigned directly to Adrian can be used for taxing attributes during the course of an adventure, or for purchasing increased attribute scores after the adventure is completed. The 25 points assigned to the player core will never affect Adrian directly, but will benefit future characters created from the same core.

### Example: Damage and Lethality Rating

WO1 Selinko watches in horror as the xenofoms outmaneuver her squad, three of the creatures lunging in for the kill.

*The GM roils three attacks, one for each stalker, and decides that all attacks will be at general target areas, as this is easiest. The stalkers have Reflexes of 62. The die rolls are 83, 17, and 23, so two of the creatures hit and one misses. Each attack causes 3d6 points of damage and has a lethality rating of 4. The first hit (17) causes 6 points of stamina damage, subtracted from the trooper's total of 25. The second attack does 8 points of body damage (not the standard stamina damage, because the 1s digit—a 3—was less than the lethality rating of 4), but the trooper only has 7 body points. The extra damage is ignored.*

One of the soldiers reels back, cut, but not seriously, by a xenofom's slashing claws. The other trooper isn't so lucky, as a stalker strikes him dead in front of platoon leader Selinko.

"Eat this," she snarls while unloading her flechette clip into the creature's gaping maw.

## AMAZING ENGINE™ Role-Playing System Player Core Sheet

Physique	Intellect	Spirit	Influence
Rank:	Rank:	Rank:	Rank:
Dice:	Dice:	Dice:	Dice:
Fitness:	Learning:	Psyche:	Charm:
Reflexes:	Intuition:	Willpower:	Position:

Player Core xps:





## **Introduction:** **The Once and Future King Universe**

Now we turn to Sir Lancelot, who rode with a damsel upon a fair highway.

"Sir," said the damsel, "here by this way a knight lurks who distresses all ladies and gentlewomen, and at the least he robs them or accosts their virtue."

"What?" said Sir Lancelot, "is he a knight and a thief and a ravisher of women? He shames the order of knighthood, and is contrary to his oath. Fair damsel, ride on ahead by yourself and I will conceal myself here, and if he troubles or distresses you, I shall ride to your rescue and teach him to behave as a knight should."

So the maiden rode ahead. And in a short while, a knight on hoversteed emerged from the woods, accompanied by his technician, and he forced the maid from her robohorse.

With that, Sir Lancelot came as fast as he could, saying, "O, false knight, who taught you to mistreat gentlewomen in this fashion?"

When the knight saw Sir Lancelot, he did not answer, but ignited his lasersword and rode towards him. Sir Lancelot threw his energylance aside and ignited his own lasersword, and struck the false knight such a blow that his head and neck were cloven in half.

"Thus are you given the payment you have long deserved," said Sir Lancelot. "Now damsel, will you have any further service from me?"

"Nay sir," she replied, "but may the First Avatar protect you, for you are truly a courteous knight to ladies and gentlewomen everywhere."

So the lady and Sir Lancelot parted company. Then he traveled to the kingdom of Surluise on the planet Mars. After wandering there two days, he chanced upon a fair castle, and all the men, women, and children of the surrounding village cried out to Sir Lancelot, begging him to succor them. Sir Lancelot rode to the castle, where there was a wide courtyard. The knight dismounted from his hoversteed and armed himself, for he saw that this was a place for fighting.

No sooner had Sir Lancelot prepared himself then there came upon him two giants, well armored but for their heads, and each armed with a great club. Sir Lancelot put his forcesshield before him, and with one

stroke of his lasersword smote the head from one of the giants. When the second saw that, he ran away as fast as he could, for fear of Sir Lancelot's great prowess. Sir Lancelot quickly remounted his hoversteed and pursued the mechanical villain. When he caught up to the giant, he struck with all his might, and rent the giant's body from shoulder to navel.

Then Sir Lancelot returned to the castle, and three score ladies and damsels came and knelt before him, and thanked both the Higher Power and Sir Lancelot for their deliverance. The ladies told how many knights had attempted to win freedom for them and failed, and they asked for his name, so that they could tell all who it was that had delivered them from bondage.

"Fair ladies," he said, "I am Sir Lancelot du Lac."

"Ah sir," said the ladies, "we thought it must be you, for surely no other knight could have had the better of the two giants."

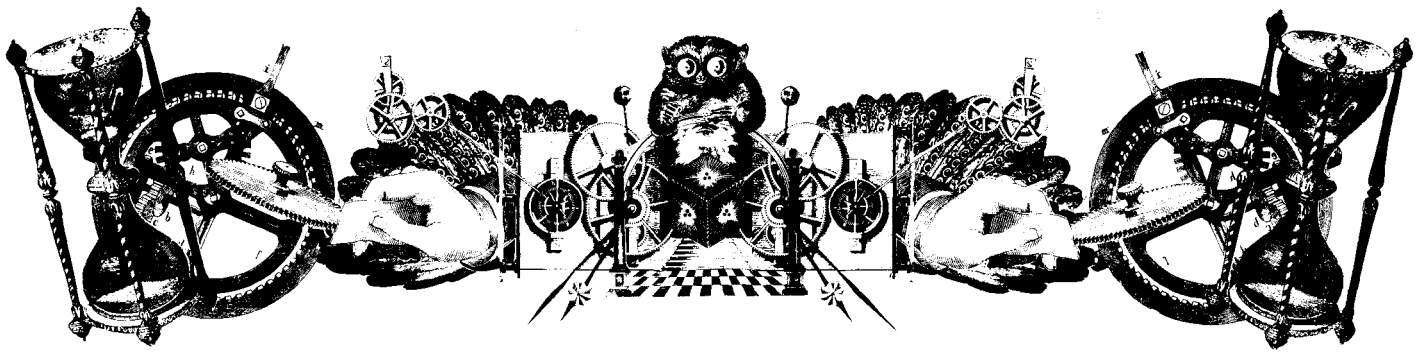
"Now you may say unto your friends who has delivered you," the knight replied, "and greet them all from me, and say that if I come to any of their lands, show me such cheer as they have cause. And in recompense for your long imprisonment, you may take what treasure you find in this castle, and I hope that whoever is lord of this castle will be restored to his own."

At that, Sir Lancelot remounted his hoversteed and continued on his quest for adventure.

—excerpted from *The Whole Book of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table*, published A.D. 4825

Welcome to the realm of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. You may find that many of the names and situations found in this book seem familiar to you, but in fact, this scenario is very different from any Arthurian legend you may know. This King Arthur does not live in a fantasy setting of the distant past, but rather in a high-technology science fiction setting of the distant future. This is the universe of *Once and Future King*, a role-playing game utilizing the AMAZING ENGINE<sup>1</sup> system.





The time is the distant future. Mankind has colonized most of the Solar System, and divided it into feudal kingdoms led by powerful warriors. The greatest of these warriors is King Arthur, ruler of the Holy Terran Empire, high king of the Solar System, and founder of the Round Table. Arthur's followers, the Knights of the Round Table, roam across the Solar System, battling evil knights, strange monsters, and ruthless technological wizards, in order to bring peace and safety to all.

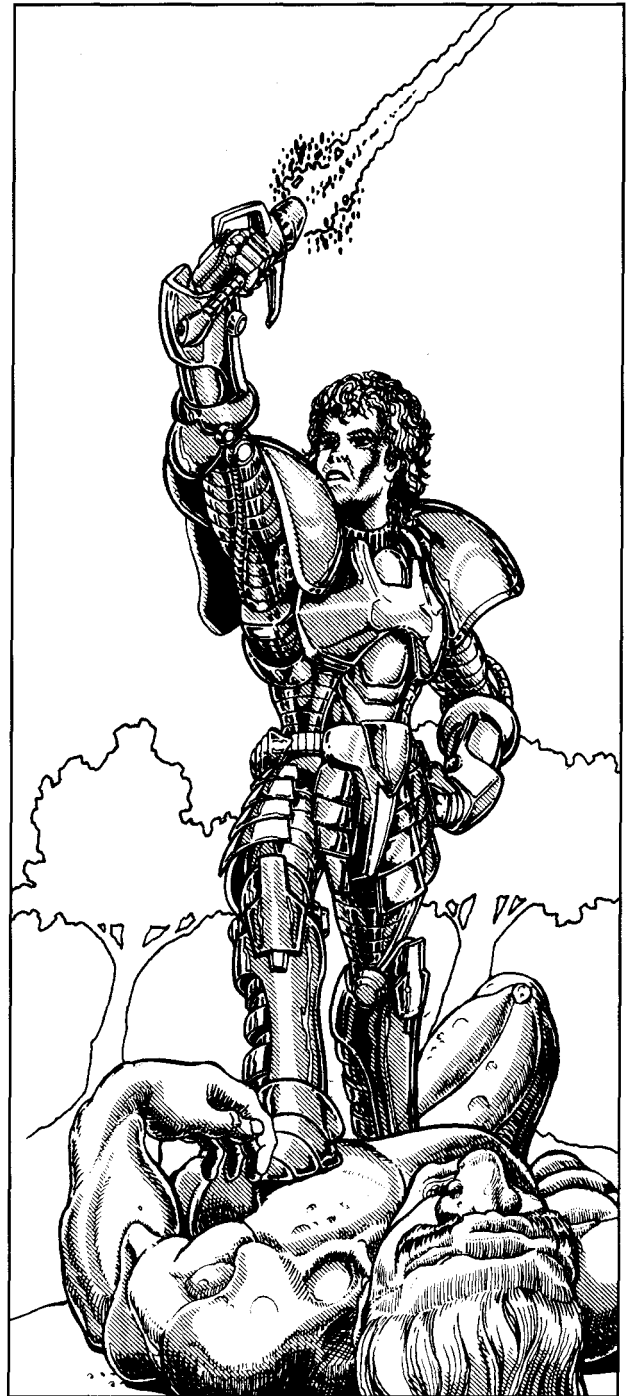
The mysterious technologists, trained in science and high technology at the secluded school of Avalon, assist (and sometimes oppose) the knights' efforts. These mighty wielders of technology possess knowledge so complex and so arcane that to others it seems like magic.

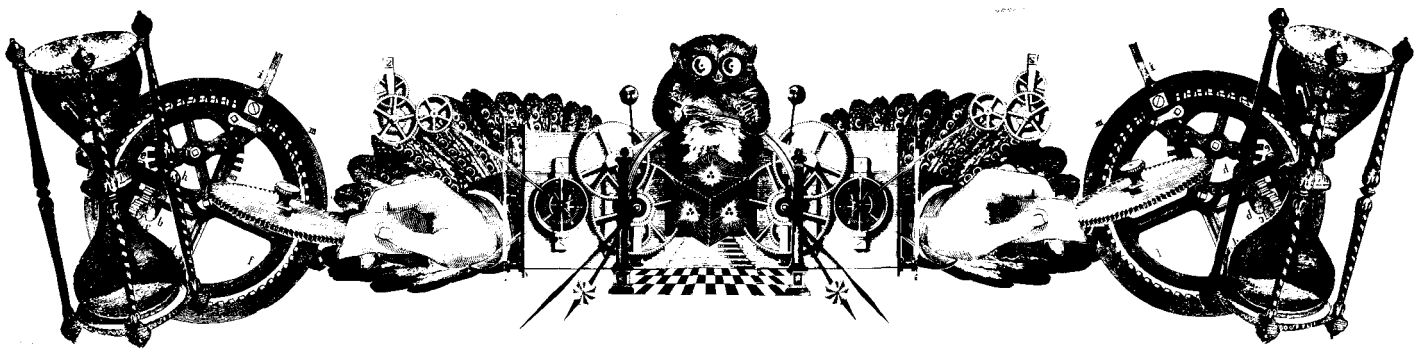
The knights' morality and ethical standards derive from devout devotion to the Theanthropy, a complex religious organization that has kept humanity united for centuries. The acolytes of the Theanthropy preach that only by observing the seven essential virtues (truth, wisdom, strength, hope, humility, faith, and courage) can mankind overcome its seven deadly enemies (pride, envy, greed, hatred, egotism, sloth, and injustice). In remote parts of the Solar System one may find wizened hermits, who have forsaken material things to pursue a spiritual life in accordance with the teachings of the Theanthropy.

Not all of King Arthur's enemies lie on the outer worlds, however. The court can be as exciting a place for adventure as the most remote frontier world. The court is the battleground of the nobility, where politics, betrayal, and intrigue can destroy kingdoms with greater speed and efficiency than the strongest army.

## About This Book

The following chapters will tell you everything you need to know to run and play an AMAZING ENGINE™ campaign in the *Once and Future King* world. In addition to rules for character creation, technology, and jousting, you will find a history of the realm of King Arthur, statistics for





many of the characters, good and evil, who inhabit the *Once and Future King* universe, and statistics for monsters and other creatures of the far future.

The *Once and Future King* world offers the challenge of playing characters with the same moral and ethical spirit of medieval knights, while interacting with a high-tech science-fiction world. Technology can achieve wondrous, amazing things, but it is no substitute for the human spirit.

## Terminology

Naturally, the scientific advances between the 20th and 46th centuries have contributed many new words and phrases that may not be familiar. Here follows a partial glossary of new words found in this book.

**acolyte:** A class of character professions. They are officials of the Theanthropy.

**android:** A mechanical life form in the shape of a human being.

**Avalon:** Space station permanently situated in sidespace. Home of a famous (and infamous) school of technology.

**Avatar, The:** Head of the Theanthropy.

**bezant:** A unit of currency.

**central mainframe:** A huge computer linking almost every computer in the Solar System together.

**courtier:** A class of character professions. Specifically, a courtier is a member of the ruling class who is not a knight.

**device:** A high-tech construction designed and built by a technologist.

**direct space:** Our three-dimensional universe. Used to distinguish this dimension from sidespace.

**dueling:** Combat between two knights using swords or other melee weapons.

**energylance:** A lance whose shaft is composed of laser energy.

**First Avatar, The:** Legendary founder of the Theanthropy. Credited with uniting humanity and saving Terra from World War III.

**forceshield:** A shield composed of laser energy.

**fusion drive:** Engines used to propel ships through direct space or sidespace.

**hermit:** A person who has forsworn material possessions and dedicated himself to spiritual pursuits.

**Holy Grail, The:** A cup from antiquity, believed by the Theanthropy to have the ability to transform a human into an enlightened being of pure light and energy. Allegedly lost when the First Avatar was killed.

**jousting:** A formalized method of combat used between knights.

**knight:** A class of character professions. Knights comprise a cadre of highly-trained and honorable warriors. They are usually descended from clones created to fight the Colonial Wars.

**lasersword:** A sword whose blade is composed of laser energy.

**Merlin:** An independent, artificially-intelligent computer program residing in the central mainframe.

**plastilance:** A lance made of tough polymers.

**plastisword:** A sword made of tough polymers.

**polyaluminum:** A very strong yet lightweight metal. Used extensively in armor and weapons.

**sidespace:** A bleak, gray dimension lying parallel to direct space. Distance in sidespace is relatively small compared to distance in direct space.

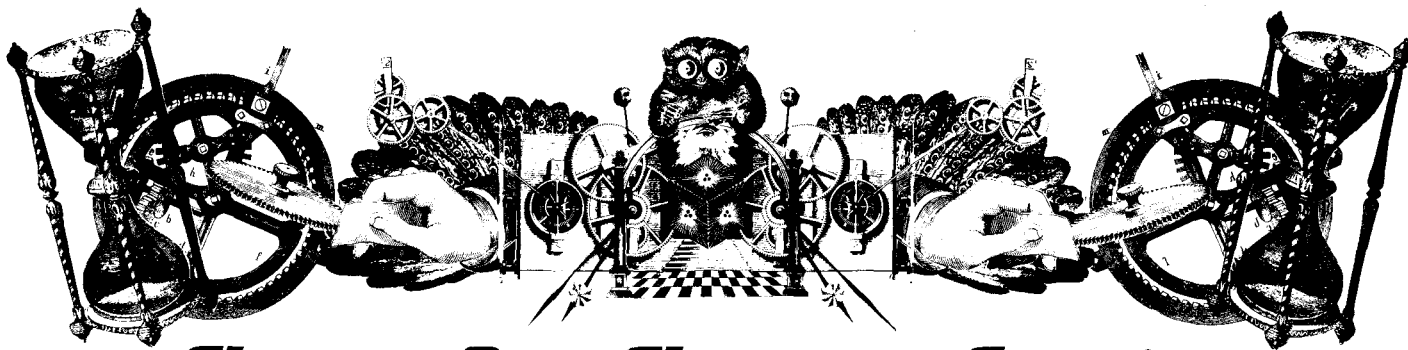
**sidespaceship:** A spacecraft with a sidespace displacement field generator. This field allows the craft to enter into sidespace.

**sourcerer:** A technologist who specializes in computer programming and operation. The name derives from the ability to rewrite source code programming.

**technologist:** A class of character professions. Technologists train to use and create technology. Graduates of the School of Avalon.

**Theanthropy, The:** The dominant religion among Terrans in the 46th century.

**tilting:** A chivalric form of combat in which knights try to knock each other from horseback by charging one another with lances.



## Chapter One: Character Creation

In the *Once and Future King* universe, unlike some other AMAZING ENGINE™ universes, it is important to have a general idea of what profession you want for your character before you generate his abilities and skills. A character could choose from four classes of professions: Knight, Technologist, Acolyte, or Courtier. After you determine your character's Attributes and skills, you should choose a specific profession for your character.

Use these rules in conjunction with the basic character creation rules found in the AMAZING ENGINE System Guide on pages 4-19 of this book. When creating a new character for this universe, use a copy of the character sheet found on page 144.

Knights are usually the most visible characters of *Once and Future King* adventures, since their armor and weaponry tend to make them stand out. However, their prominence does not relegate the other character professions to unimportant roles—in fact, most knights could not function without the support of the other character types. A balanced group of character classes makes for the best adventures.

Each of the four Ability Pools lends itself to one of the four profession classes. Knights are, as a rule, big and strong, and they are effective warriors. They generally have high Physique scores. Technology in the *Once and Future King* universe is so complex that only specialists trained from birth may devise and operate high-tech machines. These technologists are highly educated and intelligent, a fact reflected in their excellent Intellect scores. Spirituality plays a highly important role in the lives of all citizens of the 46th century, and acolytes of the Theanthropy guide the spiritual lives of the people. Because of the strict moral and ethical demands of the Theanthropy, acolytes have very good Spirit attributes. The royal court of King Arthur is home not only to knights, but to a wide variety of noblemen and noblewomen skilled in the talents of politics and intrigue. These courtiers tend to rely on their high Influence scores to advance their interests.

Each of the four profession classes comprises sev-

eral different professions. Which profession a character chooses depends on the wishes of the player and the specific goals of the GM's campaign. For example, a player's knight character could be a knight errant (one who owes allegiance to no one, but constantly seeks adventure), a Knight of the Round Table (one of King Arthur's most trusted knights), a squire (a knight-in-training), or a mercenary knight (one who serves a lord in exchange for money or other rewards). The specific professions available under each class appear in the Class Descriptions located on pages 25 through 33.

### Generating Attributes

To generate your character's attributes, follow the rules as presented in the AMAZING ENGINE System Guide. If your *Once and Future King* character will be your prime character, the following ranking setups should best prepare your player core for a *Once and Future King* campaign:

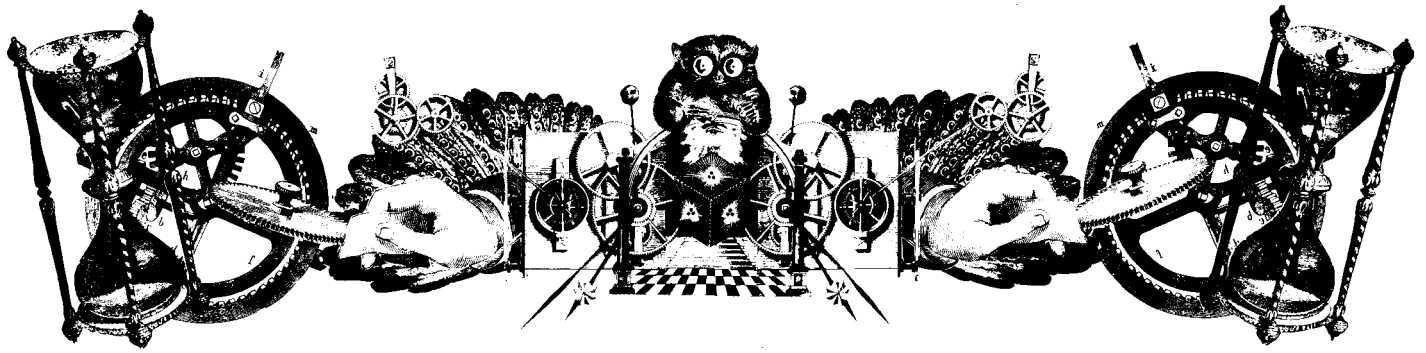
Table 1: Suggested Ability Pool Rankings

Profession	Phy.	Int.	Spr.	Infl.
Knight	1	4	2	3
Tech.	2	1	3	4
Acolyte	3	2	1	4
Courtier	4	2	3	1

Please note that these rankings are suggestions. For example, a player may want to have a knight character higher in Intellect, but lacking in Spirit, or she may want to play a technologist with more Influence than Physique.

After determining the character's attribute scores, roll 1 d10 and add the result to *either* of the attributes of his profession's primary Ability Pool. For example, a knight would add 1 d10 to either his Fitness or Reflexes attribute, *though not to both*. This extra die does not count toward determining the number of dice for the Player Pool, and does not exist outside of the *Once and Future King* universe. If your character





derives from a preexisting player core, (and therefore is *not* your prime character), the GM has the option not to allow this extra die roll. In any case, no attribute score may exceed 50.

## Rounding Out the Character

After determining your character's attribute scores, it is time to work on the particulars of your character.

### Species

All characters in the *Once and Future King* universe are either humans, genetically-enhanced clones, an interbreed of the two, or androids, an artificial humanoid life form.

*Pure humans* descend from the original inhabitants of the planet Earth. Pure humans tend to have a high Intellect and Spirit, but due to centuries of pacifistic indoctrination and peaceful coexistence they have become genetically incapable of violence. They simply cannot raise their hand against another, regardless of the provocation. A typical human lives approximately 100 years.

Human scientists originally created *clones* in an attempt to regain control of rebellious planetary colonies. The clones' genetic material came from 5th-century British warriors, and the scientists programmed the clones' minds with the practices of medieval chivalry in an attempt to keep them under control. Unfortunately, however, the clones wrested control from their pacifistic creators and conquered not only the planetary colonies, but all the nations of Terra, as well. Clones are generally stronger, faster, and tougher than humans, and much more aggressive as well. Since the scientists created very few female clones originally, there are not very many pure clones left. The life expectancy of a clone is roughly 250 years.

*Interbreeds* are those individuals who have both human and clone ancestors, keeping the best qualities of both. Interbreeds are stronger and more hardy than pure humans, and somewhat smarter than most

clones. At the same time, they are not quite as physically powerful as pure clones nor as intelligent as pure humans. Most PCs (except for technologists) will be this species. The average lifetime of an interbreed is 150 Terran years.

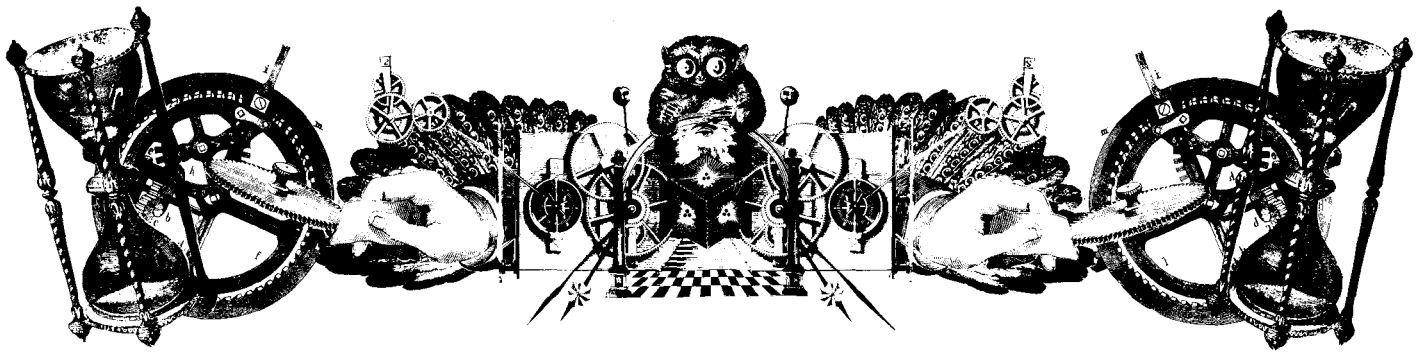
When the Terran Federation first unleashed its clone warriors on the rebellious colonies, most of the colonies responded by creating clone warriors of their own. One of the Saturn moon colonies, Titan, created a large force of humanoid machines, or *androids*, to fight for them. The Titanian scientists succeeded too well, and their androids became sentient, taking on a life of their own. The androids eventually became integrated into human society, but after several centuries, only a few thousand androids remain. Originally, all of the androids possessed identical faces and body structure, but as time passed, many of them chose to alter their appearance somewhat to express their individuality. Although strictly neuter in gender, many androids programmed their brains with gender-specific characteristics, and made matching physical changes. Other than their internal construction, two features distinguish androids from Terrans. First, an android's skin is light blue in color, a design feature meant to distinguish them from humans. Second, they do not share humanity's fundamental belief in the Theanthropy. They have adapted to human behavior patterns, but not to human spirituality; for this reason, many humans hold androids in contempt. Androids do not have a specific life span, but some of their mechanisms need replacing every 60 years to maintain peak performance. See Chapter Two for more information.

To determine your character's species, roll 1d100 and consult the following table:

Table 2: Species

Profession	Hum.	Clo.	Int.	And.
Knight		01-15	16-90	91-00
Tech.	01-75		76-95	96-00
Acolyte	01-30	31-50	51-00	
Courtier	01-35	36-65	65-90	91-00





## Handedness

Although not vitally important in the *Once and Future King* universe, you should note whether your character is left- or right-handed on your character sheet, just in case the GM needs to know. If your character is any variety of Terran (human, clone, or interbreed), you may choose whichever hand suits you. All androids are right-handed.

## Appearance & Personality

In any role-playing game scenario, it is important to visualize what your character looks like, how he reacts to other characters, and what his motivations are. The character sheet on page 144 provides space for you to note down your character's gender, height, weight, and hair and eye color, as well as a brief description of his or her physical appearance.

## Determining Stamina and Body Points

Your character's stamina and body points derive from his Fitness (F), Reflexes (R), and Willpower (W) scores. Your character's profession and species determine the formulae used based on the following charts.

Table 3: Stamina

Prof.	Hum.	C/o.	Int.	And.
Knight		$(R+W)+1.5$	$R+W$	$(R+W)+2$
Tech.	$(R+W)+4$		$(R+W)+3$	$(R+W)+2$
Acol.	$(R+W)+3$	$R+W$	$(R+W)+2$	
Cour.	$(R+W)/4$	$(R+W)/2$	$(R+W)/3$	$(R+W)/2$

Table 4: Body

Prof.	Hum.	C/o.	Int.	And.
Knight		$F/2.5$	$F/2$	$F/2$
Tech.	$F/3$		$F/2$	$F/2$
Acolyte	$F$	$F/2$	$F/1.5$	
Courtier	$F/3$	$F/2$	$F/2$	$F/2$

## Profession Class Descriptions

The following sections contain instructions to help the player determine a character's skills and profession, along with background on each of the profession classes. Note that even though each section includes a list of professions suitable for that class, a player is not limited specifically to those choices. For example, it is possible that a player may invent a unique Courtier profession not listed below. However, if a player decides to give her character a new profession, she should check with the GM to make certain the profession is acceptable.

## Knights

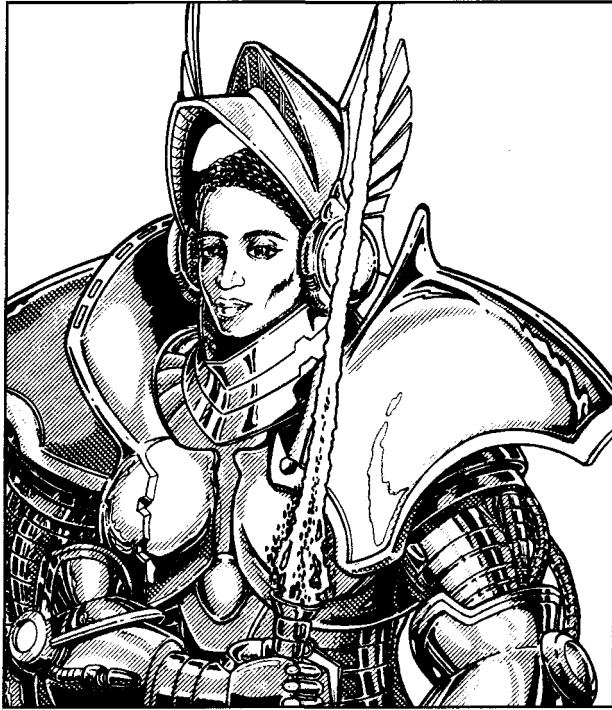
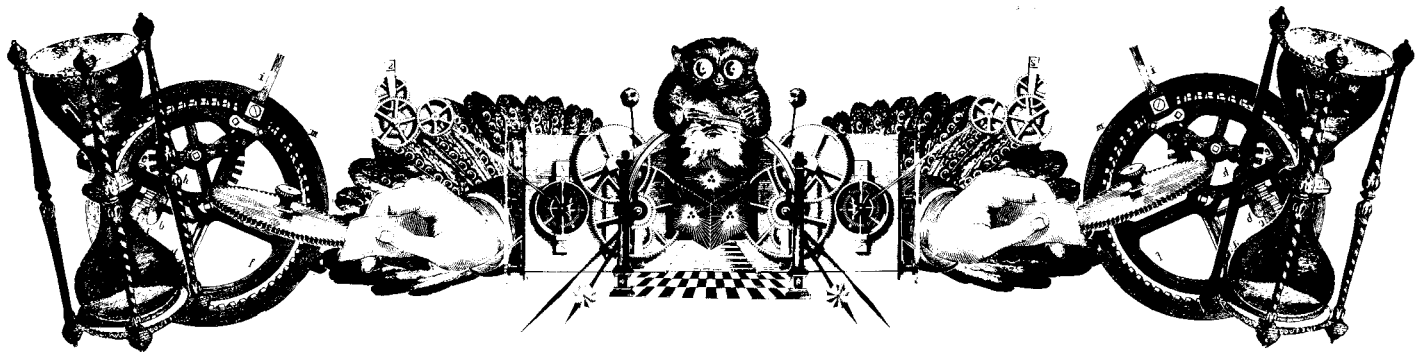
Knights are usually sons of the noble class (although on rare occasions, commoners of unusual skill and ability have been knighted; and more rarely, daughters have disguised themselves as sons in order to serve), raised from a young age to be warriors of surpassing strength, skill, and honor. They are the only class of citizen that has the right to wear armor and carry weapons. Along with this right come several responsibilities and expectations (see *The Code of Arms*, pg. 27).

## Starting Skills

After you have completed the generation of your knight's attribute scores, add together the Fitness and Reflexes scores and divide the sum by 10, rounding fractions down. You may now select this number of skills, subskills, and specialties from the Combat and Horsemanship skill groups (except Projectile Weapons). After selecting these skills, follow the rules in the System Guide to choose the remainder of the character's skills from any skill group. Note that a knight may never choose or learn any of the following skills (or their subskills): Projectile Weapons, Computer Programming, Seduction, Sidespaceship Maintenance, Land Vehicle Maintenance, Religious Practices, Psychology, Healing, Prophecy, or any Medicine or Sciences skill.







## Knight Professions

***Knight Errant*** The most common profession for knights, a knight errant roams the Solar System in search of adventure, owing allegiance to no single lord or king.

***Knight of the Round Table:*** Generally considered the highest honor a knight may achieve, the Knights of the Round Table are King Arthur's most valued and trusted knights. Usually, a character will not begin a campaign as a Round Table knight.

***Banner Knight:*** A banner knight is generally a nobleman who has a number of lesser knights sworn to his service. Banner knights themselves are usually vassals of a king.

***Household Knight:*** A household knight is one not rich enough to support himself, and therefore must rely on another knight for sustenance.

***Mercenary Knight*** These knights rent their services to anyone who can afford their high prices. They are generally scorned by other knights, and they concern

themselves less with obeying the Code of Arms than other types of knights.

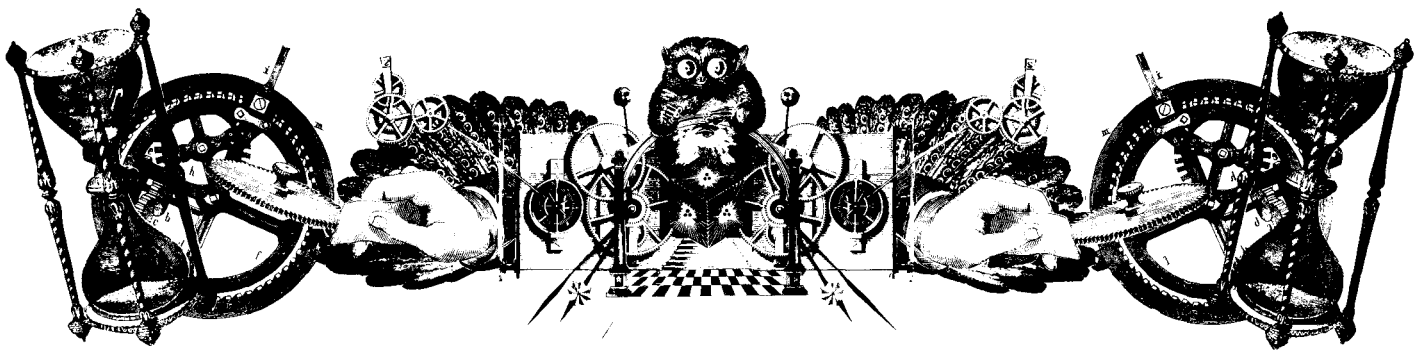
***Squire:*** A squire is a young man (or woman) who serves a knight while learning how to be a knight himself. Squires may only use weapons or wear armor in practice situations and during training, however proficient they might be.

## Becoming a Knight

Virtually all knights begin their careers as squires, learning the arts of warfare and honing their skills, but never taking part in actual combat. No knight worthy of the title would ever stoop to jousting with a mere squire.

When the squire's sponsor knight deems that he is worthy of knighthood (physically, spiritually, and intellectually), he ceremoniously touches the flat of his sword to the squire's shoulders, swears the candidate to an oath to uphold the Code of Arms and the rules of chivalry, and confers upon him the rank of knight. This ceremony can be performed at any time, with little or no preparation required. The ceremony need not even be witnessed. Most squires, however, will prepare for the ceremony by performing an overnight vigil in a holy place, during which he (or she) contemplates the duties of knighthood and rededicates his spirit to the principles of the Theanthropy. Then, the morning of his knighting, he will take a devotion and fast until after the ceremony. A feast in the new knight's honor usually follows.

After the sponsor knight has conferred the order of knighthood upon the squire, he commands the squire to rise, addressing him for the first time as "Sir." The rare female knight uses the same title (Sir Elayne). Most of the time, the new knight retains his given name, but occasionally the new knight will receive a new name. If this happens, he discards his old one, and neither he nor anyone else uses the old name. For example, when the squire Breunor first arrived at Camelot, he was dressed in a ragged,



worn-out tunic. When he became a knight, he received the name "Sir La Cote Male Tayle" (the ill-made coat) as a term of affection and recognition of his deeds. When Prince Galahad of Benwick was a squire, he amazed his instructors with his unprecedented skill at the lance. Following the recommendation of the Lady of Avalon, Prince Galahad was dubbed "Sir Lancelot du Lac," and using that name he would ultimately become the most renowned of all the Knights of the Round Table.

## The Code of Arms

When a squire is made a knight, he swears always to uphold the Code of Arms, a set of laws sacred to all knights, even those who turn to the path of evil. Though volumes stand dedicated to the intricacies of these laws and their interpretations, only a brief summary of the main tenets of the Code follows:

**Honor:** A knight will never fight with an unfair advantage over an opponent. If, during a joust, one of the two combatants is knocked from his steed, the other must dismount if he wishes to continue the battle. Along these lines, a knight will never use any kind of weapon that strikes an opponent from a distance.

**Humility:** While knight's feats and deeds can gain him great fame and renown, the Code of Arms insists that knights always remain humble and self-effacing. A popular knight can quickly find himself without supporters if he glorifies his own actions.

**Quarter:** When a knight defeats an opponent in a duel, he must ask his opponent to yield. This procedure is known as "offering quarter." If the foe refuses to yield, the knight is perfectly within his rights to kill his adversary (usually accomplished by removing his helmet and beheading him). If the defeated adversary yields, the knight may not harm him further, but may give his adversary a command, which he must obey. For instance, a victorious Knight of the Round Table might require that a defeated foe swear an oath of loyalty to King Arthur.

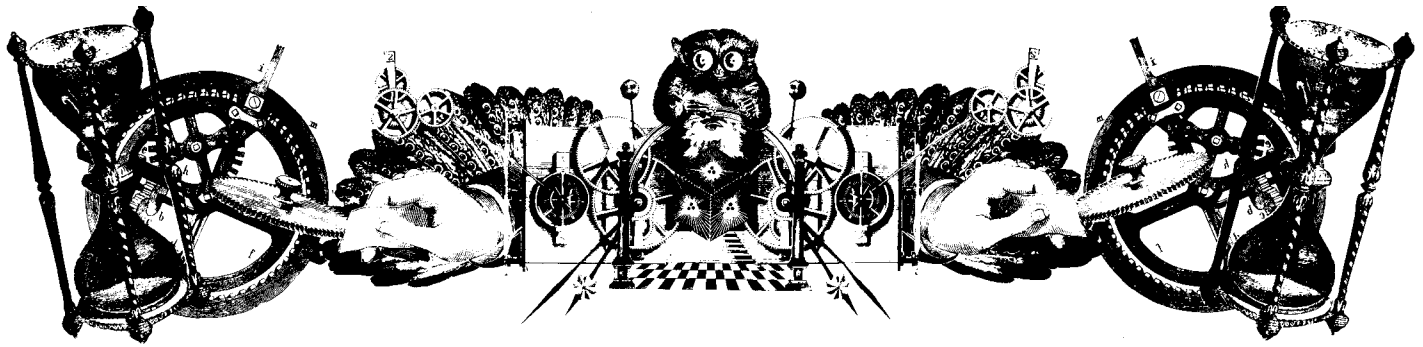
A knight does not have to offer quarter to his enemy if both combatants have agreed at the beginning of the joust to battle to the death.

**Courtesy:** It is widely believed among the noble class that manners and breeding separate nobles from commoners. As a result, knights always treat one another with politeness, generosity, and hospitality, even (or especially) toward their enemies. For instance, if a questing knight arrived at the castle of a renegade knight and challenged him to a duel, the knight of the castle would be expected to offer the challenger accommodations for the night, in addition to any other courtesy the questing knight might require. It might seem odd that a knight would accept hospitality from his enemy, but taking action against a guest would constitute an extreme violation of the Code of Arms.

**Oaths:** Knights take the swearing and executing of oaths very seriously. A knight's word is his bond, and a knight who has broken an oath can never be trusted again. If a knight breaks an oath unwillingly, he may redeem himself by performing an arduous quest, usually accompanied by a penance decreed by a representative of the Theanthropy.

**Justice:** Every knight is considered a member of the ruling class, and thus he may be called upon by commoners and nobles alike to adjudicate disputes. Knights are expected to be fair and equitable whenever they settle a case. Often times, the truth of a matter cannot be discerned from the evidence available. In these circumstances, the parties involved may select champions, who will fight a duel to determine the outcome of the dispute.





### Sample Knight Character

#### Sir Dinadan

**Profession Group:** Knight

**Core Experience:** 35

**Player Core:**

Phy.	Int.	Spr.	Inf.
Rank: 1	Rank: 4	Rank: 2	Rank: 3
Dice: 6	Dice: 4	Dice: 6	Dice: 5
<b>F: 28</b>	<b>L: 23</b>	Ps: 22	C: 27
<b>R: 40</b>	<b>I: 14</b>	W: 36	Po: 21

**Body Points:** 56

**Stamina Points:** 76

**Character Experience:** 65

**Profession:** Knight  
of the Round Table

**Gender:** Male

**Species:** Interbreed

**Hand:** Right

**Hgt.:** 1 70 cm

**Wgt.:** 88 kg

**Eyes:** Brown

**Hair:** Brown

**Skills:** Armed Combat (From Horseback/Lance/Sword, On Foot/Sword), Robohorse (Riding/Tilting), Chivalry, Art, Music

**Equipment:** Robohorse, Cybernetic Armor, Energy-lance, Lasersword, Pavilion, Lute

**Background:** Sir Dinadan is known throughout the Solar System for his cunning wit and scathing satire. He once wrote a song satirizing King Mark of Cornwall, and, naturally, King Mark himself did not appreciate the song. Fortunately, none of the knights who have challenged Sir Dinadan on King Mark's behalf have been able to overcome him. In more hospitable realms, Sir Dinadan remains one of the most popular Knights of the Round Table.

## Technologers

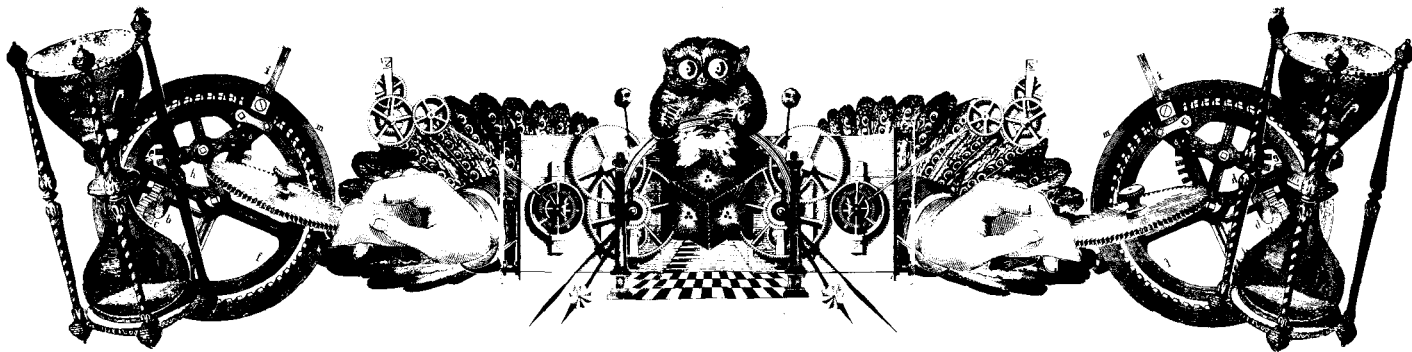
In the high-tech world of the *Once and Future King* universe, technology has become so advanced that only a handful of individuals, trained from a young age in the ways of science, are able to comprehend it. Their ability to create and operate machinery is almost magical. Unlike knights, technologers can come from almost any social class and can be either male or female.

## Starting Skills

After calculating a technologist's attribute scores, add together his Learning and Intuition, and divide the sum by 10, rounding fractions down. You may now select this number of skills, subskills, and specialties from the Computer, Engineering, Sciences, and Technology skill groups. After choosing these skills, follow the rules in the AMAZING ENGINE™ System Guide (pp. 4-19) to select the character's additional skills from any skill group. Note that a technologist may never select any of the From Horseback or On Foot combat skills. Only technologers aligned with the forces of evil may learn the Projectile Weapons skill.

## Technologer Professions

**Engineer:** An engineer is a technologist who specializes in the repair and maintenance of machinery, especially vehicles.



*Pilot:* A pilot guides airborne or spaceborne vehicles. Pilots usually may fly both direct space and sidespace ships.

*Professor.* A professor is a member of the teaching staff of the School of Avalon. Professors are usually experts in their specific scientific field.

*Sourcerer.* Sourcerers are computer programmers and operators who have become so proficient that they can alter the central mainframe's source codes.

*Technician:* A technician is a technologist who specializes in creating and building new devices.

## Becoming A Technologist

As soon as a child's birth registers on the central computer mainframe, a representative of the School of Avalon visits the baby's parents and evaluates the newborn's intellectual potential. The representative uses a device that scans those portions of the brain controlling logic, analysis, and deductive reasoning. If the child scores high enough, the parents may decide to release the child to the School for training in the sciences.

Once accepted, a student's education begins immediately. Through the use of subliminal thought enhancers, instructors begin to teach the basics of mathematics to newborns. By the time the children learn to walk, they are usually proficient in advanced algebra and trigonometry. Students who have not mastered calculus by age five are expelled from the School.

Through the rest of childhood and early teens, students train intensively in all areas of science and technology. At age 15, students take an aptitude test to determine in which field of science they most excel. They spend the following five years as an apprentice to a professor specializing in that student's field. Their mentors also encourage the students to pursue studies in other fields that hold their interest. After the apprenticeship period, the student takes an intensive examination. If she passes, she gains the title of technologist and may leave Avalon.

Due to the extraordinary talent and dedication needed to graduate from the School of Avalon, many

students drop out before completing their studies. While these individuals will never enjoy the status and privileges that go along with being a technologist, they can have very fulfilling careers. Even an incomplete Avalon education is a highly-valued commodity. Many of these individuals become technical support people, computer operators, assistant pilots, and repair specialists.

## The School of Avalon

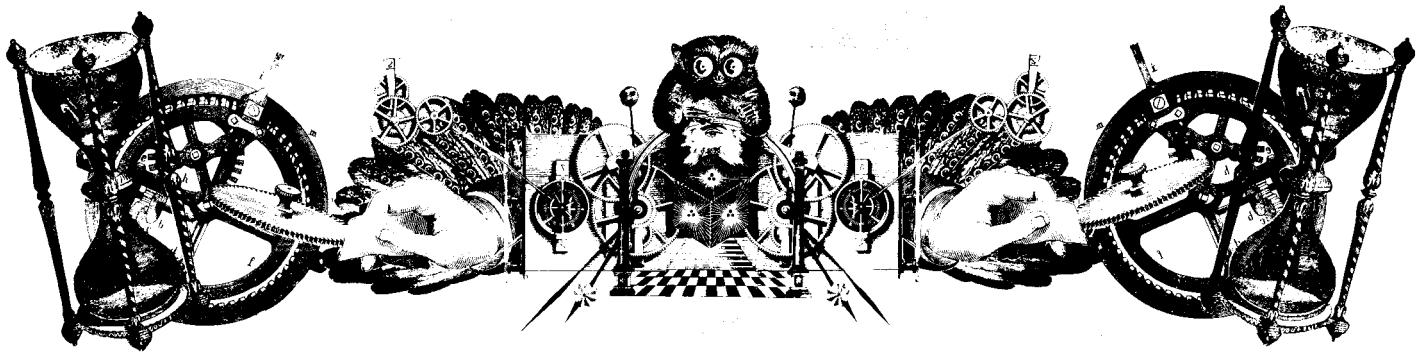
The School of Avalon takes its leadership from its dean, an individual known as the Lady of the Lake (or Lady of Avalon) if female, or the Lord of Avalon if male. Curiously, men have occupied this position only four times in Avalon's lengthy history, and even then only for brief periods of time. The "of the Lake" portion of the dean's title derives from the fact that the only permanent portal between direct space and Avalon's sidespace location stands near a lake in Glastonbury, England.

A Board of Trustees made up of six professors assists the dean. The Board's duties include devising the School's curriculum, advising the Lady of the Lake, and selecting a new dean when the old one dies or retires.

The School of Avalon has historically remained utterly neutral in all political events, being loyal only to the preservation and proliferation of science. They accept male and female candidates equally, based solely on intellectual merit. Once it was determined that androids were, in fact, sentient individuals, the School began to accept especially promising android candidates. Some technologists who have graduated from the School later turn to evil, but School policy disavows all responsibility for such individuals.

Since the sourceress Nimue became Lady of the Lake (in recognition for her unprecedented success in deactivating the Merlin AI), the School has become more involved with the court of King Arthur. The Lady retains access to Merlin's data and files, and she believes that supporting Arthur paves the way for Avalon's prosperity.





### Sample Technologist Character

#### Modina

**Profession Group:** Technologist **Core Experience:** 45  
**Player Core:**

<b>Phy.</b>	<b>Int.</b>	<b>Spr.</b>	<b>Inf.</b>
Rank: 2	Rank: 1	Rank: 3	Rank: 4
Dice: 5	Dice: 7	Dice: 5	Dice: 5
<b>F:26 L:41</b>	<b>Ps:19 C:28</b>		
<b>R:23 I:31</b>	<b>W:31 Po:22</b>		

**Body Points:** 13

**Stamina Points:** 18

**Character Experience:** 85

**Profession:** Sourceress

**Gender:** Female

**Species:** Interbreed

**Hand:** Left

**Hgt.:** 162.5 cm

**Wgt.:** 45 kg

**Eyes:** Blue

**Hair:** Blond

**Skills:** Computer Systems (Central Mainframe/Access Terminals), Computer Programming (System, Module), Technology (Devices/Maintenance & Repair), Physics (Sidespace), Courtly Love, Seduction, Live Horse (Riding)

**Equipment:** Orb of Hypnosis, Flight Ring

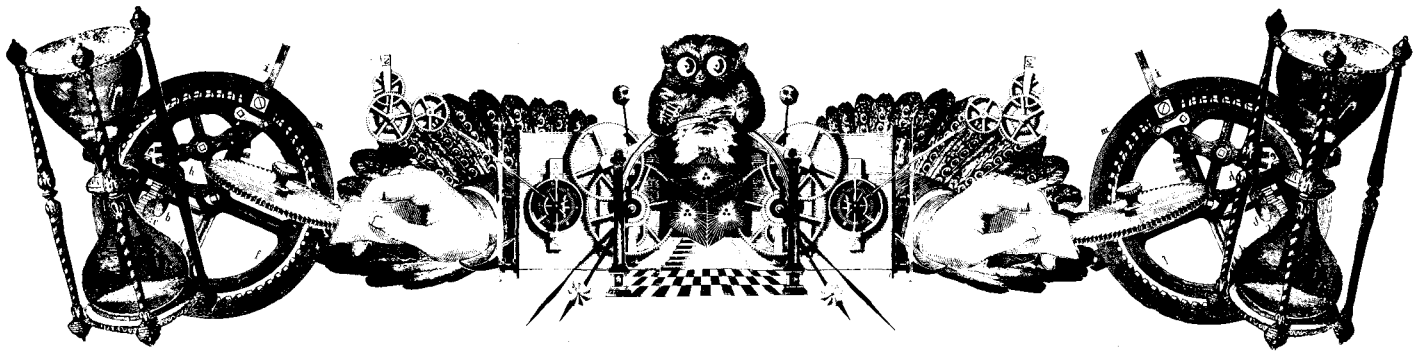
**Background:** Modina is the third daughter of a family of wheat farmers from the kingdom of Lothian. When her potential ability as a technologist was detected after her birth, her parents wasted no time enrolling her in the School of Avaion. For several years after her certification as a technologist, Modina worked in the service of the sourceress Morgan Le Fay. When it became known that Morgan was plotting to seize power from King Arthur, Modina deserted her mistress and sought asylum at Camelot. She now serves on the science staff at King Arthur's court, and occasionally provides computer support to knights who arrive at Camelot without technologists of their own. Rumors abound that Modina is in love with Sir Blamor De Ganis, a Knight of the Round Table.

## Acolytes

People in the *Once and Future King* universe lead a very well-defined and orderly spiritual life, governed by the Theanthropy, a religion combining many of the practices of ancient beliefs into one coherent system. The caretakers of this system are individuals who have forsworn all their material possessions and dedicated themselves to the pursuit of spiritual perfection.

## Starting Skills

After completing the acolyte's attribute scores, add up his Psyche and Willpower scores and divide the total by 10, rounding fractions down. You now select this number of skills, subskills, and specialties from the Humanities and Religion skill groups. After choosing these skills, follow the rules in the System Guide section to select more skills for the acolyte character from any skill group. Note that an acolyte may never select from the following skills (including subskills or specialties): Computer, Engineering, Court, or Sciences. Most members of the acolyte profession also have no Combat skills. However, since some acolytes are retired knights, it is possible that there may be a



few of them who still retain their old skills. The GM must approve any Combat skill chosen for an acolyte.

## Acolyte Professions

*Cardinal:* The cardinals are high-ranking members of the Theanthropy's hierarchy, second only to the Avatar himself. They usually serve as the Avatar's messengers and administrators.

*Hermit:* Hermits are holy men who have forsaken the company of other people in order to pursue a personal vision. They often have mysterious powers beyond mortal comprehension.

*Initiate:* An initiate is an acolyte who has only recently taken a vow to serve the Theanthropy. After a period of service, they usually enter one of the other professions.

*Monk:* There are seven monastical groups in the solar system, each devoted to perfecting one of the seven essential virtues. In addition to following a general vow of service, monks also take strict oaths governing their behavior.

*Priest:* Priests are the most common of the acolyte professions. They are responsible for the daily operations of the Theanthropy, as well as the spiritual well-being of their followers. They rank just below cardinals in the Theanthropy hierarchy.

## Becoming An Acolyte

Virtually any individual can choose to become an acolyte at any time in his life. The person need only be willing to dedicate himself to spiritual pursuits. After an interview with a priest, the would-be acolyte travels to New Rome on Venus, where several different officials of the Theanthropy further examine him. Once the officials determine his sincerity, the applicant takes a vow of service and becomes an Initiate.

After a period of indoctrination and education lasting any period of time from several months to several decades, the Initiate is usually promoted to the priesthood. In some cases, the Initiate may decide that

becoming a priest does not reflect his true calling, and he joins one of the seven monastical groups, becoming a monk instead.

Hermits constitute a different sort altogether. The major distinction separating hermits from the rest of the Theanthropy is that hermits have all had some special vision or message from the Higher Power leading them to renounce all material things to live a life of reclusive austerity. Miracles have a tendency to crop up around hermits, giving these recluses an air of holiness and mystique. Hermits almost always have some talent proving their link to the Higher Power, such as the ability to heal with a touch or the power to foresee future events.

Unlike following the rigid hierarchy of the Theanthropy, there is no set procedure for an Initiate to become a hermit. It is a decision the player and the GM must make, and such a decision should result from some miraculous occurrence during the course of an adventure. Note that switching to the hermit class does not mean that the character must immediately forswear the company of his fellow companions. However, he must make an effort to lead as austere a life as possible by refusing creature comforts, dutifully following all required rituals and prayers, and practicing the seven essential virtues (see below).

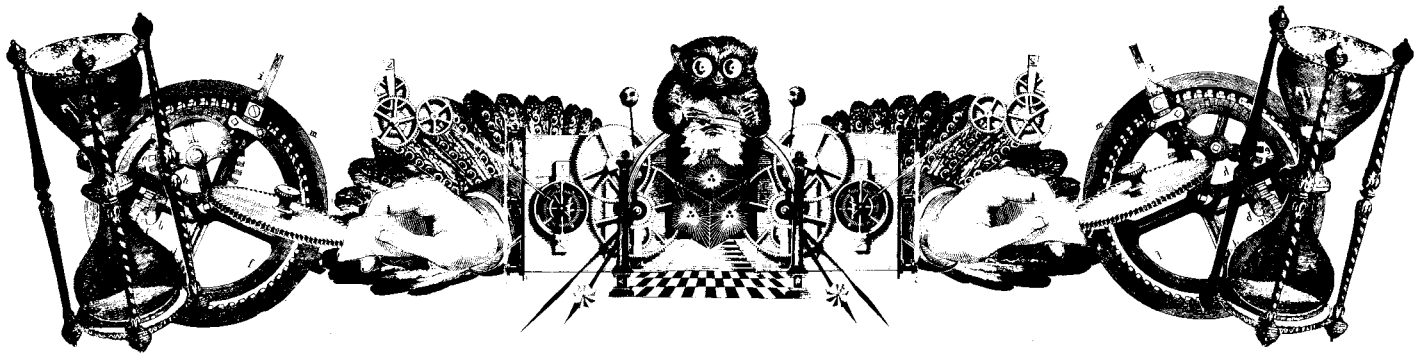
## The Theanthropy

The Theanthropy is a religion founded in the mid-21st century by a man now known only as the First Avatar. He is said to have pulled Earth back from the edge of World War III and ushered in a thousand years of peace and prosperity. The teachings of the Theanthropy managed to keep humanity united throughout centuries of colonization and political strife.

The Theanthropists believe that every person keeps a spark of divinity within them, which moral and ethical behavior nurtures and advances. This divine impulse derives from an unnamed Higher Power, the nature of which depends on each individual's per-







sonal beliefs. However, despite the best intentions of the Higher Power, there also exists in every human heart the capacity for evil, which festers and becomes manifest through wicked deeds. Unlike mankind's divine essence, these evil tendencies come from within, rather than from an outside influence.

The Theanthropy defines the opposing forces of the soul by categorizing them into seven "essential virtues" and seven "deadly enemies of man." The virtues are truth, wisdom, strength, hope, humility, faith, and courage. The enemies are pride, envy, greed, hatred, egoism, sloth, and injustice. In order to help teach their beliefs, the Theanthropists use a complex system of symbolism, in which every object in the universe has its ideological opposite, such as light and darkness, day and night, matter and energy, and so on.

The Theanthropy's holy symbol provides an example of their principles at work. The star in the center represents the divine core of man, which resides in the heart, the next symbol out from the center. A perfect circle surrounds the heart, representing the soul of man, which encompasses both the human and divine.

The temporal leader of the Theanthropy is known as the Avatar, a title passed down through the generations from the First Avatar to his ideological descendants. The Avatar is a figure of extreme importance, and all believers in the Theanthropy recognize his authority, even kings and princes. It is believed that the Avatar speaks with the voice of the Higher Power itself. The Avatar's seat of power is in the city of New Rome, in the kingdom of Almoin on Venus. In addition to being a center for worship, New Rome serves as the major educational nexus for the Theanthropy's hierarchy of cardinals, priests, monks, and so on.

## Sample Acolyte Character

**Nennius**

**Profession Group:** Acolyte

**Core Experience:** 55

**Player Core:**

**Phy.**

**Int.**

**Spr.**

**Inf.**

*Rank: 3*

*Rank: 2*

*Rank: 1*

*Rank: 4*

*Dice: 5*

*Dice: 5*

*Dice: 7*

*Dice: 4*

*F:24*

*L:30*

*Ps:41*

*C:18*

*R:26*

*I:15*

*W:32*

*Po:19*

**Body Points:** 48

**Stamina Points:** 58

**Character Experience:** 112

**Profession:** Hermit

**Gender:** Male

**Species:** Clone

**Hand:** Right

**Hgt.:** 182.8cm

**Wgt.:** 61 kg

**Eyes:** Blue

**Hair:** White

**Skills:** Theology, Religious Practices (Devotion, Penance), Psychology (Dream Interpretation), Prophecy, Philosophy, Unarmed Combat (Fisticuffs)

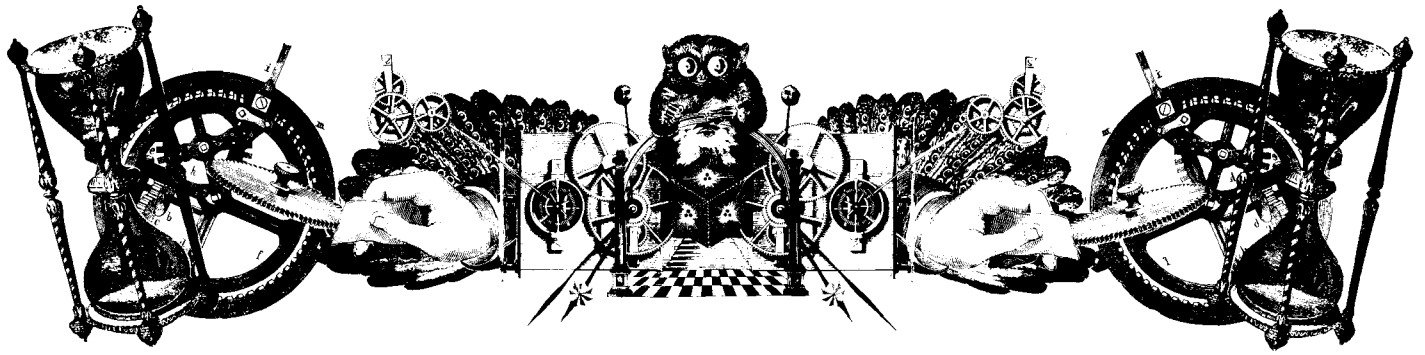
**Equipment:** Scourge, Electric Hair Shirt

**Background:** Nennius was a soldier for the kingdom of Northumberland, believed dead and accidentally left behind on Mars. He found himself in a harsh desert in a remote corner of the Red Lands, hundreds of kilometers from the nearest habitable region.

Nennius crossed the desert on foot with only meager supplies and no water. After four days of travel, he stumbled upon a mysterious oasis, which he instinctively recognized as holy ground. He drank deeply from the small pool of water he found there and experienced a prophetic vision. This vision led him to become an acolyte of the Theanthropy. Years later he returned to the oasis, becoming a hermit.

## Courtiers

While all knights are considered members of the noble class, not all members of the noble class are knights. The royal courts of the solar system are home to many different individuals who make up the courtier class of professions.



## Starting Skills

After calculating the courtier's attribute scores, add his Charm and Position scores together, and divide the sum by 10 (round fractions down). You may now choose this number of skills, subskills, and specialties from the Court and Humanities skill groups. After selecting these skills, use the rules in the System Guide to choose additional skills for your character from any skill group. Note that a courtier character may never take any skills from the Combat or Sciences groups, and may only take a Riding subskill of Horsemanship. Courtiers are also not allowed the Religious Practices, Psychology, Healing, and Prophecy skills, although many nobles are expert in Theology and Religious History.

## Courtier Professions

**Jester:** The personal entertainer of a monarch, a jester is charged always to tell the truth. Jesters tend to have moderately high Charm scores.

**Lady:** A woman of rank who is not a ruling monarch. Usually has a Position score of at least 35.

**Minstrel:** An entertainer who travels from kingdom to kingdom, bearing news and messages. Most minstrels have a Charm score over 35.

**Noble:** A man of rank who is not a ruling monarch. Usually has a Position score of at least 40.

**Page:** A personal attendant to a lady or noble, usually a youth aged 10-15. Most pages eventually become squires and then knights.

## Becoming a Courtier

Unlike the other profession groups, courtiers are generally born to their profession. With the exception of jesters and minstrels, most courtiers do not have any particular training or education for their jobs.



## The Court

Courtiers play a large role primarily at court. The rules of courtly behavior are very complex, with guidelines for proper behavior in all aspects of courtly life. While knights are largely concerned with weapons, armor, and feats of chivalry, courtiers are responsible for maintaining the dignity and etiquette of the court.

### Sample Courtier Character

**Lady Lionors**

**Profession Group:** Courtier

**Core Experience:** 25

**Player Core:**

**Phy. Int. Spr. Inf.**

Rank: 4      Rank: 2      Rank: 3      Rank: 1

Dice: 5      Dice: 6      Dice: 6      Dice: 8

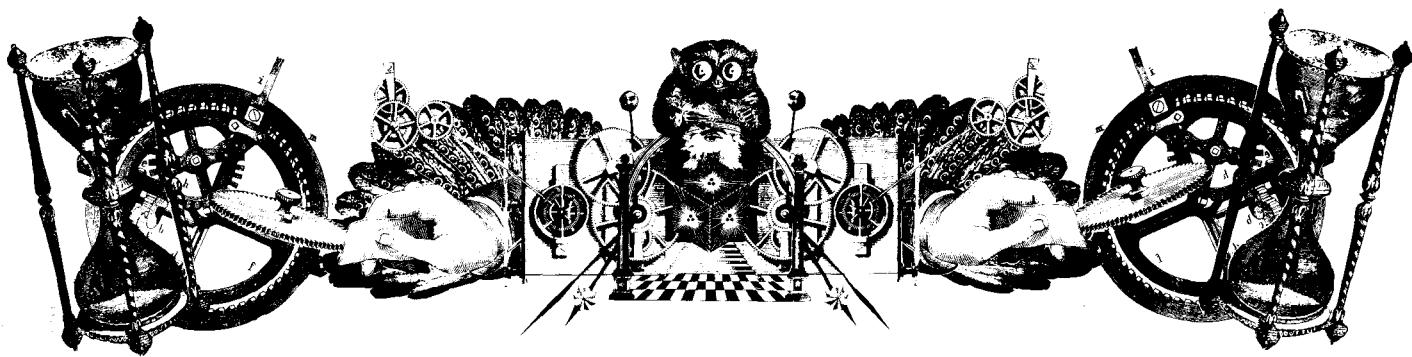
F:20      L:30      Ps: 25      C: 50

R:28      I:25      W31      Po:33

**Body Points:** 6

**Stamina Points:** 14





**Character Experience:** 44

**Profession:** Lady

**Species:** Human

**Hgt.:** 167.6cm

**Eyes:** Green

**Skills:** Seduction, Music, Courtly Love, Behavior (Etiquette, Protocol), Art, Live Horse (Training, Riding), Terran Medicine, Theology

**Equipment:** None

**Background:** Lady Lionors first came to Camelot shortly after King Arthur withdrew Caliburn from the stone. She was somewhat older than the king, and found it rather easy to seduce the young monarch with her womanly charms. Lionors hoped that the infatuated king would marry her and make her his queen, but her hopes were dashed when King Arthur's adviser Emrys somehow learned of their affair. She was sent away from Camelot and never returned.

Eight months later, she gave birth to a son whom she named Torre. By the time the child was born, King Arthur had married Queen Guinevere, so Lady Lionors kept Torre's true lineage a secret. She never succeeded in her desire to marry a powerful king, but took pride in the fact that her son grew up to become a Knight of the Round Table.

## Skills

The skills listed on page 35 are available to characters in the *Once and Future King* universe. A letter and a number reference follow each skill. The letter indicates which attribute the skill utilizes, and the number indicates the experience-point cost to add the skill to a character later in the campaign. Some skills are restricted only to a certain profession group or are forbidden to certain groups. The skill descriptions below describe these restrictions in detail.

Obviously, this list is in no way an all-inclusive delineation of every possible skill the PCs may wish to possess. GMs should feel free to amend this list with other skills of their own creation. One skill category remains strictly prohibited, however: anything that

could be classified as illegal or dishonest. Because of the high moral standards imposed on all individuals by the Theanthropy, no thief or rogue characters exist in the *Once and Future King* universe, and therefore no skills such as lockpicking, forgery, or theft exist, either. Such talents would be considered base and distasteful, even to evil characters.

### Sub-specialty penalties

In *Once and Future King* adventures, characters receive a -10 penalty per step if they attempt to use a sub-specialty of a skill they do not possess. This penalty adds to any other modifications to the Skill Check being made.

For example: an engineer with only the Vehicle Maintenance skill would receive a -20 penalty should he attempt to repair a sidespaceship's displacement field generator. A technologist with the Displacement Field Generator specialty would receive no penalty while attempting the same repair.

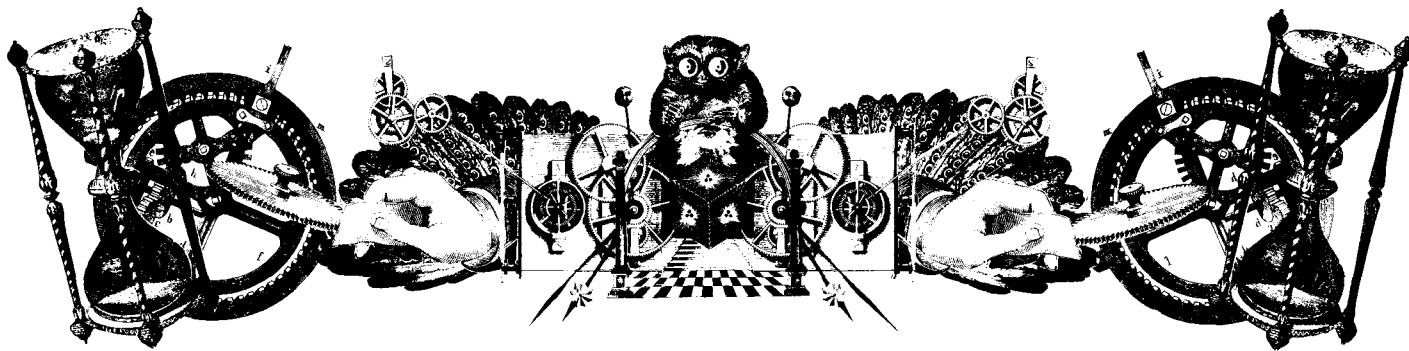
At all times, the GM may modify such attempts based on the situation. If the displacement field generator in the previous example merely required a few screws to be tightened, the GM might decide to assess no penalty to the engineer. If the generator needs dismantling and rebuilding, the GM might deem that even the specialist would incur some penalty.

## Skill Descriptions

This section gives greater detail about the skills available to your characters in the *Once and Future King* universe. Some of the skills listed are self-explanatory (like Swimming or Music) and/or have no intrinsic game effects. These are mentioned only briefly.

### Athletics

This group of skills represents the wide variety of physical abilities that a character might choose to develop to a superior degree. In general, a character with one of these skills adds +5 to his attribute check when attempting an action that involves his area of training. This is in



## Athletics

- Acrobatics (R—75)
- Climbing (R—75)
- Swimming (F—50)
- Throwing (F—50)
- Lifting (F—50)
- Jumping (F—50)

## Combat

- Armed Combat (F—125)
  - From Horseback (F—125)
    - Lance (F—200)
    - Sword (F—175)
    - Other (F—150)
  - On Foot (F—75)
    - Sword (F—100)
    - Other (F—100)
- Unarmed Combat (F—125)
  - Fisticuffs (F—50)
  - Wrestling (F—75)
- Projectile Weapons (R—50)
  - Energy Weapons (R—100)
    - Specific Type (R—100)
  - Solid Projectile Weapons (R—100)
    - Specific Type (R—100)

## Computer

- Computer Systems (L—100)
  - Solar System Central Mainframe (L—200)
  - Access Terminals (L—200)
- Computer Programming (L—150)
  - System Programming (L—300)
    - Source Code Programming (L—450)
    - Merlin Programming (L—\*)
  - Module Programming (L—150)

## Court

- Behavior (Po—50)
- Etiquette (Po—100)
- Protocol (Po—100)
- Chivalry (C—100)
  - Heraldry (L—100)
  - Disguise (C—150)
- Courtly Love (C—150)
- Seduction (C—150)

## Engineering

- Android Maintenance & Repair (L—250)
- Vehicle Maintenance & Repair (L—100)
  - Sidespaceship (L—100)
    - Sidespace Displacement Field (L—200)
    - Fusion Propulsion Drive (L—200)
  - Land Vehicles Maintenance (L—50)
    - Hovership (L—50)
    - Other (L—50)

## Horsemanship

- Hoversteed (R—75)
- Riding (R—150)
- Tilting\* (R—300)
- Dueling\* (R—250)
- Robohorse (R—50)
  - Riding (R—100)
  - Tilting\* (R—200)

- Dueling\* (R—175)
- Live Horse (R—100)
  - Training (W—150)
  - Riding (R—125)
  - Tilting\* (R—200)
  - Dueling\* (R—150)

## Humanities

- Art (P—25)
- History (P—25)
  - Specific time period (L—50)
- Linguistics (L—50)
- Literature (L—35)
  - Specific country (L—50)
  - Specific time period (1—65)
- Music (P—25)
  - Specific music type (P—50)
- Philosophy (1—50)

## Medicine

- Terran Medicine (L—100)
  - Specific Field (L—200)
- Emergency (L—100)

## Religion (The Theanthropy)

- Theology (P—75)
- Religious History (L—35)
- Religious Practices (L—100)
  - Devotion (L—150)
  - Penance (L—150)
  - Miscellaneous Rituals (L—150)
- Psychology (I—100)
  - Dream Interpretation (P—150)
  - Counseling (P—150)
- Healing (P—400)
- Prophecy (P—350)

## Sciences

- Specific Field (L—100)
- Physics (L—100)
  - Direct Spacial Physics (L—150)
  - Sidespacial Physics (L—250)
- Technology (L—100)
  - Device Creation (I—300)
  - Deciphering Devices (I—150)
  - Device Maintenance & Repair (I—200)

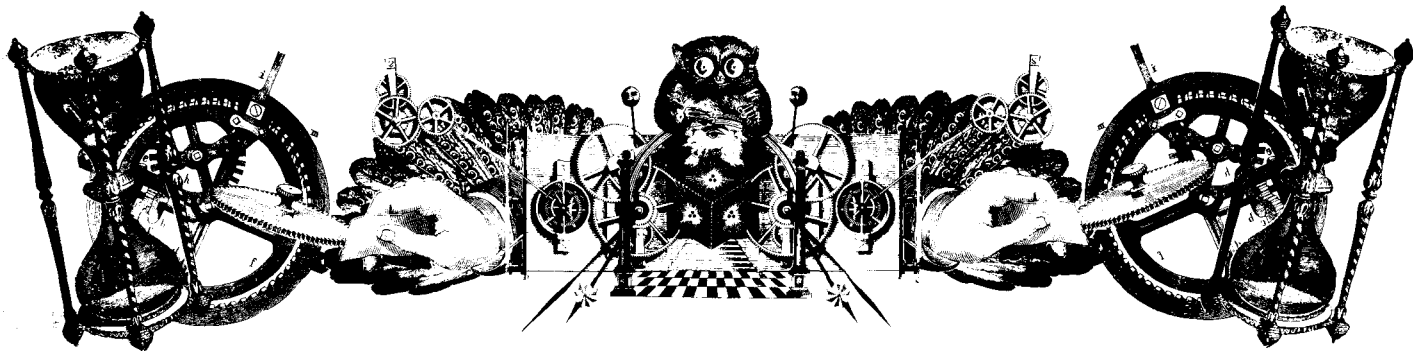
## Travel

- Navigation (I—50)
  - Planetary (I—50)
  - Space (I—75)
  - Sidespace (I—100)
- Piloting (I—125)
  - Planetary (I—125)
  - Direct Space (1—150)
  - Sidespace (I—150)

\*A character cannot buy the ability to access and to reprogram the Merlin artificial intelligence. Such a talent only comes from the direct result of an adventure. The CM is cautioned to allow PCs to gain this skill only if circumstances clearly call for it.

\*Before a character can have the tilting or dueling subskills of horsemanship, he must possess the respective riding subskills.





addition to whatever other modifiers the GM feels the situation warrants. Any character can perform most of these actions (climbing, swimming, etc.), but purchasing the skill indicates that the character is particularly adept, thus gaining the +5 bonus.

*Acrobatics* is the art of tumbling, diving, rolling, and keeping one's balance in tricky situations.

*Climbing* is the ability to scale vertical surfaces, with or without mechanical assistance.

*Swimming* is knowing how to propel one's body through water without drowning. Characters swimming in armor suffer a -30 to their roll.

*Throwing* is the skill of being able to hit a target by hurling an object through the air.

*Lifting* involves picking objects up with sheer strength. A person with this skill has studied and practiced techniques for maximizing this ability.

*Jumping* includes both horizontal leaping (long jump) and vertical leaping (high jump).

## Combat

Combat skills break down into three categories: *Armed*, *Unarmed*, and *Projectile Weapons*. Generally, only knights and squires may select the Armed Combat skill, although depending on your character's history and background the GM may allow you to make an exception. For instance, many hermits are retired knights who may still remember their former prowess. Knights and squires are both prohibited from taking any Projectile Weapons skills, and under no circumstances may any courtier take any Combat skill.

*From Horseback* is the subskill of Armed Combat used when a warrior fights from the back of a mount, whether the mount is a hoversteed, a robohorse, or a live horse. Before mastering this skill, the character must have at least one Riding skill (listed under Horsemanship, below). If the character is proficient with more than one type of mount, she does not have to purchase this skill more than once: it allows proficiency with any type of steed.

The *Lance*, *Sword*, and *Other* specializations indicate the classes of weapons the character trained to use while fighting on horseback. It is assumed that a character with one of these specialties can use any weapon that falls into that category. For example, a knight with the Lance specialty could use a wooden lance or an energylance without penalty.

*On Foot* is the subskill of Armed Combat that shows that a character is particularly potent at fighting unmounted.

Like *From Horseback*, *On Foot* divides into weapon class specialties. Lances are too unwieldy for a character to use effectively on the ground, but most other weapons can be used. Almost all knights prefer to take the Sword specialization.

*Fisticuffs* is the ability to brawl effectively, using only your bare hands. Any kind of fighting that can be described as boxing or punching is considered Fisticuffs.

*Wrestling* is the opposite of Fisticuffs. It is distinctive in that its practitioners grapple their opponents and attempt to overbear them with sheer physical strength.

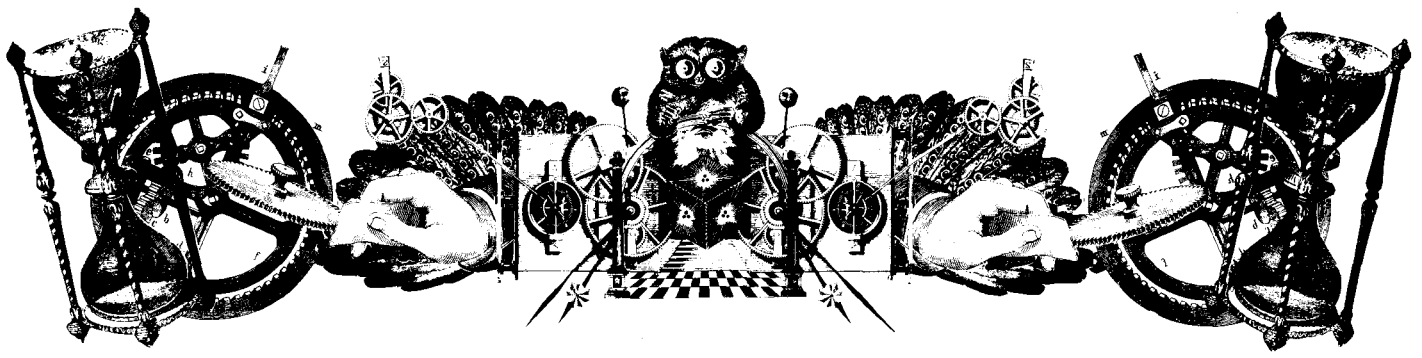
Almost no one uses *Projectile Weapons* in the 46th century, since fighting from a distance is considered cowardly and dishonorable. However, a few craven individuals still keep and use them.

*Energy Weapons* are those that shoot bursts of energy, such as laser rifles and energy pistols. Solid Projectile Weapons are those that fire solid objects, such as bullets or arrows. Chapters Two and Three describe these weapons and their uses.

## Computers

Chapter Two describes the role of computers in the *Once and Future King* universe in detail. Computer skills come in two categories: the use of *Computer Systems*, and *Computer Programming*. Anyone may learn the former, but technologists exclusively use the latter.

Thanks to submicrowave relays and microscopic



connections through the mysterious realm called sidespace, 95% of the computer terminals in the Solar System connect to one another by way of a huge computer mainframe. With the *Solar System Central Mainframe* subskill, a character can use the mainframe to run programs, access data, or communicate instantly with any other terminal in the system.

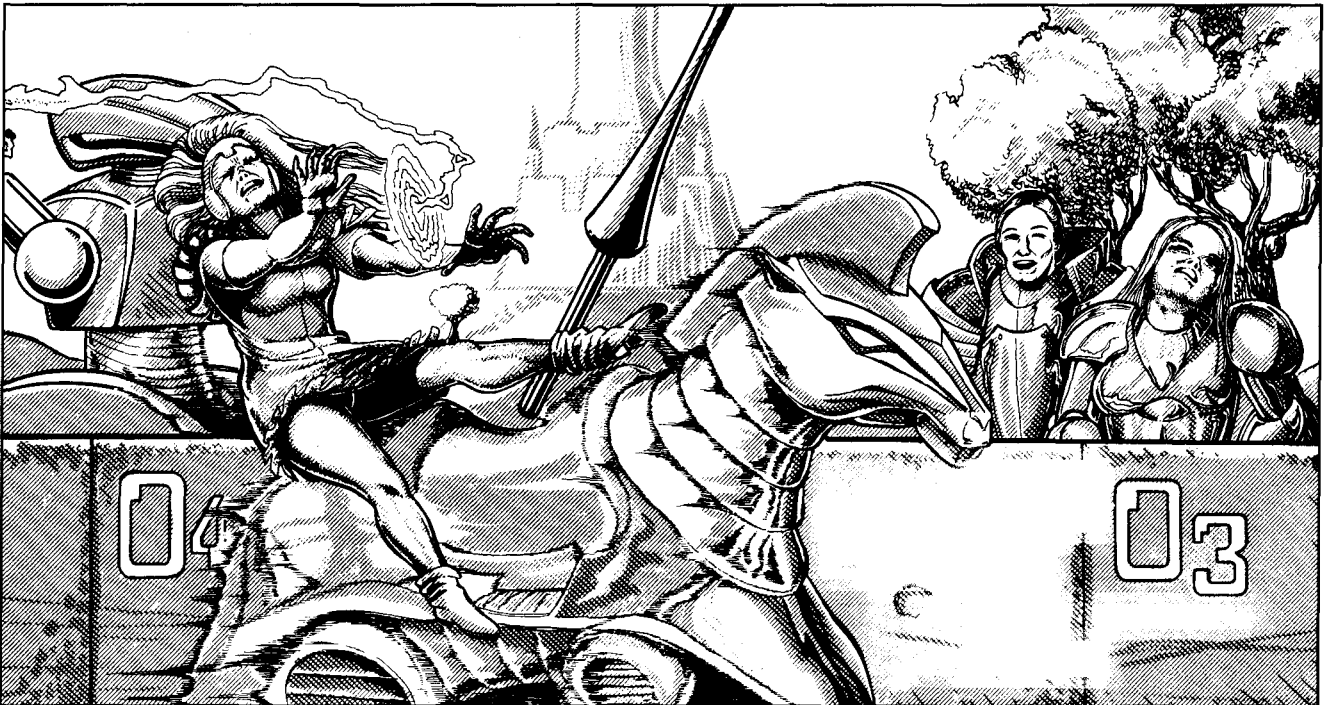
The *Access Terminal* subskill allows a character to operate programs residing outside of the mainframe. These programs may include private databases in a particular castle's computer core, secret security codes for a single individual, or any other program running independently of the central mainframe.

*System Programming* is the ability to create new programs to run on the central mainframe. The scope of these programs may be small or large, but it should be noted that after over a thousand years of foiling would-be hackers, the system remains completely tamper-proof. *Source Code Programming* is a specialization available to sourcerers only. In fact, the term

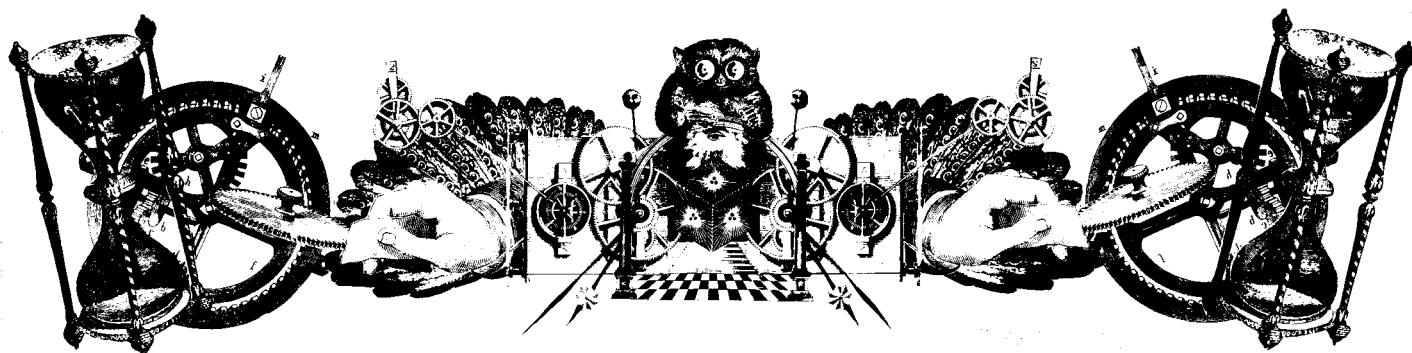
"sourcerer" originally derived from the ability of highly-skilled individuals to reprogram source code. With this skill, a sourcerer can reprogram fundamental portions of the central mainframe's main core.

For centuries, the "soul" of the central mainframe has been an incredibly complex, artificially intelligent program called "Merlin." Only one individual, the sourceress Nimue, was ever able to decipher the root algorithms of Merlin enough to alter its programming. It is said that Nimue had assistance from Merlin itself, and then she used the knowledge it had given her to shut it down. A character may not select this subspecialization when he or she begins, nor can a character purchase this skill with experience points. If the GM wishes to allow a character to learn this skill, such knowledge must come about as the result of a particularly challenging scenario.

*Module Programming* is the ability to write small, independent programs that run outside the central mainframe.







## Court

This group of skills concerns the intrigue and politics of life at the royal courts. Courtiers tend to excel at these skills, and therefore, they pay only half of the experience points listed on page 35 when purchasing them.

The skill of *Behavior* does not mean that characters who have it behave properly, and those who do not behave improperly. Rather, having this skill means that a character has made a thorough study of the patterns of behavior expected from the nobility, both male and female.

*Etiquette* constitutes the observance of the forms and proprieties expected between fellow members of the nobility. These forms include a knight's behavior toward his lord and the interactions of men and women of the upper class.

*Protocol* is the system of behavior that governs relations between the upper and lower classes. It describes how the nobility should treat commoners (with respectful disdain) and how commoners respond to the nobility (with respectful obedience).

*Chivalry* is the code of honor and duty that rules the life of a knight. A knight who breaks any of these rules disgraces his order and loses any of the courtesies associated with being a knight. The chivalric code holds these tenets: to display always courage, strength, and skill with weapons; to protect the weak and poor; to be pure of heart and clean of spirit; to be just and loyal; to uphold the good and to battle the forces of evil; never to be guilty of falsehood or treason; always to serve the cause of virtuous ladies; and to obey the teachings of faith, as presented by the Theanthropy. Most knights are unable to uphold these values perfectly (in fact, Sir Galahad is the only knight who never fell from any portion of his chivalric oath), but all knights recognize these tenets as the standards by which knighthood is measured.

*Heraldry* is a system of symbolic identification used by the nobility for their family crests, displayed on a knight's armor and shield. Chapter Eight contains a detailed discussion of heraldry and its uses.

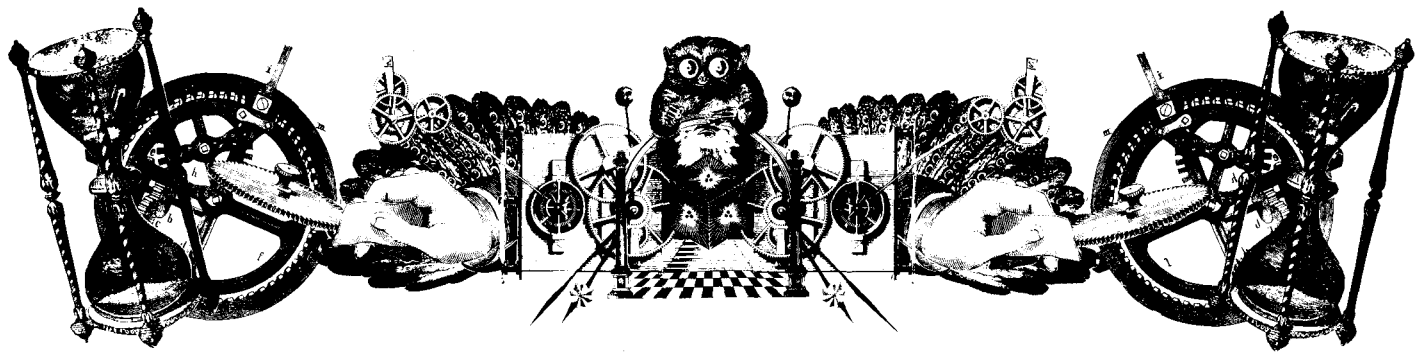
Many knights, especially those whose reputation makes it difficult to find challengers for jousts, use the skill of *Disguise* to move around the Solar System with anonymity.

Sometimes referred to as *fin d'amors*, *Courtly Love* is a term used to describe the systematic practice of passion, romance, and love. Under the code of courtly love, it is the duty of a knight to serve his lady unquestioningly, with little or no concern for his own welfare. An obvious contradiction arises between the demands of chivalry (see above), which claims service to ladies as only one of its commandments, and the dictates of courtly love, by which all other concerns fall second to the whims of the lady. However, the greatest knights are those able to balance the two doctrines and also to excel at both (Sir Lancelot and Sir Tristan of Lyonesse are the strongest examples of this phenomenon).

*Seduction* is the practice of using physical traits to bring a member of the opposite gender under your influence. Although attempts at using this skill are widespread, especially among dishonorable sorts, very few individuals truly master it. This skill is generally reserved only for ladies, but there are rare instances of sourceresses who possess it, as well. Acolytes are totally forbidden from having this skill, and only evil knights may possess it.

## Engineering

Only the following skills appear under Engineering: *Android Maintenance and Repair* and *Vehicle Maintenance and Repair*. However, the field of engineering is so much broader than these two subjects that GMs may feel free to add other engineering skills as they see fit (e.g. industrial engineering, computer hardware engineering, or chemical engineering). In any case, only technologists usually may select Engineering skills. If a player wishes her character to select an Engineering skill, she must provide the GM with a rationale and an explanation for why her character might have such a skill.



*Sidespaceship Maintenance* is a character's ability to maintain and operate vehicles capable of moving through sidespace. Any character profession may learn this skill, but only technologists can learn its specialties.

Sidespacecraft are translated from direct space (our known universe) into sidespace and back again by means of a mechanism called a *Displacement Field Projector*. *Fusion Propulsion* propels a ship through direct space or sidespace.

*Land Vehicles* are those that carry passengers and cargo across the surface of a planet. The most common of these is the *Hovership*, a class of vehicles described in Chapter Two. Other land vehicles include airplanes, boats, automobiles, and so on.

## Horsemanship

The three skills in this group are essentially identical: the only difference is the type of mount that the character has learned to ride. *Hoversteeds* are machines resembling horses, but instead of legs a hoversteed makes use of reversed polarization for propulsion while the rider sits at a height comparable to that of a real horse. A *Robohorse* is a mechanical horse constructed of steel, titanium, or polyaluminum. The rarest mount of all is a *Live Horse*, due to scarcity and the difficulty and expense incurred transporting live animals off-world. Whenever a character learns one of these skills, he must immediately take the *Riding* subskill. The subskills of each Horsemanship skill are essentially the same for each type of mount.

*Training* is the subskill used to break a live horse, to teach it to perform correctly in jousts and other battles, and to care for it properly. Hoversteeds and robohorses are machines, and they do not need training.

The *Tilting* subskill represents a knight's control over his mount while charging a similarly attacking opponent. A knight uses this skill in conjunction with the *Armed Combat (From Horseback/Lance)* specialty to engage another knight in battle. Only knights may learn this subskill.

Similarly, *Dueling* represents a rider's ability to direct and control his mount while fighting another mounted rider with swords. A knight uses this skill in conjunction with the *Armed Combat (From Horseback/Sword)* specialization to duel with a mounted opponent. Again, only knights may learn this subskill.

## Humanities

The ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle divided knowledge into seven "liberal arts," but the centuries since then have subdivided learning into many more categories. *Humanities* is a generic term for any subject dealing with the study of mankind and its culture, apart from science. The list on page 35 is only a small sampling of the subjects that a character might study, but the GM must approve other disciplines a player wishes to choose for her character.

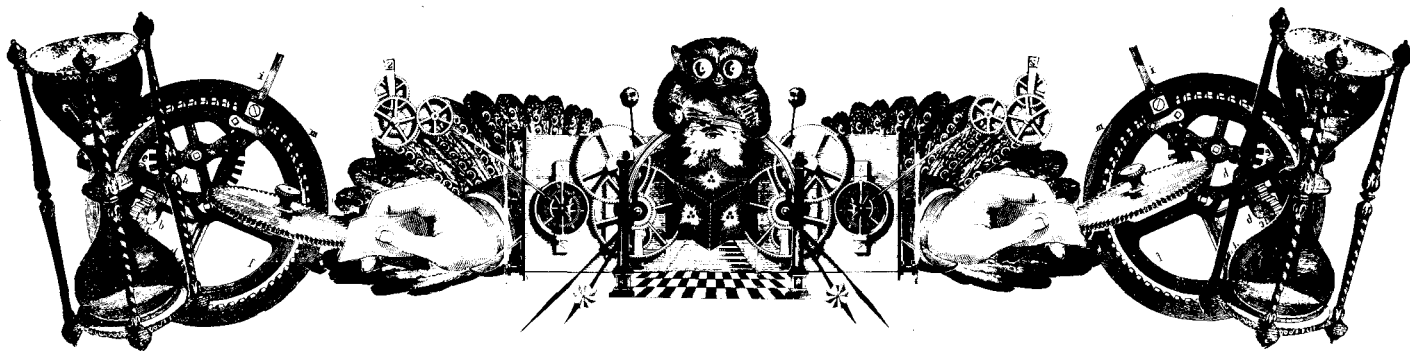
## Medicine

In the 46th century machines provide most medical care, or, in rare cases, clerics of the Theanthropy with healing powers might provide care (see below). However, a small cadre of individuals who believe technology is inherently unreliable have trained themselves in the medical arts.

Those characters who have learned *Terran Medicine* are familiar with human biology, anatomy, and medical procedures. Characters with this skill can treat human, clone, or interbreed characters.

The specific fields of medicine available are far too numerous to list completely, so the GM must use his best judgment in allowing characters to specialize in medicine. Some *Specific Fields* that might come in handy in a campaign are: pharmaceuticals, the study of preparing and dispensing medicines; internal medicine, the study of the respiratory system; cardiology, the study of the heart and circulatory system; orthopedics, the study of the skeletal system; neurology, the study of the brain and central nervous system; and pediatrics, the specialty of treating children. Of





course, each of these specialties also includes many sub-specialties. Unless the GM's campaign has specific need for such a specialization, however, characters should limit themselves to something more broad.

One useful area of medical practice listed is *Emergency medicine*. This skill includes first aid, as well as life-saving techniques such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

### **Religion (The Theanthropy)**

This group of skills exists due to the major role that the Theanthropy plays in the lives of every citizen of the Solar System. Virtually all acolytes will have at least the Theology and Religious History skills.

*Theology* is the study of the nature of the Higher Power, and how that Higher Power relates to mankind. Theology deals with the symbolism of the Theanthropy and how the material world interacts with the spiritual. The Theanthropy's hierarchy encourages anyone to study theology, and there are many non-clergy who possess this skill.

Many people also study *Religious History*. The Theanthropy has managed to survive where many other faiths have died out, and it is largely responsible for keeping mankind united. The history of the Theanthropy abounds with parables, stories of heroism, and miracles.

Like any other religion, the Theanthropy has many *Religious Practices*, which help believers to renew their faith. Some of these practices are performed quite regularly (daily or weekly), while others take place only when a need or an occasion calls for them. Only acolytes may choose this skill or any of the associated subskills.

*Devotion* is a simple service, in which a member of the clergy leads a group of worshipers in prayer. In addition to being a spiritually fulfilling experience in itself, many knights believe that participating in a devotion helps to purify them before a battle.

Knights who begin spiritually-motivated quests (such as the search for the Holy Grail) often fail because they have not atoned for past misdeeds.

*Penance* is the practice of admitting evildoings to a member of the Theanthropy hierarchy, whereupon the acolyte assigns an appropriate punishment that the follower must perform to receive absolution.

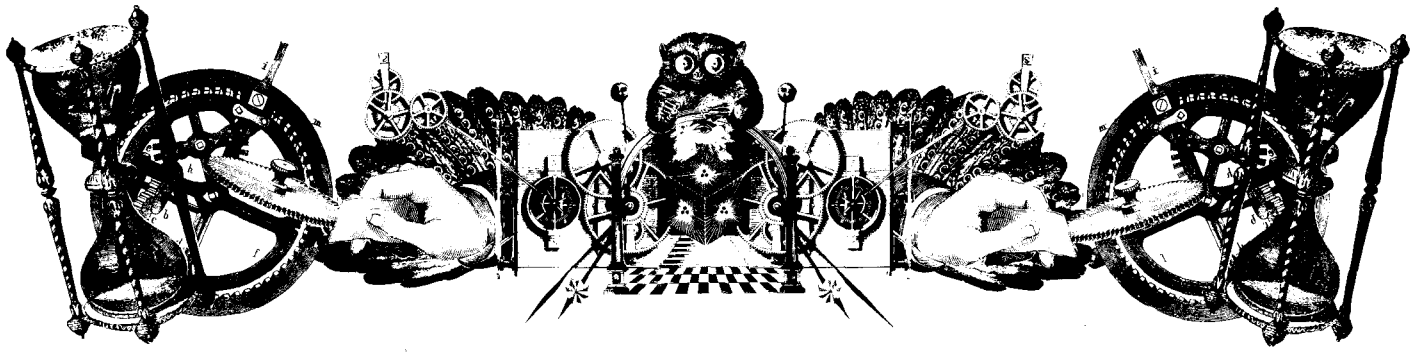
Devotion and penance are the rituals an acolyte will perform most often in a campaign, but there are a number of others an acolyte might conduct as well. These include marrying couples, administering last rites, performing funeral services, overseeing knightings, ordaining new clergy, and so on. If a character has *Miscellaneous Rituals*, he may perform any of these kinds of services.

In addition to performing religious services, many clerics (especially hermits) provide knights with advice and counsel. Thus, *Psychology* falls under the Religion group, rather than under Humanities or Sciences. Only acolyte player characters learn this skill or its subskills.

An important part of many *Once and Future King* scenarios are dreams and what they portend. *Dream Interpretation* reflects a cleric's ability to listen to a description of a dream and to interpret how that dream applies to the dreamer's life. For example, a dream could foreshadow an adventure that a knight is about to embark upon, or a dream might provide a clue for the whereabouts of the dreamer's true love. Usually, acolytes will interpret dreams in terms of the complex symbolic structures of the Theanthropy.

*Counseling* is a much more straightforward aspect of the psychology skill. Clerics with this subskill are particularly apt at helping others to investigate and to evaluate their own lives. In addition to identifying problems, a character with this skill may also suggest changes in behavior that will help solve those problems.

The power of *Healing* is not a skill a character can learn. Rather, Healing is a gift bestowed on particularly worthy individuals who have proven their purity and strength of character over and over again. Only hermits may possess this skill. No character may simultaneously have the Healing and Prophecy skills (see below). When attempting to heal another character, the healer places his hands on the wounded character's open wounds, and prays to the Higher Power for assistance. When making the skill check, the



amount of stamina damage the character has sustained, and twice the amount of body damage, are always subtracted from the roll. However, on those rare occasions when the check succeeds, the wounded character is always completely healed, with all of his stamina and body points instantly restored. A hermit may never heal an android character.

For example: A hermit attempts to heal Sir Dornard, who has suffered 13 points of stamina damage and 5 points of body damage. The hermit's Psyche score is 33. When the hermit's player rolls for the healing attempt, he subtracts 23 (stamina damage of 13 plus twice the body damage), so he needs 10 or less on the dice to succeed. If he fails, Sir Dornard's condition remains the same, but if he succeeds, all of Sir Dornard's injuries miraculously vanish.

Another skill that is bestowed rather than learned is the gift of *Prophecy*. Because of the nature of these divine gifts, no hermit character may have both Healing and Prophecy simultaneously. Only hermits may have this skill at all, and they cannot call on the power at will. Rather, images of future events appear to the prophet whenever the Higher Power deems. These visions will always have some high, grand design, such as "a deliverer will arrive at sundown to free the land from the clutches of the cruel ogre." Prophecies will never be anything as mundane as, "there's a dwarf waiting behind a rock at the next crossroads." No matter what they portend, prophecies always come true in the end, which makes them difficult for the CM to role play. Just keep in mind that changing one's course of action to try to prevent a prophecy from coming true has long been proven to be a major cause of why such prophecies are ultimately fulfilled.

## Sciences

Like the Humanities group, the *Sciences* group can include many subjects not listed below. As always, the GM should exercise her discretion as to which areas she will allow, and to how specific she wishes the

characters' skills to be. In general, only sourcerers and technicians may learn any skills in the Sciences group.

Some of the *Specific Fields* a scientist may choose to study include: astronomy, chemistry, biology and physics. In the *Once and Future King* universe, *Physics* is divided into subskills based on whether the scientist is proficient in *Direct Space*, our known three-dimensional universe, or *Sidespace*, the gray dimension that lies parallel to our own.

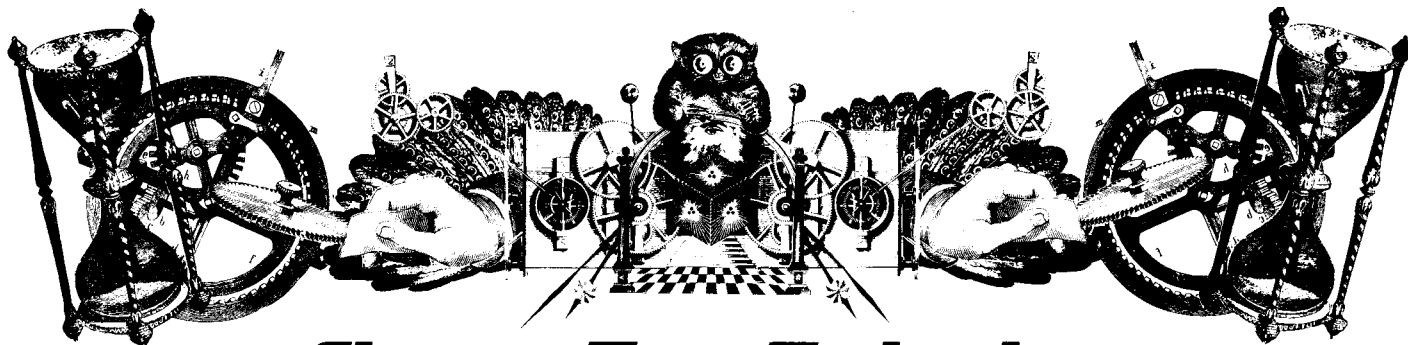
The *Technology* skill represents the use of scientific principles and knowledge in practical form. Specifically, technologists use this skill to design, to analyze, and to create the wide variety of gizmos, gadgets, and mechanisms found in the 46th century. Such creations carry the generic term "devices." See Chapter Two for a complete description of how technology works in the *Once and Future King* universe.

Technology has three subskills. *Device Creation* represents a technician's ability to design and to build brand new devices from scratch. *Deciphering Devices* covers a technologist's ability to analyze a device he has not previously encountered, and to determine its powers and use. *Device Maintenance and Repair* indicates how well a technologist is able to take care of wear and tear on devices. This skill also reflects his ability to repair broken or damaged devices. Page 53 describes the use of these subskills in detail.

## Travel

As in most role playing games, characters in the *Once and Future King* universe spend a lot of time getting from here to there. To do so successfully and easily requires the *Navigation* and *Piloting* skills. Each of these areas encompasses three subskills, which represent different types of navigational and piloting situations. Characters use the *Planetary* skill when traveling across the surface of a planet. Characters moving through *Direct Space* travel directly from one planetary body to another, without using a sidespace displacement field. When moving through sidespace, a character must refer to her *Sidespace* subskills.





## ***Chapter Two: Technology***

By the 46th century, research has raised science to such a level that most citizens consider technology an almost mythological power, harnessed and understood by only a handful of specially-trained individuals called technologists. Indoctrinated from birth in the ways of science, technologists inspire the same sort of superstitious awe as did the magicians and wizards of old.

In the *Once and Future King* universe, there is no "true magic." That is, no supernatural force exists that can be tapped into and harnessed through spells, rituals, and so forth. However, the spiritual power of the people sometimes manifests itself in the form of strange and miraculous events. These unpredictable and uncontrollable forces are the concern of the clerics of the Theanthropy, not technologists. Chapter Eight contains more detail on these spiritual phenomena.

### **Computers**

Because average humanity has so little knowledge of science and technology, most equipment operates automatically. Virtually every castle in the solar system contains a computer system with innumerable megabytes of memory. All sidespacecraft and direct spacecraft have on-board computers for navigation and piloting assistance. Portable computer modules allow computing power without need for a power source.

A huge central computer mainframe on Avalon, the technology school in sidespace, organizes and controls all the computers in the solar system. Thanks to breakthroughs in sidespace technology centuries ago, almost every computer terminal has instantaneous access to the central mainframe (and vice versa), despite the vast distances involved. A small transceiver modem located in the circuitry of every computer, capable of broadcasting and receiving signals through the sidespace domain, makes this vast linkage possible.

The central mainframe contains vast amounts of data, comparable to every printed word ever published in the solar system by the year 4430. This information is organized in a complex hierarchical structure, which sometimes makes accessing certain

information difficult or impossible. Every file includes an access code, which defines it as being anything from totally unrestricted to top secret. The Computer Systems (Solar System Central Mainframe) skill allows a technologist to gain entry to these files.

The degree of protection specified by the access code modifies a technologist's skill check for gaining access to files and programs on the mainframe. Common programs, for piloting a sidespaceship, displaying a schematic of a lasersword, or sending a message to another terminal, have a very simple access code, and entail no modifications to the user's skill check.

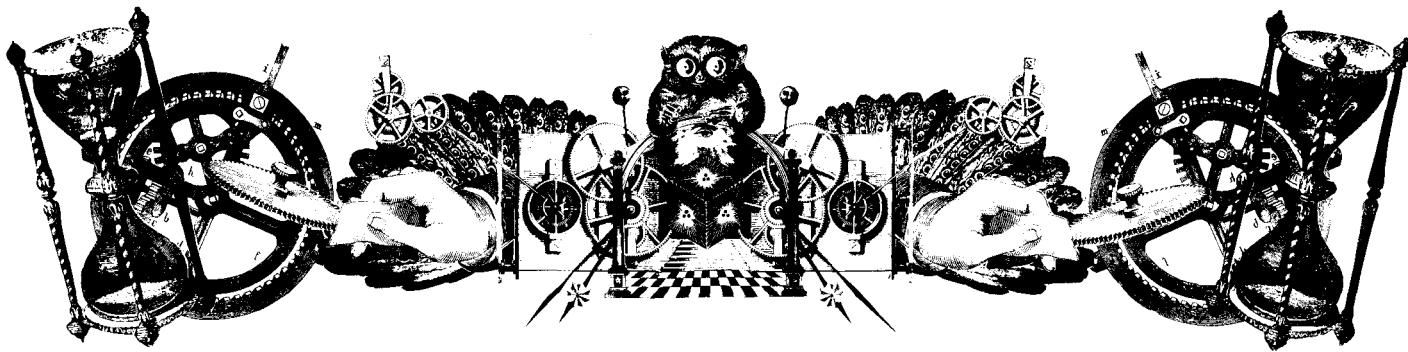
More restricted files require more skill to access. The security system for a castle, for instance, requires a complex password, a voice print analysis and a retinal scan identification. These kinds of access code barriers can modify a skill check in the range of -5 to -30.

In addition to the central mainframe, many localized computer systems run their own programs. While still connected to the central mainframe, these systems might occasionally run applications independently of the main system. A technologist uses the Computer Systems (Access Terminals) skill to gain access to these programs and files. Any program that runs unmonitored by the central mainframe is known as a module.

### **Computer Programming**

One of the most intensive and difficult courses in the School of Avalon is computer programming. The central mainframe alone contains over a thousand years of data and programs stored in its microchips. Since science and technology continue to improve, technologists constantly modify the software running on the central mainframe.

During the course of an adventure, the PCs may want to create a new program to run on the central mainframe. Technologists use the Computer Programming (System Programming) skill to create any new applications. As with computer operation, the modifications made to the skill check depend on the complexity of the program the technologist wishes to create. A character



could create and execute a simple program, such as a search-and-retrieval program designed to track down known sightings of the Questing Beast, with no modifiers to her skill check. A more complex program, such as a program to locate and eliminate all evidence of Sir Mordred's involvement with Morgan Le Fay, would involve a modifier range of -15 to -30.

In addition to creating new programs from scratch, some technologists have studied the central mainframe to such an extent that they can rewrite portions of the operating software, known as the source code, thus becoming known as "sourcerers." Most of the time, only the Lady of Avalon or one of her Trustees performs this kind of programming. Generally, the Lady only alters the source code in order to keep the mainframe up-to-date with advances in technology. The last time the source code had a major overhaul was 2000 years ago, when new technology made it possible to include retinal patterns as part of file access codes. Because of the complex programming sequences involved, only technologists who have mastered the Source Code Programming specialization of Computer Programming can attempt such a revision.

Technologists may also write computer programs for the local computer systems mentioned above. These programs are generally simpler than mainframe programs, and they are distinguished by the fact that they run without being detected by the central system. This kind of local program is called a module. Technologists can create such a program using their Computer Programming (Module Programming) skill.

## Merlin

From the year 3136, when it appeared in the central mainframe unannounced, to the year 4503, when the sourceress Nimue took it off-line, the Merlin AI became the most conspicuous symbol of the central mainframe. Rumors state that the legendary software engineer Kevin Blaise created Merlin to act as a safeguard and a protector of humanity, though history remains mute on the subject. At first, Merlin merely

contained an extremely sophisticated form of artificial intelligence, but shortly after the first rebellion by the outworld colonies, driven by its programming to preserve the human race, it gained self-awareness. It is believed that the name "Merlin" originated as an acronym of some kind, but again history has closed its doors on the subject.

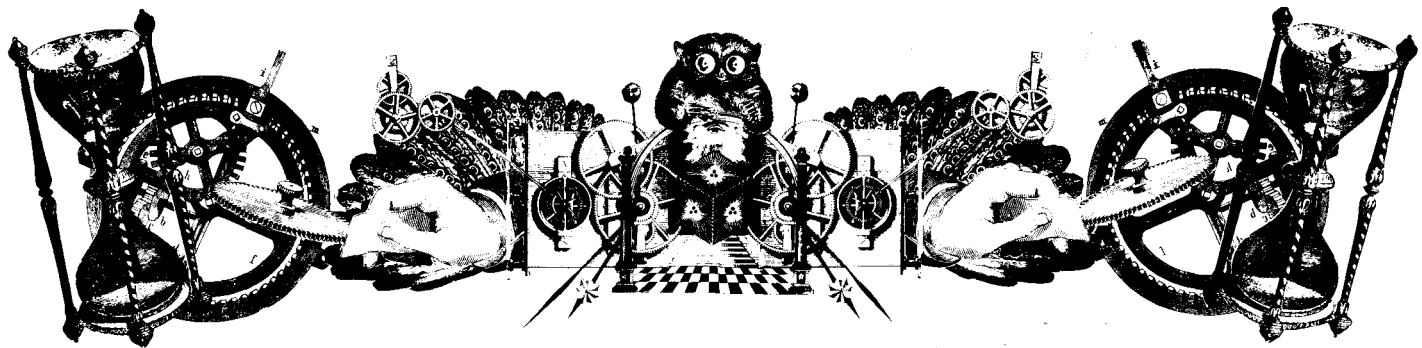
During the years of civil war Merlin subtly manipulated people and events, and preserved knowledge of science and technology that might otherwise have been lost. Merlin even helped to create the clone warriors who ultimately ended the wars and created the new kingdoms.

It later became evident that during the years of strife, Merlin had begun a long-term program meant to insure the well-being of the human race. It realized that the clone warriors could prove to be as great a danger as the rebels, and thus initiated a series of events that would ultimately lead to the creation of a part-human, part-clone monarch who could unite the factions of the Solar System. To this end, he gave unprecedented assistance to a clone warrior known as Uther Pendragon, helping him to win battles and make alliances. Chapter Four includes a detailed history of Merlin's involvement with Uther. Arthur, the illegitimate son of Uther and the woman Igraine, became Merlin's focus.

Using its influence in Avalon, Merlin oversaw the creation of Caliburn, the famous sword in the stone, and it supervised the construction of a complex android able to pass as an elderly human. Merlin transferred the core of its consciousness into this android, and became the young Arthur's tutor using the alias Emrys. Not until Arthur became king and established the Round Table fellowship of knights did Merlin return its core consciousness to the central mainframe.

In the following years, Merlin's probability analysis algorithms predicted the end of the Round Table and the decline of King Arthur. Not wishing to see its careful planning come to nothing, Merlin began working extensively with a young sourceress named Nimue on a plan that would ultimately remove humanity from all decision-making in the solar system. Nimue pretended to go along with Merlin's plans, but when she had





gained enough information on Merlin's core algorithms, she disconnected the program and filed it under an access code only she could decipher.

In the later years of King Arthur's reign, Nimue became a close adviser to the monarch, frequently making use of programs and information available only through Merlin's subroutines. It is not known whether Merlin has ever escaped from its microchip "prison."

## Androids

Androids are artificial humans created during the Colonial Wars to combat the clone warriors of the Terran Federation. When first constructed, they were all identical in features and capabilities. Unknown to their creators, however, Merlin had added subtle programming of its own to the androids' artificial intelligence algorithms. As the androids gained more experience and knowledge, they began to build a consciousness of their own. Eventually, the androids became sentient individuals.

By the time the Colonial Wars came to an end, the androids had become recognized as an independent race with free will and basic rights. Because of their newfound desire for individuality, many of the artificial humanoids altered their appearance to distinguish themselves from one another. Although technically neuter in gender, most of these "humanized" androids programmed themselves to behave according to gender-specific patterns. Some androids have even formed romantic relationships with one another. Finding no other pattern to follow, the androids patterned themselves after humanity, so they obey the same laws and social customs as do biological humans.

After the end of the Colonial Wars, Merlin closed down all computer files on android design and construction techniques. It claimed "security reasons" for the restriction. Thus, no new androids have been constructed for many years. Although, theoretically, androids could live for as long as replacement power supplies and parts are available, there has been a slow attrition of androids over the intervening years,

as they have been damaged beyond repair, malfunctioned, or simply run out of power. Where there were once nearly a million androids roaming the solar system, now only about 10,000 remain.

## Android Construction

Although designed to resemble humans in many ways, androids are mechanical in nature, not biological. Where humans have bones, muscles, and blood, androids have polyaluminum supports, servomotors, and lubricant. The diagram on page 45 gives an example of a typical android construction.

**Neurotronic Processor:** The "brain" of an android, this highly compact CPU emulates the functions of the human brain. Individual intellectual capacity in androids varies almost as much as in humans, but androids have more logical thought processes and they enjoy complete holographic memories. Their main processor also includes an independent power battery allowing function and data retention for up to 10 weeks should the android's head become detached from its main power supply.

**Audio-visual inputs:** Androids are able to see and hear in wavelengths beyond the range of humans. They can see into the infrared and ultraviolet spectrums, and they hear certain ultrasonic and infrasonic sound frequencies.

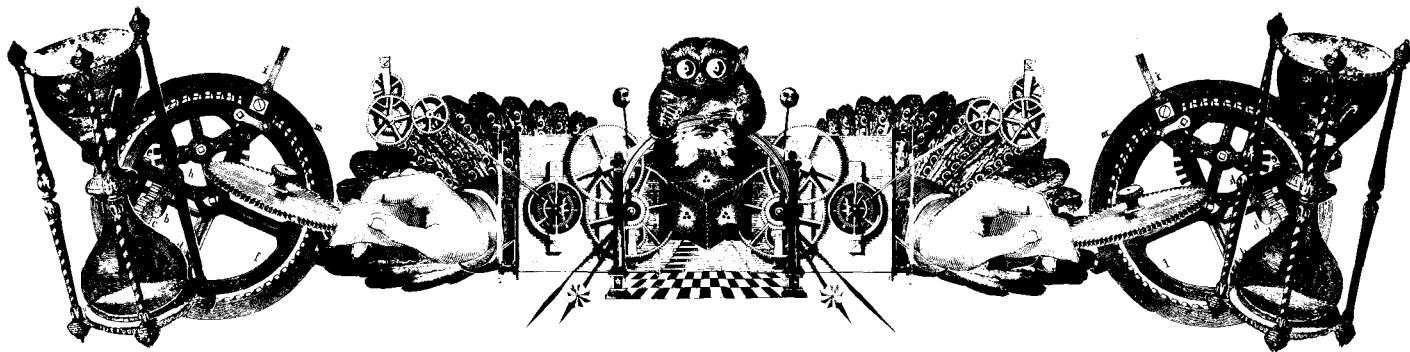
**Power Supply:** An android's main energy source is an atomic battery protected by a double shielding of polyaluminum. The battery can generate sufficient energy to keep the android's systems running at peak efficiency for 60 to 75 years. Most androids replace their battery every 60 years, to be on the safe side.

**Servomotors:** Located in all of an android's joint areas, the servomotors allow their limbs to duplicate any human movement. At first, facial movement was nearly impossible, but research by android technologists discovered a means of installing artificial muscles made out of polyaluminum fibers, making possible such expressions as smiling, frowning, and even snarling.

**Epidermal Covering:** A layer of light blue synthetic skin covers the entire surface of an android's body.







This skin is composed of three layers of fibers, the middle layer of which contains a pressure- and disconnection-sensitive mesh giving the androids a sense of touch equal to a human's. Many philosophers, both human and android, have debated whether or not this enables the androids to experience painful and pleasurable sensations.

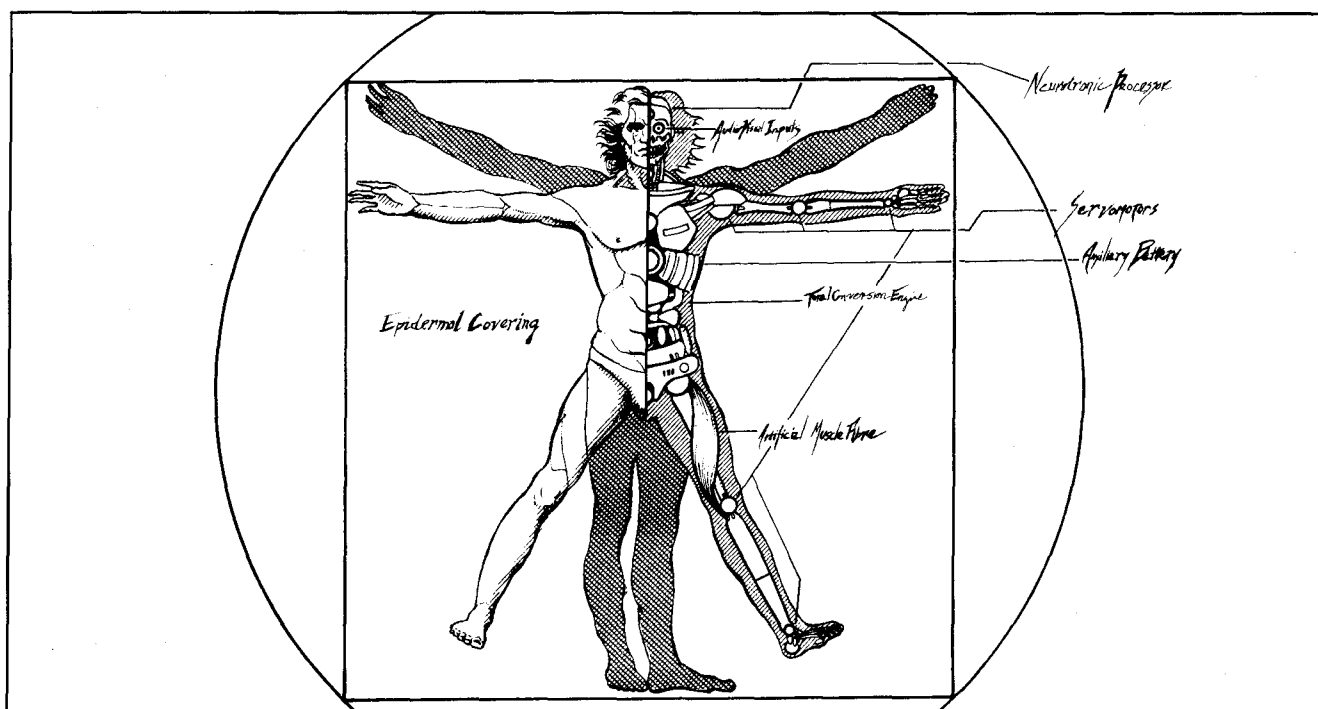
### Android PCs

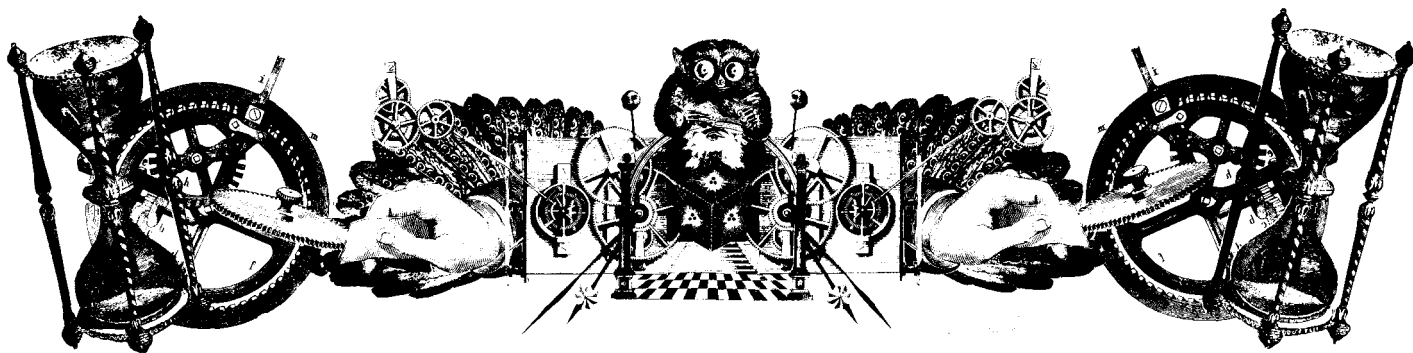
Although rare, it is possible for an android to become a knight, technologist, or courtier. The Theanthropy recognizes the androids' right to exist, but has never allowed an artificial being to become an acolyte. Since the androids know where they came from, having been invented and built, they have little use for human theological belief systems.

The primary difference in playing an android character arises in the area of damage. Androids have some internal maintenance systems, which allow

them to heal stamina damage at the usual rate. However, a technologist with the Android Repair & Maintenance skill must repair any body damage an android takes. If the android character himself has this skill, he may perform repairs on himself, but only if his current body point total is greater than half of his base body score. If the android has sustained body damage more than half his base value, the android is far too damaged to attempt any repairs on himself.

In order to repair an android, the technician must have access to sufficient replacement parts and tools. If the repair situation is less than ideal (such as trying to fix an android in the dungeon of an enemy knight), the CM may assess penalties as he sees fit. When making the skill check, the player always subtracts the amount of body damage the android has sustained from the roll. The amount of time taken to repair an android is generally twenty minutes per point of damage to be repaired. However, in some situations a technician may need to rush the job, thus decreasing the possibility of success.





For every turn less than the base needed to repair the damage, the GM should assess a -5 penalty to the skill check. Success on this roll indicates that the technologist successfully repaired the android and has restored the android's Body score to its full value.

For example: A technician, Herman, attempts to repair Sir XP-423, an android who has suffered 8 points of body damage. The technician's Android Repair & Maintenance skill score is 35. When Herman's player rolls for the repair attempt, he subtracts 8, so he needs 27 or less on the dice to succeed. Herman is in no hurry, so he takes the full amount of time needed to repair the android knight (8 points x 20 minutes = 160 minutes or two hours and 40 minutes). If he fails, Sir XP-423's condition remains the same, but if he succeeds, he repairs Sir XP-423's damage and restores all the android's body points.

### Optional Rule

Of course, it is possible that androids might be only partially repaired, especially in the middle of an adventure, when time and resources may be scarce. In this case, the CM should assign a Margin Rating to the repair attempt. (See "Margin Ratings" in the System Guide section.) Partial success would then translate into a partial repair of the android.

## Sidespace and Direct Space

In the year 2287, a theoretical physicist working at the top secret Epsilon Base on Earth's moon postulated a theory suggesting that an entirely separate universe could exist in addition to our own. Furthermore, he stated that this other universe, or "sidespace," existed on a dimensional plane that was parallel to "direct space," and could be physically entered by manipulating certain subatomic energy wave patterns.

It was over 20 years before someone proved the theory correct. In 2301, a scientist named Arnold Dawson, working completely on his own, managed to project a radio signal into sidespace and back out again. To his surprise, he found that by taking a "shortcut" through

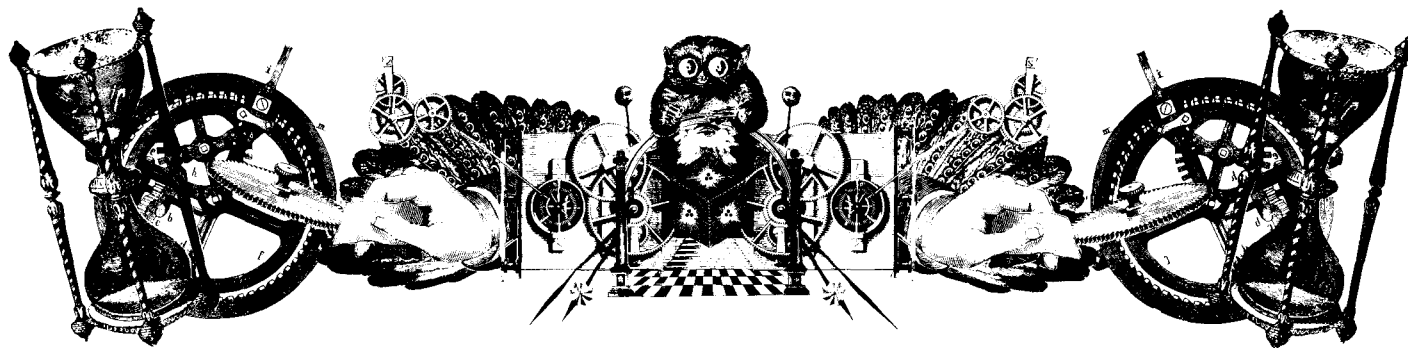
sidespace, the radio waves could move between two points at a relative speed faster than the speed of light. Sidespace communications revolutionized space travel and colonization, since it allowed signals to be transmitted to and from Earth nearly instantaneously, instead of suffering from the delays normally associated with direct space's interplanetary distances.

Over 700 years later, scientists reached a milestone in sidespace technology when they found a means by which to shift solid objects into and out of sidespace. Colonel "Flash" Michelson was the first human ever to travel in sidespace. In an interplanetary craft modified with the experimental sidespace displacement field, Col. Michelson went from Earth's moon to the Jovian moon Io in one hour, four minutes, 35.6 seconds. He reported that sidespace was a great, formless, gray space that seemed to be composed of nothingness. Without sophisticated navigational instruments and stationary beacons, it would be easy to become forever lost in sidespace's amorphous vastness.

By the time of King Arthur, sidespace communications and travel have become commonplace. The sidespace station known as Avalon has been in existence for over a thousand years. The only permanent portal between direct space and sidespace links Avalon with a secret location near Glastonbury in the kingdom of Logres on Terra.

There are two main engines that make sidespace travel possible. The first is the sidespace displacement field generator, used to transfer a ship from direct space into sidespace and vice versa. The second engine is a fusion propulsion drive, a machine that uses nuclear fusion to propel a ship through either direct space or sidespace. The combination of these two engines allows a sidespaceship to make interplanetary trips in much less time than it would take to travel the entire distance in direct space.

There are still some craft in the solar system not equipped with the displacement field generator, but these generally transport only cargo or commoners. Most nobility consider direct space ships to be beneath their dignity.



## Technological Devices

The *Once and Future King* universe abounds with a wide variety of high-tech gizmos, gadgets, and inventions, both casual and fantastic. These pieces of equipment are generally known by the simple term "devices." A device can be anything as simple as a sword or a lance, or as complex as a jet pack or an invisibility belt.

### Device Basics

Devices are divided into three *Types*. *Nontech* (type N) devices include anything that would not require a technician or a sourcerer to create or repair. They are also generally available to anyone, whether commoner or nobility. *Semitech* (type S) devices are gadgets definitely high-tech by 20th-century standards, but fairly commonplace in the far future of King Arthur. Most armor and weapons fall into this category. *Hitech* (type H) devices are usually one-of-a-kind, designed and built from scratch by a technician or sourcerer. This might include a crystal ball that can eavesdrop on conversations half a world away, holographic projectors that make someone appear to be where they are not, and so on.

Like characters, devices have a certain number of *Body* points. Usually, a device will only suffer damage if it is specifically targeted in combat. Any damage sustained by a device is automatically subtracted from its body; devices have no stamina. A device that has lost half its original body will no longer function, and if the body points of a device fall to 0 the device is damaged beyond repair.

Every device also includes a *Cost* in bezants, which represents the average amount a character must pay to obtain it. The availability and price of each device always varies, depending on the time and circumstances surrounding the purchase.

The *Weight* of a device more properly indicates its mass rather than its weight. Some planets in the solar system pull less gravity than others, and there-

fore the weight of any object will vary somewhat. Assume that the weight listed for each device is how much it would weigh on Terra.

*Complexity* encompasses a measure of how difficult the device is to identify, repair, and create. The number listed is the amount subtracted from any skill checks made using the Technology skill on the device. *XP Cost* is an indicator of how much experience it would cost for a technician or sourcerer to design such a device from scratch (see Creating Devices, below). Generally, nontech and semitech devices have N/A (not applicable) for their XP Cost, since these devices have been in existence for decades at the very least.

### Common Equipment

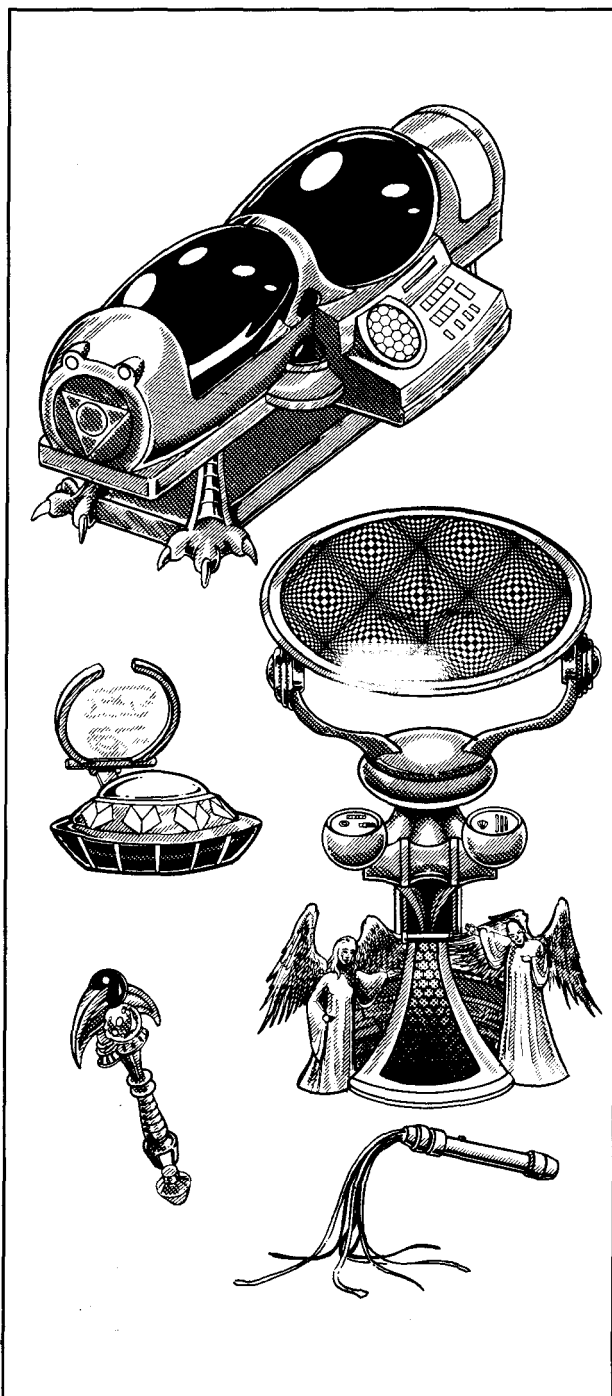
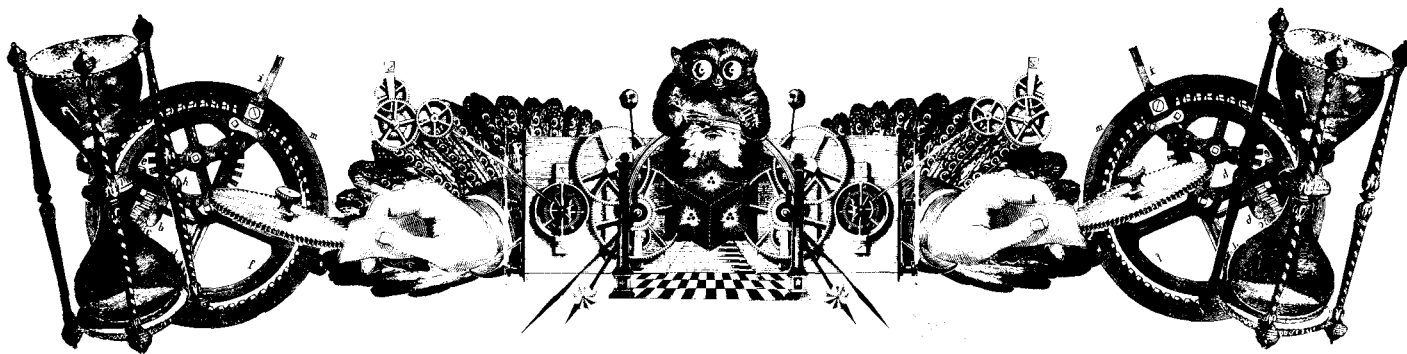
The following are devices any group of PCs might find useful during the course of an adventure. This is not an all-inclusive list, but should give the GM and players a feel for the sorts of things available in the *Once and Future King* universe. Keep in mind that the setting is the 46th century—"medieval" is only superficially accurate to describe their highly advanced technology.

#### Portable Computer Terminal

Type: S	Complexity: N/A
Body: 10	Weight: 1 kg
Cost: 1200 bezants	XP Cost: N/A

This computer terminal resembles a small octagon that opens to reveal a holographic, 3D viewscreen. The user interface is wholly vocal; ask a question, hear the answer (and maybe even see and feel it). Characters can carry it on almost any adventure, and it has an internal power source. Once activated, its sidespace transceiver can make contact with the central mainframe in seconds, allowing access to a limited range of data files and programs.





### Field Medical Rod

Type: S  
Body: 10  
Cost: 2000 bezants

Complexity: N/A  
Weight: 5 kg  
XP Cost: N/A

By connecting a brain module to this hand-held rod, field medics initiate a complex sequence including diagnosis, treatment, and followup care. The interface is again vocal. Nanotech surgery is a common programming for a brain module; such rods are capable of extruding hollow injection tubes through which the nanomeds are deployed.

### Medical Tube

Type: S  
Body: 100  
Cost: N/A

Complexity: N/A  
Weight: 65 kg  
XP Cost: N/A

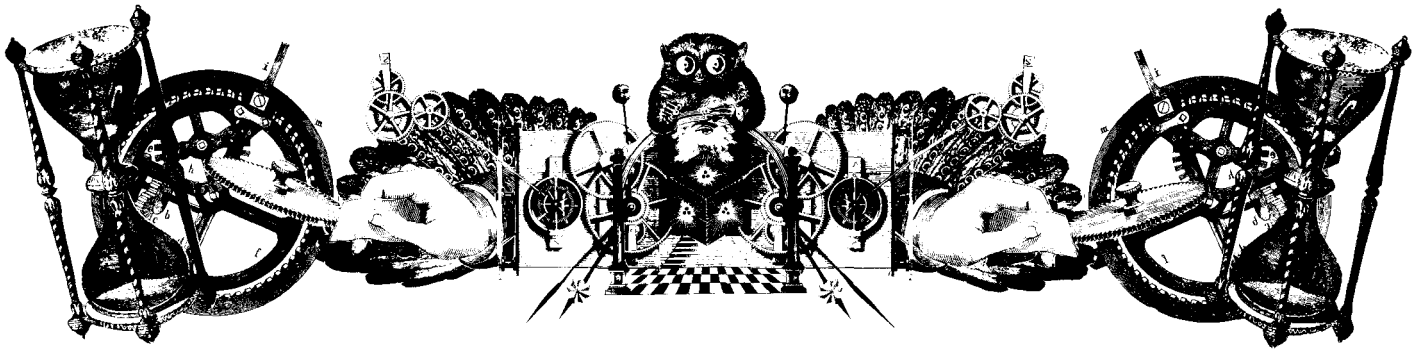
A medical tube is a complete, self-contained medical facility. Most castles contain a medical tube, and even some hermitages and churches have them. All humans need do is put the patient in the tube, which is programmed for complete medical treatment. Scanners diagnose the patient's condition and immediately begin treatment, up to and including complicated surgical procedures. In game terms, a medical tube doubles the recovery rate of lost body points and quadruples the rate of lost stamina points. *Note:* A medical tube has no effect on android characters.

### Handheld Sidespace Transceiver

Type: S  
Body: 5  
Cost: 25 bezants

Complexity: N/A  
Weight: 0.5 kg  
XP Cost: N/A

This handheld transceiver can broadcast over any of the 10,000 separate frequencies used on the inhabited worlds of the Solar System. It also contains a scrambler circuit for coding classified transmissions.



### **Pavilion**

Type: S	Complexity: N/A
Body: 45	Weight: 30 kg
Cost: 5000 bezants	XP Cost: N/A

A pavilion is essentially a portable home away from home for a knight and his followers. When not in use, the pavilion collapses into a small bundle easily carried in saddlebags or a backpack. When activated, it expands into a building with 1,000 to 2,000 square feet of space. The pavilion contains sleeping, bathing, and cooking facilities. More sophisticated models also have an active security system that keeps out intruders.

### **Scourge**

Type: S	Complexity: N/A
Body: 5	Weight: 0.25 kg
Cost: 5 bezants	XP Cost: N/A

A scourge is a tool used frequently by the Theanthropy as a means of penance. When lightly tapped against the back or chest, it delivers a painful though harmless shock. It can do no real damage, but the pain it causes is designed to teach malefactors the benefits of a moral life.

### **Electric Hairshirt**

Type: S	Complexity: N/A
Body: 3	Weight: 0.5 kg
Cost: 0 bezants	XP Cost: N/A

The electric hairshirt is a garment worn by hermits and used for the same purpose as a scourge, namely to cause discomfort leading to moral enlightenment. A hairshirt is particularly badly woven, and has electrical contacts throughout it that give off a continual low-level charge that is uncomfortable but not debilitating. It is said that Sir Lancelot du Lac wore an electric hairshirt for over a year and a half while on the Quest for the Holy Grail.

## **Vehicles**

Most of the time, a knight and his company travel on the backs of hoversteeds, robohorses, or even real horses. However, for crossing intercontinental and planetary distances, the following vehicles prove a bit more practical. When traveling at high speeds, it is usually best to leave piloting of any hovership to the on-board computer.

### **Hovership, Personal**

Type: S	Complexity: N/A
Body: 200	Weight: 500 kg
Cost: 10,000 bezants	XP Cost: N/A

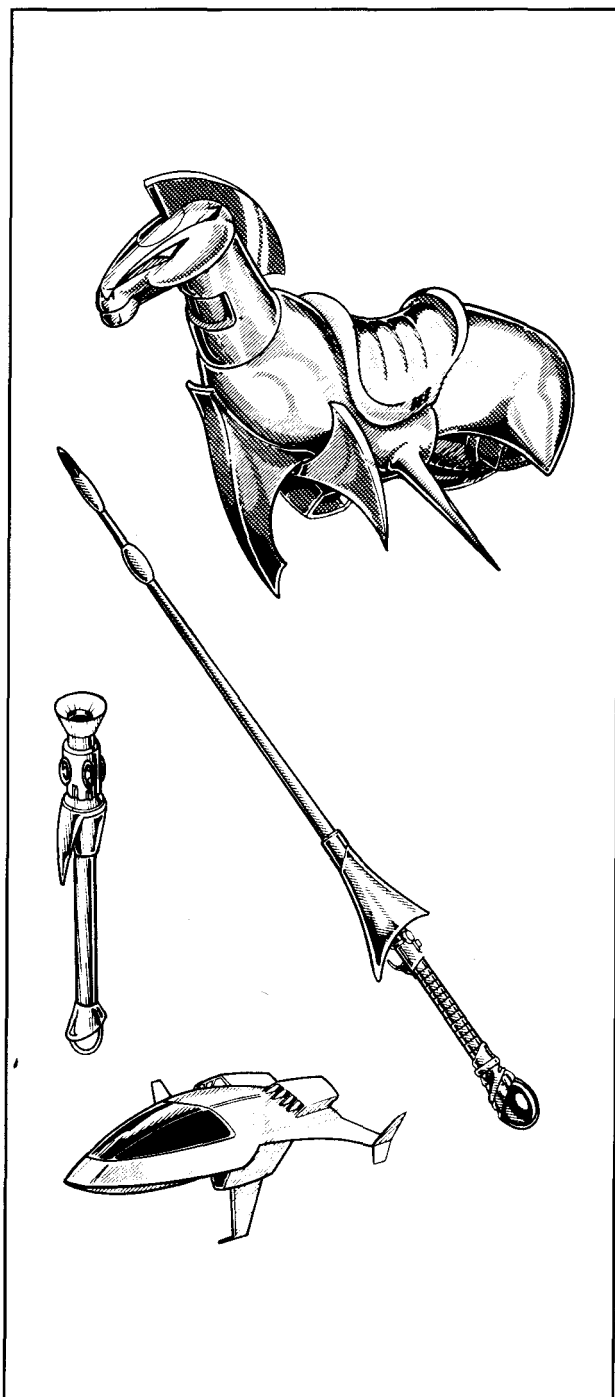
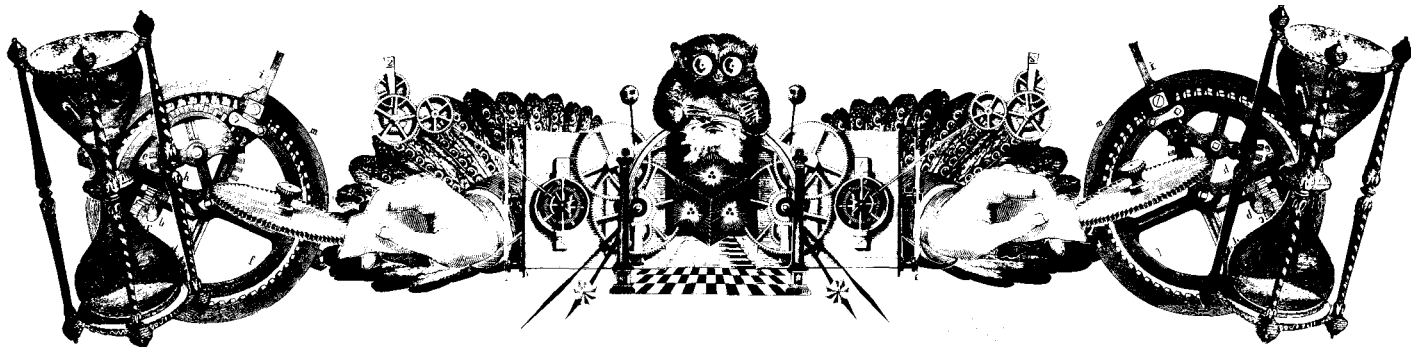
The personal hovership is just large enough to carry one person and his personal equipment. If the character carries no equipment, a second person might be able to squeeze into the cargo compartment, at the GM's discretion. Its chassis and body are made of polyaluminum, its cruising speed is 1,000 kilometers per hour, and it can carry up to 800 kilograms. The maximum altitude a personal hovership can maintain without suffering from steering and navigational problems is approximately 500 meters above solid ground, or 250 meters above water.

### **Hovership, Transport**

Type: S	Complexity: N/A
Body: 250	Weight: 1,500 kg
Cost: 30,000 bezants	XP Cost: N/A

Larger and more spacious than the personal hovership, the transport hovership can carry up to 10 passengers and has a cargo capacity of 3,000 kilograms. Essentially a flying bus, its cruising speed is a mere 800 kph. The optimal altitude for the transport hovership is 400 meters above ground and 200 meters above water.





### Hovership, Cargo

Type: S

Body: 400

Cost: 90,000 bezants

Complexity: N/A

Weight: 6,000 kg

XP Cost: N/A

The great-granddaddy of all hoverships, the cargo hovership has a carrying capacity of 25,000 kilograms and a cruising speed of 600 kph. However, because of its bulk, the cargo hovership flies best at an altitude 200 meters or less above ground, or 100 meters above water.

### Mounts

There are three different kinds of mounts used by knights and other characters in the *Once and Future King* universe: hoversteeds, robohorses, and live horses. Of these, live horses are the most rare, due to their costly upkeep and the difficulty of adapting them to other worlds. Statistics for live horses appear with statistics for other fauna in Chapter Seven.

Characters ride and control both types of artificial horse listed below the same way. Sensors in the knight's helmet (or lady's headgear, or technician's hat) pick up commands directly from the rider's brain and transmit those commands to the mount's CPU. This system equates to the minor gestures and nudges that a rider uses to help guide a live horse. In any case, characters accomplish primary steering by manipulating a set of controls designed to duplicate reins.

### Robohorse

Type: S

Body: 120

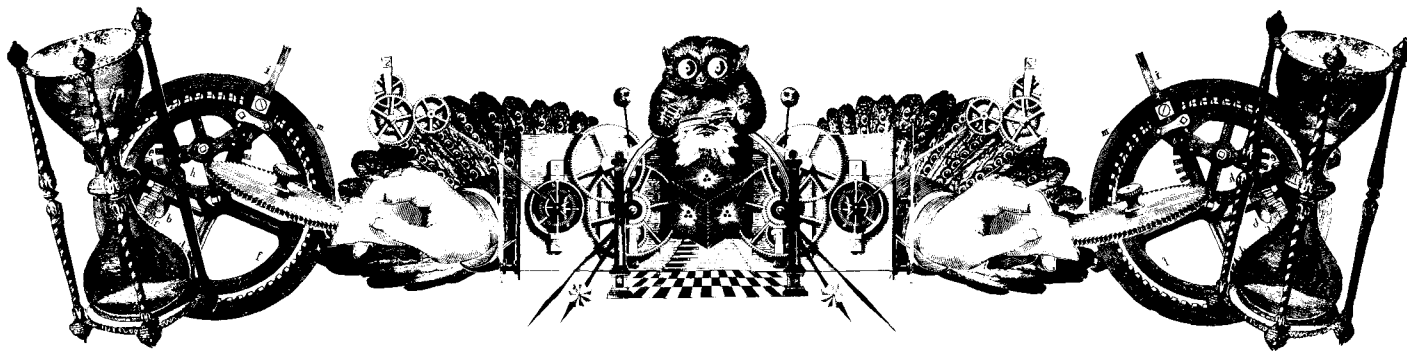
Cost: 2,750 bezants

Complexity: 10

Weight: 800 kg

XP Cost: N/A

The robohorse was the first artificial steed invented for the knighthood. A robohorse is much heavier and slower than a real horse (the top speed of a well-tuned robohorse is 50 kph), but many older knights still prefer them to the newer hoversteeds. The carrying capacity of a robohorse is 350 kg, including its rider.



## Hoversteed

Type: H Complexity: 20  
 Body: 85 Weight: 300 kg  
 Cost: 4,500 bezants XP Cost: 215

The hoversteed was developed during the reign of King Vortimer, around the year 4423. At first, many of the nobility scoffed at these legless mechanical mounts, but after the generals Uther and Aurelius managed to overthrow Vortimer using a hoversteed cavalry, the new mount rapidly gained in popularity. Almost all the younger Knights of the Round Table prefer the hoversteed. More maneuverable and faster than a robohorse, a hoversteed reaches speeds up to 80 kph on level ground.

## Weapons

In addition to the basic attributes common to all devices, weapons possess certain unique properties. The Modified Attack Score modifier (MAS) represents the number of points added to the MAS when a knight uses the weapon in a joust. Damage Dice is the number of additional six-sided dice of damage that a knight can inflict when using this particular type of weapon. The number following the slash after a weapon's damage dice represents the weapon's lethality rating.

Lances have a Base To Break percentage, representing the base chance that the lance will break if a knight makes a successful hit against an opponent while tilting. A detailed explanation of jousting follows in Chapter Three.

Projectile weapons list ranges for short, medium, and long distances. These are the distance in meters that represent the effective range at which the weapon can be fired. Refer to the AMAZING ENGINE™ System Guide portion of this book for details on the use of projectile weapons. Remember, projectile weapons are contrary to the Code of Arms and a chivalrous knight would never use one.

## Special Weapons

### Excalibur

Type: H Complexity: 30  
 Body: 80 Weight: 1.5 kg  
 Cost: priceless XP Cost: 200  
 MAS: +10 Damage Dice: 4d6/3

### Excalibur Sheath

Type: H Complexity: 35  
 Body: 40 Weight: 2 kg  
 Cost: priceless XP Cost: 350

Excalibur is the famous sword of King Arthur, and the weapon with which he is most closely linked. Many historians later confused Excalibur with the Sword in the Stone, Caliburn, but in fact, Excalibur was given to King Arthur, along with its remarkable sheath, after the Sword in the Stone was broken in battle.

Excalibur itself is made of durocarbonated polyaluminum, with a monomolecular edge and point. Special sensors within the blade actually seek out vulnerable points in the armor of Arthur's opponent. The sheath includes a miniaturized force field generator that constantly monitors its wearer's health. If the sheath detects a wound, it immediately creates a small force field around the injury, stanching any bleeding until the wearer can receive proper medical attention.

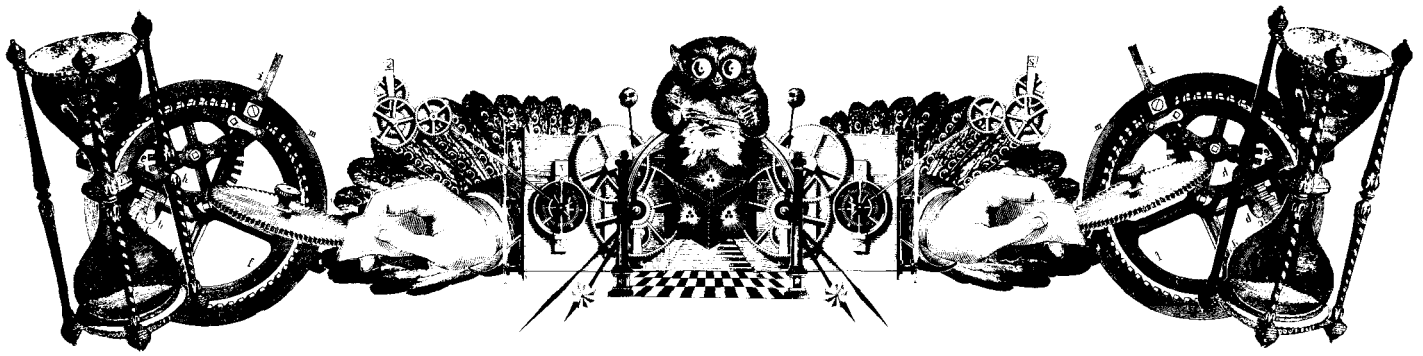
In 4490, Arthur's half-sister, the sorceress Morgan Le Fay, stole Excalibur and its sheath, and she replaced them with duplicates that superficially resembled the originals, but contained none of their technological enhancements. King Arthur later recovered Excalibur from Le Fay's paramour, Sir Accolon, but the evil sorceress destroyed the sheath.

### Caliburn (The Sword in the Stone)

Type: H Complexity: 45  
 Body: 65 Weight: 4 kg  
 Cost: priceless XP Cost: 500  
 MAS: +7 Damage Dice: 3d6/2



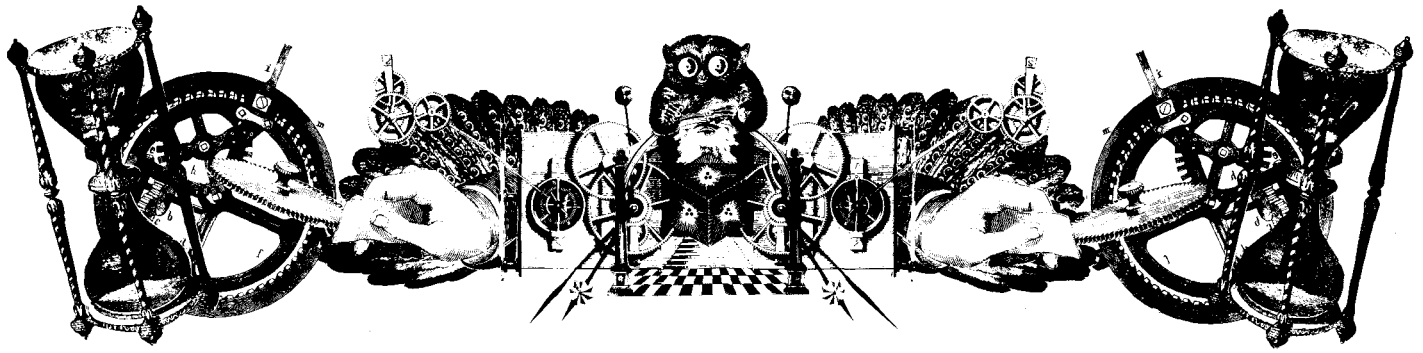




## Weapon Chart

	Type	Complexity	Body	Weight	Cost	XP Cost	MAS mod	Damage Dice
<b>Swords</b>								
Polyaluminum Sword	N	N/A	40	4kg	150 bt	N/A	+3	1d6/2
Plastisword	S	N/A	30	2kg	100 bt	N/A	+3	1d6/1
Lasersword	H	5	45	2 kg	200 bt	15	+5	2d6/2
<b>Lances</b>								
Wooden Lance	N	N/A	20	5 kg	400 bt	N/A	+8	2d6/2
(Base To Break: 10%)								
Plastilance	S	N/A	30	4 kg	200 bt	N/A	+5	2d6/1
(Base To Break: 5%)								
Energylance	H	5	45	4 kg	350 bt	20	+10	3d6/2
(Base To Break: 0%)								
<b>Miscellaneous Melee Weapons</b>								
Polyaluminum Mace	N	N/A	40	5kg	75 bt	N/A	+2	1d6/2
Energy Mace	H	5	45	3kg	125 bt	15	+3	2d6/1
Polyaluminum Morning Star	N	N/A	40	5kg	95 bt	N/A	+4	1d6/3
Plastaxe	S	N/A	30	2kg	85 bt	N/A	+3	1d6/2
Polyaluminum Dagger	N	N/A	20	1kg	50 bt	N/A	0	1d6/1
Plastidagger	S	N/A	15	0.5kg	65 bt	N/A	0	1d6/1
Energy Dagger	H	5	25	0.5kg	125bt	15	0	1d6/2
<b>Projectile Weapons</b>								
Pistol	S	N/A	50	2 kg	250 bt	N/A	N/A	2d6/4
(Range— Short: 15 Medium: 30 Long: 60)								
Semiautomatic Pistol	S	N/A	50	2 kg	400 bt	N/A	N/A	3d6/5
(Range— Short: 15 Medium: 35 Long: 70)								
Rifle	S	N/A	60	4 kg	450 bt	N/A	N/A	2d6/5
(Range — Short: 60 Medium: 100 Long: 150)								
Automatic Rifle	S	N/A	60	4 kg	600 bt	N/A	N/A	3d6/6
(Range — Short: 40 Medium: 80 Long: 125)								
laser	S	N/A	55	0.25kg	500 bt	N/A	N/A	1d6/3
(Range — Short: 3 Medium: 6 Long: 10)								
Type II Laser Pistol	H	10	65	2.5kg	750 bt	N/A	N/A	3d6/5
(Range — Short: 25 Medium: 50 Long: 100)								
Type IV Laser Rifle	H	10	75	5kg	900 bt	N/A	N/A	4d6/6
(Range — Short: 25 Medium: 50 Long: 100)								





## Armor Chart

	Type	Complexity	Body	Weight	Cost	XP Cost	MAS mod	MDS mod	Stamina
<i>Armor</i>									
Polyaluminum Plate Armor	N	N/A	80	25kg	1000bt	N/A	N/A	+425	
Plate Plastarmor	S	N/A	60	20 kg	850 bt	N/A	N/A	+3	20
Cybernetic Plate Armor	H	15	90	25kg	1200bt	25	+5	+8	15
Polyaluminum Tilting Armor"	N	N/A	75	20kg	1100bt	N/A	N/A	+6/-2	20
Tilting Plastarmor"	S	N/A	55	15kg	925 bt	N/A	N/A	+5/-1	16
Cybernetic Tilting Armor*	H	15	85	15kg	1500 bt	25	+5/-5	+10/-4	12
<i>Helmets</i>									
Polyaluminum Helmet	N	N/A	30	1.5kg	150bt	N/A	N/A	+1	N/A
Plastihelmet	S	N/A	20	1kg	125 bt	N/A	N/A	+1	N/A
Cybernetic Helmet	H	10	25	1.5kg	225 bt	20	+1	+2	N/A
<i>Shields</i>									
Polyaluminum Shield	N	N/A	80	25 kg	300 bt	N/A	N/A	+4	5
Plastishield	S	N/A	80	25kg	250 bt	N/A	N/A	+3	9
Tilting shield differs from regular plate armor, in that it is designed solely to be used while tilting (see Chapter 74). It gives extra protection to the left, or target side of the body, while leaving the right side more free to aim and adjust the lance. However, in dueling and general combat, tilting armor can make your knight easier to hit. Therefore, there are two MDS modifiers listed for each type of tilting armor. The first is used while the wearer is tilting and the second is used while dueling.									

The technicians of Avalon created Caliburn under Merlin's guidance. Its blade was made of a special polyaluminum alloy molecularly bonded to a stone and anvil. The hilt comprised special sensors that scanned and identified the genetic pattern of any individual trying to remove the sword from the stone. Only when a person carrying the genetic pattern identified as that of the offspring of King Uther Pendragon and Queen Igraine made the attempt did the sensor signal the sword's micromechanisms to release the blade's molecular bond to the stone.

In a series of battles following his ascension to the monarchy, King Arthur wielded Caliburn with deadly efficiency. However, during one particularly violent fray, Caliburn's blade snapped in two. Saddened by the loss of his sword, the king asked Merlin to provide a replacement, and the program led him to Glastonbury, where he received Excalibur from the Lady of the Lake.

### The Sword of Sir Balin

Type: H Complexity: 25  
 Body: 50 Weight: 4 kg  
 Cost: priceless XP Cost: 150  
 MAS: +5 Damage Dice: 3d6/2

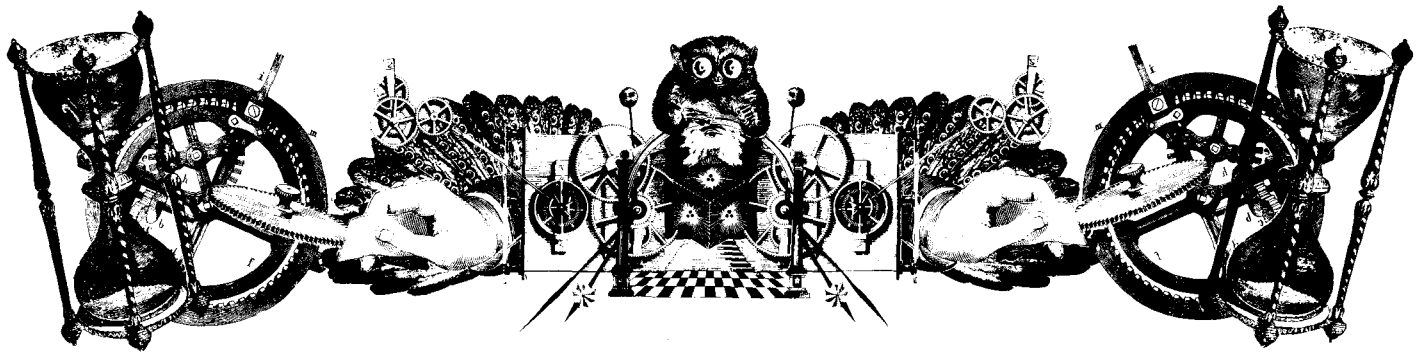
Sir Balin was also known as the Knight of Two Swords, but this weapon is the one which gained renown when it passed to Sir Galahad. After Sir Balin's death, technicians from Avalon took his sword and modified it to have similar properties to Caliburn, King Arthur's original sword. However, this time the sword was not programmed to recognize a specific genetic pattern. Instead, Merlin had remote sensors installed that would allow it to release the sword when a proper candidate presented himself. When the Lady of Avalon deactivated Merlin, she decided that Sir Lancelot's son would be the best knight to receive the sword, and programmed it accordingly.

It is not known what became of the sword of Sir Balin when Sir Galahad was transformed on the Grail world (see page 74).

### Armor

The obvious function of armor is to protect a knight against an opponent's attacks. However, certain types of cybernetic armor actually help to make attacks as well. The chart above lists the characteristics of several different types of armor. The Modified Defense Score modi-





fier (MDS) represents the amount a suit of armor adds to a knight's Modified Defense Score. The stamina of armor represents the points of stamina damage that the armor can absorb in a single round of combat. A knight suffers only the damage that exceeds this amount.

### Tilting Armor

Tilting armor differs from regular plate armor in that it is designed solely to be used for tilting (see Chapter Three). It gives extra protection to the left, or target side of the body, while leaving the right side free to aim and to adjust the lance. However, in dueling and general combat, tilting armor makes a knight easier to hit. Therefore, two MDS modifiers appear for each type of tilting armor. The first applies while the wearer is tilting and the second applies during dueling.

## The Technology Skill

Anyone with the proper contacts can acquire most of the common equipment described so far in this chapter. Technicians, however, always invent new and exciting devices in their isolated workshops that they do not intend for the general public to use. They design and build these devices with the Technology (Device Creation) skill.

### Making A New Device

If a player wants his technician character to create a new device for use in game play, he follows a five-step process. It is assumed that all new devices fall into the hitech type; otherwise characters could obtain the equipment elsewhere, without needing a technician to build one from scratch.

#### Device Creation

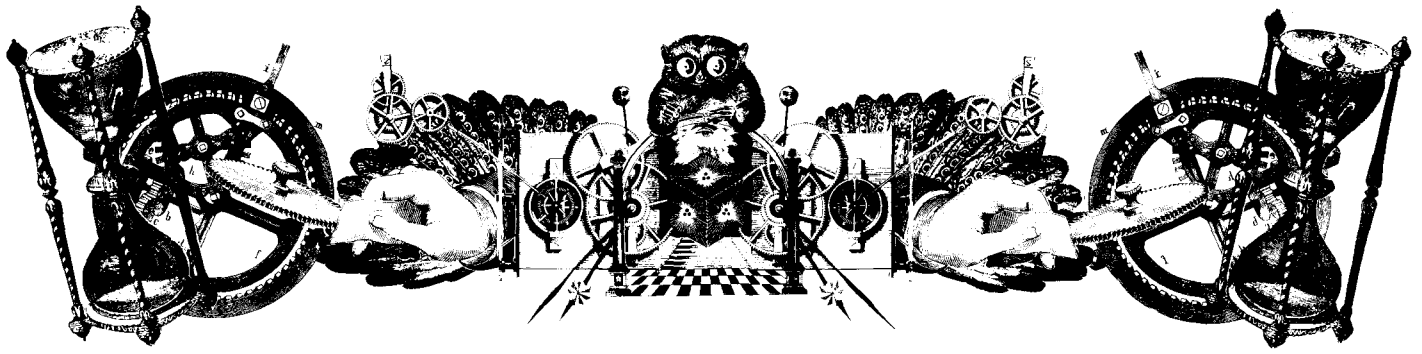
1. Design the device.
2. Let the GM approve the design.
3. The GM and player agree on an XP Cost.
4. The player pays the XP Cost.
5. The player rolls his Technology skill check.

A player first designs a device's characteristics, keeping the following questions in mind: what is the device supposed to do, and how does it accomplish it? When designing a *Once and Future King* device, the player should remember that even though the characters operate in the 46th century, all the equipment should have an essentially medieval look and feel. A "Captain Cozmic Jet Pack" would not be appropriate, but an "orb of illusions" would be.

After the player designs the device, the GM must approve it. He may accept the device as is, he might reject it altogether, or he might make some suggestions for revisions that would make it acceptable. For example, the GM may decide that a wand shooting lightning bolts for 20d6 points of damage with a lethality rating of 9 would be a bit too powerful. He might reject the wand design outright, or he may make a counteroffer to the player, for example offering to accept the wand if the damage is reduced to 5d6 with a lethality rating of 4. In any case, the player and the GM should work together so that both of them will be happy with the final result.

After approving the design, the GM must decide what the device's Experience Point Cost will be. The player must spend that number of XPs in order to have his character make the attempt to build the device. Generally, the more complex the device is, and the more effect it will have on play of the game, the more expensive it will be. A truly devastating device might even cost more XPs than the character currently has available, which means he will have to wait until he has gained more experience to make the attempt. The XP Costs and Complexity ratings of the devices listed at the end of this chapter should give the GM a general idea of the appropriate amounts.

Once the GM decides the XP Cost and assigns a Complexity rating (the player may feel free to negotiate with the GM over this cost, as long as it doesn't hold up game play), the player may pay the XP Cost whenever he wants his character to make the device creation attempt. He does not have to do so immediately, but can wait for an opportune moment. After all, a technician is not likely to invent a new wonder widget right in the middle



of an adventure, but he might do so in between adventures, while resting up back at the castle.

After paying the XP Cost, the player makes a Skill Check using the character's Technology (Device Creation) skill. Subtract the Complexity of the device from the die roll. If the player rolls the required number or under, the character successfully builds the device. Note, however, that in game time, designing and building a gadget could take days or weeks. The GM should use his best judgment to decide how long the device creation process took.

### Identifying and Repairing Damaged Devices

Sometimes, the PCs may come across a device that no one, not even the group's technologist, has seen before. In this case, the technologist uses her Technology (Deciphering Devices) skill. Like the device creation skill check, subtract the device's Complexity from the technologist's base skill. If the check succeeds, the technologist has deduced the device's effects and operation.

If a device sustains damage, due to combat or other circumstances, a skilled technician may try to repair it, using the Technology (Device Maintenance & Repair) skill. Like the previous Technology skill checks described, subtract the Complexity of the device from the base skill to find the amount needed to be successful. In addition to this, if the device has lost half or more of its starting body points, assess an additional -5. If the check succeeds, the technician has repaired the device and she has restored the device to its original body points. It is not possible to add more body points than a device originally had.

### Sample Devices

The following represents just a small sample of the sorts of wondrous inventions technicians can create in the *Once and Future King* universe.

#### Amulet of Illusion

Type: H	Complexity: 15
Body: 12	Weight: 0.25 kg
Cost: 5100 bezants	XP Cost: 420

Appearing to be mere costume jewelry, this amulet can project a hologram of its wearer up to 100 meters away, while simultaneously cloaking him in an invisibility field. Characters encountering this hologram may make a Willpower check to discover the hoax.

#### Belt of Invisibility

Type: H	Complexity: 10
Body: 15	Weight: 1 kg
Cost: 3,200 bezants	XP Cost: 210

A field generator in the buckle allows the wearer of this belt to cover himself with an invisibility field. While invisible, the character may act and move normally and he will remain unseen, though certain actions may give away his whereabouts. Only the renegade knight Sir Garlon was ever known to use a belt of invisibility (see page 92).

#### Cloak of Protection

Type: S	Complexity: 5
Body: 60	Weight: 5 kg
Cost: 2,500 bezants	XP Cost: 125

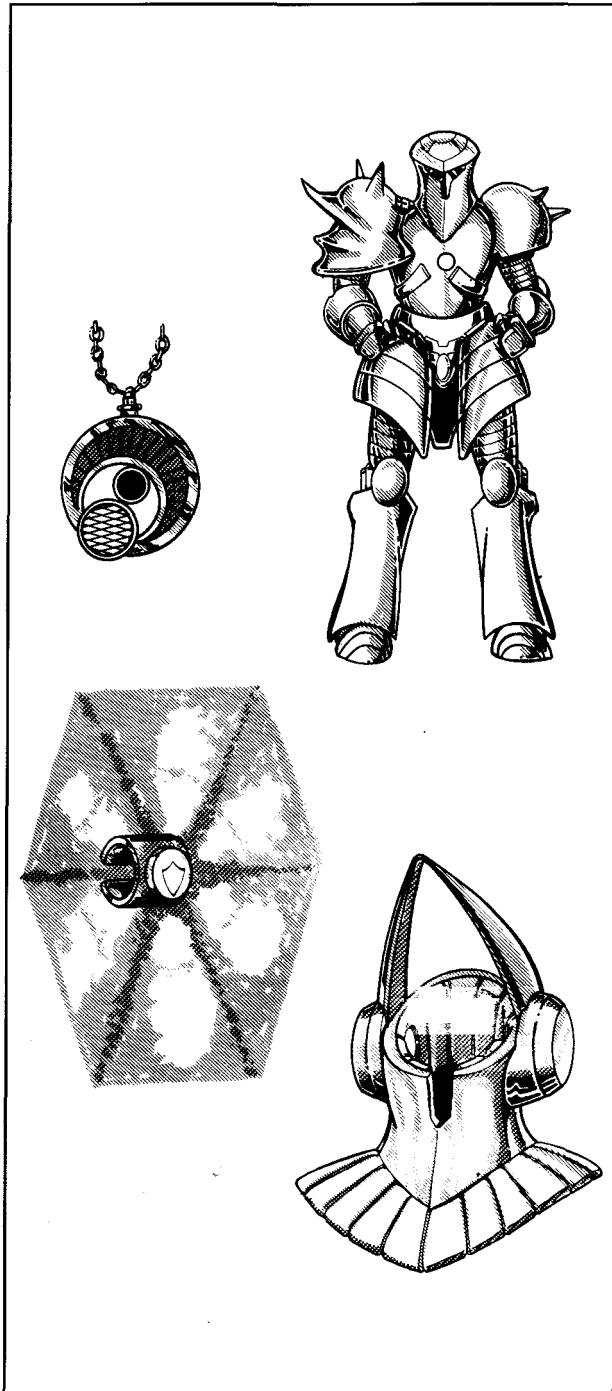
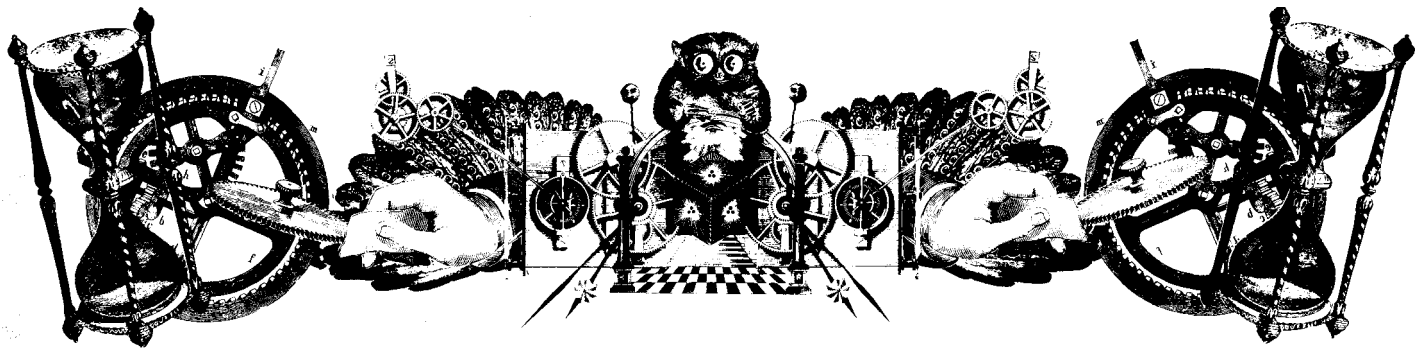
This device is simply a cloak made from an extremely durable fiber a hundred times more resistant to damage than present-day kevlar. A person wearing this cloak can disregard up to 35 points of stamina damage each turn and cannot take body damage, despite a weapon's lethality rating, unless the attacker specifically aims for a vital target area.

#### Crystal Ball

Type: H	Complexity: 25
Body: 5	Weight: 3 kg
Cost: 6,000 bezants	XP Cost: 335

The crystal ball contains a microreceiver able to record residual electromagnetic radiation up to 24 hours old in a room and play it back on a small holographic imager. In this way, a crystal ball can replay conversations and events otherwise not recorded.





### Flight Ring

Type: H

Body: 3

Cost: 650 bezants

Complexity: 10

Weight: 0.1 kg

XP Cost: 150

As its name suggests, this ring reduces the wearer's relative mass and allows her to fly. Neurological sensors pick up instructions from the wearer's brain, shifting and adjusting her mass further, in order to propel her in the desired direction. A ring's maximum altitude is about 500 meters, with a maximum air-speed of about 30 kph.

### Gauntlets of Strength

Type: H

Body: 10

Cost: 800 bezants

Complexity: 10

Weight: 2 kg

XP Cost: 150

These gauntlets diminish the mass of whatever object the wearer grasps. A person wearing the gauntlets may thus lift twice the weight that he can regularly. These gauntlets confer no combat bonuses.

### Hoop of Teleportation

Type: H

Body: 20

Cost: 7,800 bezants

Complexity: 40

Weight: 2.5 kg

XP Cost: 435

This is a golden metal hoop approximately half a meter in diameter, with complex diodes along its inside surface. When placed on the ground and activated, the hoop contacts a booth-sized teleportation device in another location and then teleports the hoop and whoever or whatever is within its diameter to that location.

### Orb of Hypnosis

Type: H

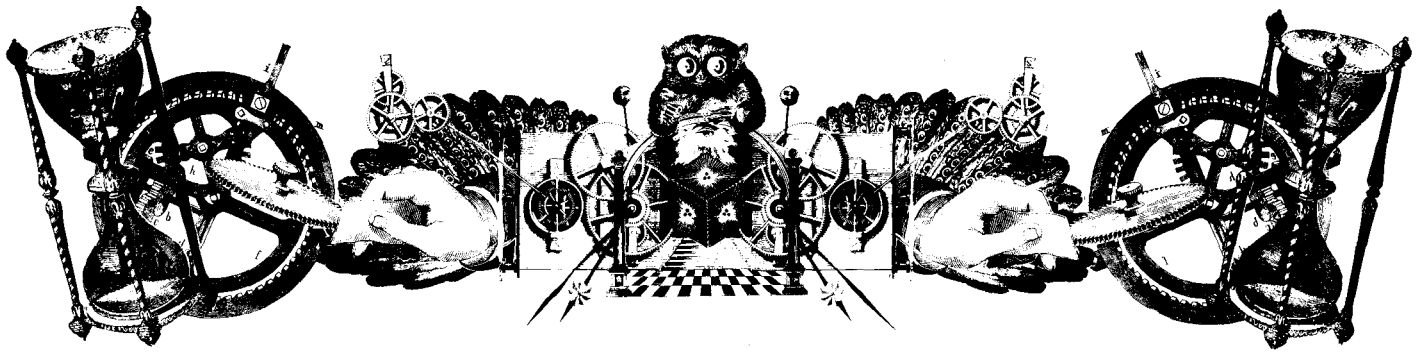
Body: 2

Cost: 1,540 bezants

Complexity: 10

Weight: 0.5 kg

XP Cost: 95



This appears to be simply a transparent crystal hanging on a thin gold chain. When activated, however, the orb releases a dizzying pattern of light and color that sends anyone looking directly at the orb into a hypnotic trance. Characters can try to prevent this by making a Willpower check with a -5 penalty. The owner of the orb may give any who fail the check one post-hypnotic command that the characters must obey. If the command given conflicts with the fundamental nature of the victim (e.g. ordering Sir Lancelot to slay King Arthur), the hypnotized character may make another Willpower check just before carrying out the order, this time with a +5 modifier.

#### Rod of Paralysis

Type: H

Body: 15

Cost: 3,025 bezants

Complexity: 15

Weight: 3 kg

XP Cost: 225

This innocent-looking walking stick can actually fire a beam of energy that freezes all of the muscles in a human body in place for 1 d10 turns. The range of the rod is only about 10 meters. Use the attacker's Reflexes score to determine whether the beam hits, as usual, but the rod causes no damage. After the first turn of paralysis, the victim may try to shake off the effects of the beam by making a Fitness check with a -5 penalty. If the check succeeds, the character will be able to move again normally on the following turn. A character may make only one attempt to disrupt the effects of the rod. The rod has no effect on android characters, since their locomotive systems are mechanical rather than biological.

#### Wand of Lightning

Type: H

Body: 2

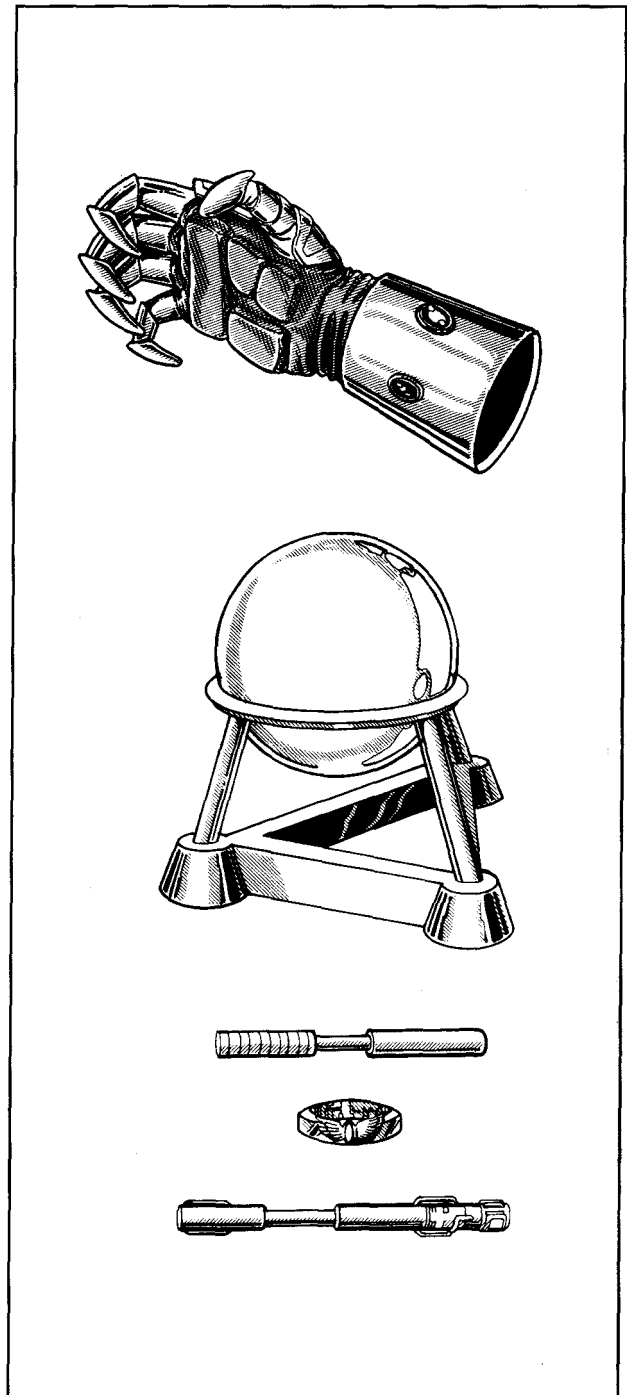
Cost: 875 bezants

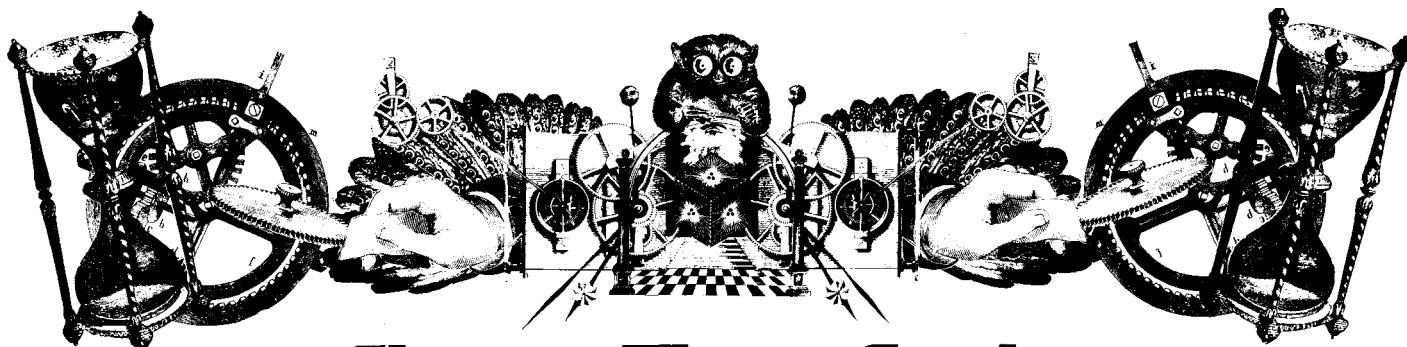
Complexity: 5

Weight: 0.5 kg

XP Cost: 85

This wand fires charges of electrical energy that inflict 7d6 points of damage and have a lethality rating of 3.





## Chapter Three: Combat

The *Once and Future King* universe uses two different types of combat: *general combat* and *jousting*. General combat represents the type of battle that does not follow the rules of chivalry. Any combat situation in which one or more of the combatants is not a knight involves general combat. Jousting, on the other hand, is a highly ritualized and formal method of resolving conflicts used when the participants are knights (or, in rare cases, squires). Jousting consists of two elements: *tilting*, in which two knights charge one another in an attempt to dislodge each other from their mounts; and *dueling*, in which the opponents try to force each other into submission via swordplay.

### General Combat

General combat describes battles utilizing the standard AMAZING ENGINE™ combat rules found in the System Guide section of this supplement. All characters of any profession use those rules, as long as the situation does not involve a formal joust between knights. It should be noted, however, that even when engaged in general combat, knights must obey the Code of Arms described in Chapter One.

Since only knights are legally allowed to bear and to use arms, general combat happens infrequently in the *Once and Future King* universe. The major exception to this guideline would involve occasions in which the PCs fight not another human, but a giant, dragon, or other monster. The general combat rules also apply if human opponents are not themselves knights (e.g. rogue technologists, pirates, android renegades, etc.). In almost any situation, the knights and squires in a party will do the majority of the fighting, although in rare instances, a technologist, acolyte, or courtier may be forced to fight in self-defense.

*A note to the Camemaster:* Since combat is almost always the exclusive prerogative of the knight profession group, it is important to make sure that your adventures do not consist solely of battles. There

should always be technological and theological puzzles to solve, as well as social situations that require a certain courtly touch. This will help to give your other players fun and interesting things to do.

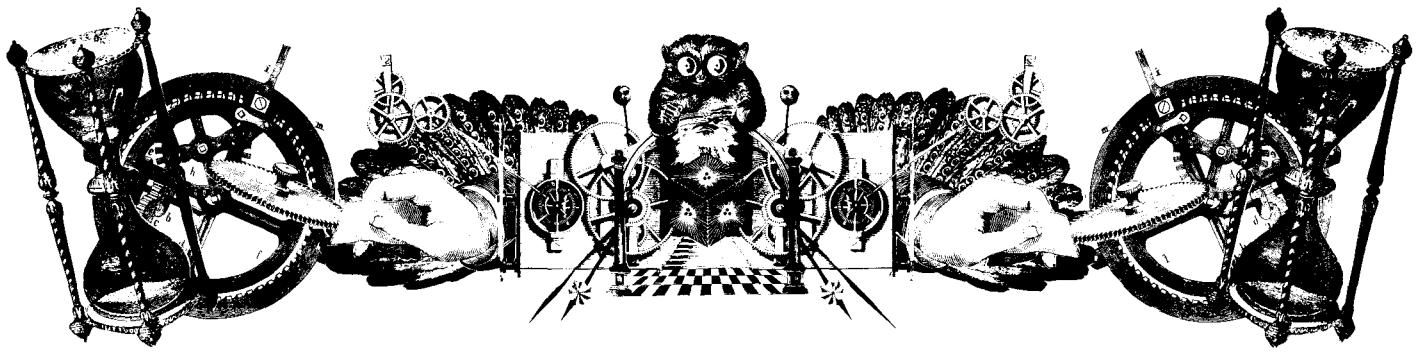
### Damage

With a successful hand-to-hand attack, an unarmed character can inflict a number of six-sided dice damage equal to the 10s digit of his Fitness score. This is called base damage dice. For example, with a Fitness of 43, Sir Philip du Kelley has 4d6 base damage dice. Sir Lancelot, whose Fitness is 88, has 8d6 base damage dice.

When a character makes a successful hand-to-hand attack against an opponent, he may inflict damage from 1d6 to the limit of his base damage dice. The character may wait until after determining the success or failure of his attack to announce the number of damage dice he inflicts, but he must declare that number before rolling for damage, and the player cannot roll additional dice afterwards. Also, when a character makes a successful attack, he must roll at least 1d6 damage—a character cannot hit someone, then decide to do no damage. For example, if Sir Lancelot attempts to subdue Sir Gawaine without seriously injuring him, he could choose to inflict from 1d6 to 8d6 damage after a successful attack. Once Sir Lancelot has rolled for damage on a given attack, however, he may not roll any additional dice, even if he did not use his entire base damage dice.

Weapons add damage dice to the damage a character can inflict in hand-to-hand combat. The weapon listings in Chapter Two show the specific number of damage dice each weapon type adds to the base damage dice when a character makes a successful hit with that weapon. A lasersword, for example, can add up to 2d6 damage dice. The weapon damage dice always add to the character's base damage dice. When a character uses a weapon, she must add at least one of the weapon's damage dice to the roll. If





Sir Philip were to hit an enemy with a lasersword, he could inflict up to 6d6 points of damage (4d6 base damage dice plus 2d6 lasersword damage), but he must roll at least 2d6 (1d6 from his base damage dice and 1d6 from the weapon). With exactly the same weapon, Sir Lancelot could deal up to 10d6 points of damage.

### Projectile Weapons

Projectile weapons are the exception to the above rules. Because neither matter nor energy projectiles rely on the physical strength of the wielder, an attacker using a firearm does not roll his base damage dice when determining damage. Also, the player must roll the full damage dice of the weapon after a successful hit—there is no way for a projectile to hit with greater or lesser force. For example, a pirate who fires a Type IV laser rifle can cause no more nor less than 4d6 points of damage.

### Lethality Ratings

In addition to damage dice, every weapon description in Chapter Two includes a lethality rating. Some of these ratings may seem rather low compared to other AMAZING ENGINE™ universes. This is because knights in the *Once and Future King* universe seldom try to kill or to maim one another. The goal of combat is to subdue your opponent and thereby prove your moral and ethical superiority. While death and serious injuries do occur, usually such incidents are the result of accident or misadventure, rather than deliberate efforts to cause harm. On those rare occasions when a combatant actually seeks to inflict lethal damage on his opponent, he can accomplish this by attacking vital rather than general target areas of the enemy (see page 11 of the System Guide section).

The *Once and Future King* universe makes one further modification to the standard AMAZING ENGINE lethality rules. When the attack roll equals or falls

below the weapon's lethality rating in the 1s digit, apply only the *weapon's* damage dice to the target's Body. Apply the attacker's base damage dice to the target's stamina.

For example: Sir Lionel (Fitness 57) attacks Sir George with a lasersword (lethality rating 2). Sir Lionel rolls a 21 on his attack roll, a successful attack, and the 1s digit is below his lasersword's lethality rating. Sir George takes 2d6 damage to his body (for the lasersword), and takes 5d6 to his stamina (Sir Lionel's base damage dice). To avoid confusion, the player should roll each portion of damage separately.

The various Unarmed Combat skills bestow a lethality rating for fighting with bare hands. Characters with the Wrestling skill have a lethality rating of 1; those with the Fisticuffs skill have a lethality rating of 2. Note that only characters with one of these Unarmed Combat skills can inflict deadly harm without using a weapon of some kind.

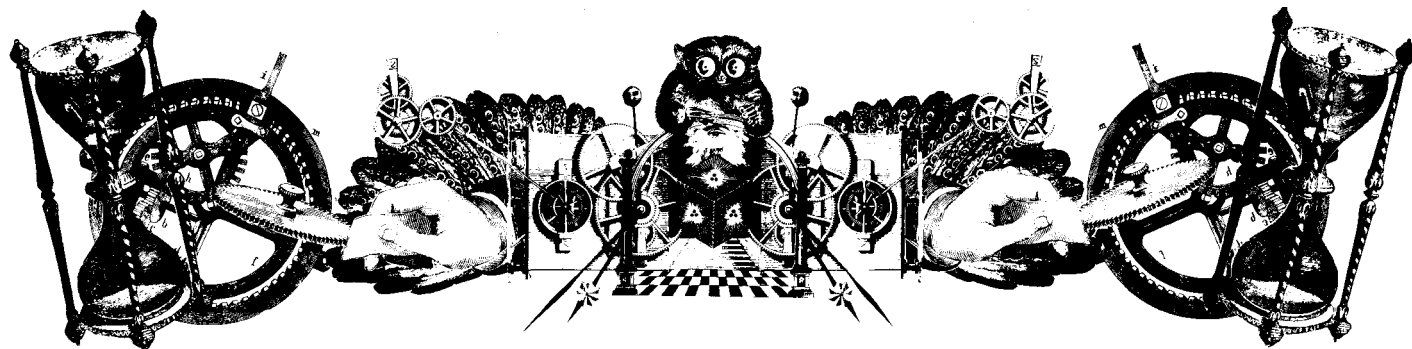
### Jousting

Jousting involves a very formal kind of combat between knights only. A joust takes place between only two opposing knights at a time. If several knights in a party face only one foe, the knights must take turns battling the enemy, until he is defeated or they are. Tournaments, huge jousting free-for-alls, are the exception to this chivalric standard.

Unlike general combat, where success depends on your character's skills modified by circumstances, a joust pits your character's skills directly against those of her opponent.

When jousting, it is vital that knights obey the rules of chivalry, known as the Code of Arms. Even the most wicked of knights hesitates to break these rules, for fear of being branded a traitor—or worse, a coward. Also, a knight who betrays the chivalric code has essentially waived his right to receive mercy at the hands of fellow knights. If defeated in combat, a traitor knight will most likely be slain, and even if he is spared, he will certainly lose the loyalty and companionship of his friends





and/or retainers. See the knight profession class description in Chapter One, page 27, for a description of the Code of Arms.

A joust consists of two separate types of combat: tilting and dueling. Tilting is the type of fight usually associated with knights. Knights charge one another on horseback and try to knock each other from the saddle with lances. Once one or both knights have been unhorsed, they continue the fight on foot, using swords or other melee weapons. The on-foot portion of jousting is called dueling. When a joust takes place, no other combat may happen at the same time, such as a fight between the two knights' retainers. All attention focuses on the joust.

A joust continues until one of the following things happens:

1. If one of the knights' stamina scores falls to 0, he loses the joust and must yield to the victor (the usual rule about falling unconscious is suspended until after the knights finish their post-joust dialogue). If the loser refuses to yield, the victor may slay him, usually by beheading, although android knights generally prefer to have their power source disconnected. The beheading *coup de grace* requires no attack roll—it is considered an automatic success. If the loser does yield, chivalry requires that the victor not slay him. Instead, the victor may dictate terms to the vanquished, and make certain demands. These demands might include ordering the loser to swear an oath of allegiance to the winner's lord, demanding that the loser return a castle to its rightful owner, or sending the loser on a quest to atone for his misdeeds. Sir Lancelot usually requires his defeated adversaries to travel to Camelot and to submit to the mercy of Queen Guinevere.

2. One of the knights decides to yield to the other before losing all his stamina. If clearly outclassed by his opponent, a knight may choose to yield with honor rather than continue to take punishment in a losing cause. In this instance, the winner may make the same kinds of demands discussed above. Most of the time, demands in this instance will be less

harsh than if the losing knight fights until he is utterly defeated.

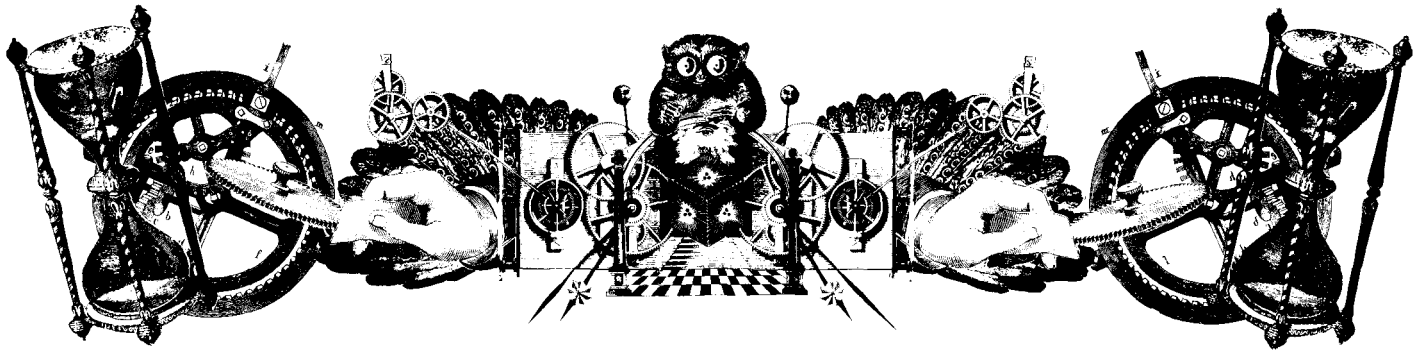
3. Both knights agree to end the joust. This may happen if two friendly knights suddenly learn each other's true identities, or if they discover they are fighting one another under mistaken provocation. Other times, two knights may fight to a draw and decide that they are so evenly matched that further combat would be fruitless. In these cases, neither knight wins (no matter how many stamina or body points each knight lost), and, more importantly, neither knight loses. Therefore, neither knight may make demands of the other. In fact, this sort of joust usually ends with both knights swearing an oath of friendship.

4. One or both of the knights dies. Unless both knights agree before the joust begins that the combat will be to the death, deliberately aiming for a vital target area is considered a serious violation of the Code of Arms. Thus most jousts, while visually exciting and brutal, do not result in death. However, because of weapon lethality ratings and the randomness of dice rolls, some hits in a joust may cause body damage that could result in death for a knight. When this happens, the death is considered an accident or a work of the Higher Power, and the victorious knight takes no blame. While a knight may be legally exonerated if an opponent dies in a joust, the victim's family may harbor a special animosity towards the victor in future jousts.

## Tilting

Instead of using the normal AMAZING ENGINE™ combat sequence, tilting uses a ten-step procedure to determine the results of each set of attacks. Each time two knights tilt at one another they *pass*, since the mounted knights try to hit one another as they thunder by. A pass, from the moment the two knights begin to charge one another until they reign in their mounts and turn around for another pass, takes about 60 seconds, or 6 turns. Most of this time is taken up





accelerating toward the opponent and braking after the pass. The real action of tilting represented by these ten steps actually takes only split seconds.

Most castles have special playing fields, known as the *lists*, set up for the sole purpose of tilting. However, tilting can take place on any level surface with enough space for two knights to charge at each other. Forest clearings and river fords are favorite spots of jousts between knights.

In order to take part in a tilt, a knight must have the Tilting subskill of Horsemanship, whether he specializes in Hoversteed, Robohorse, or Live Horse. It is possible to tilt while riding a mount the knight has no specific skill with, but this decreases the knight's effectiveness. The Armed Combat (From Horseback) skill helps in tilting, especially if the knight has the Lance specialty, but it is not required.

#### **Tilting Sequence**

1. Knights commit to attack method.
2. Determine initiative, if any.
3. Attacker calculates MAS.
4. Defender calculates MDS.
5. Locate Hit # on Joust Table.
6. Attacker rolls for attack.
7. If attack succeeds, roll for damage.
8. If attack succeeds, roll to see if defender is unhorsed.
9. Roll to see if attacker's lance breaks.
10. Repeat Steps 3-9 for second knight, if needed.

#### **Attack Method**

There are two basic methods of attack that knights may use while tilting. A knight may ride with the point of his lance extended straight towards his opponent, or he may approach with his lance held perpendicular to the line of attack. Each of these methods has its advantages and disadvantages. A perpendicular or sweep attack is more likely to dislodge an opponent from his mount. However, if the opponent chooses to make a point attack while the character makes a sweep attack, the opponent wins

initiative and resolves his attack first (in which case the character may never get the chance to counter-attack). A *point* attack assures, at worst, the character and the opponent will have simultaneous initiative. However, a point attack gives a lower probability of unhorsing the opponent.

At the beginning of each pass, both players (or more likely, the player and the CM) secretly note which attack method their knight will employ on this pass.

Example: Because of an insult to his wife, the Lady Jennifer, Sir Philip du Kelley has challenged Sir Sean of Rhodes to a joust. After hearing a devotion at daybreak, the two knights arm themselves and proceed to the lists. As they prepare for their first pass, Eric recalls that the GM favors the sweep attack, so he decides to start with a point attack. True to form, the GM decides that Sir Sean will make a sweep attack.

#### **Initiative**

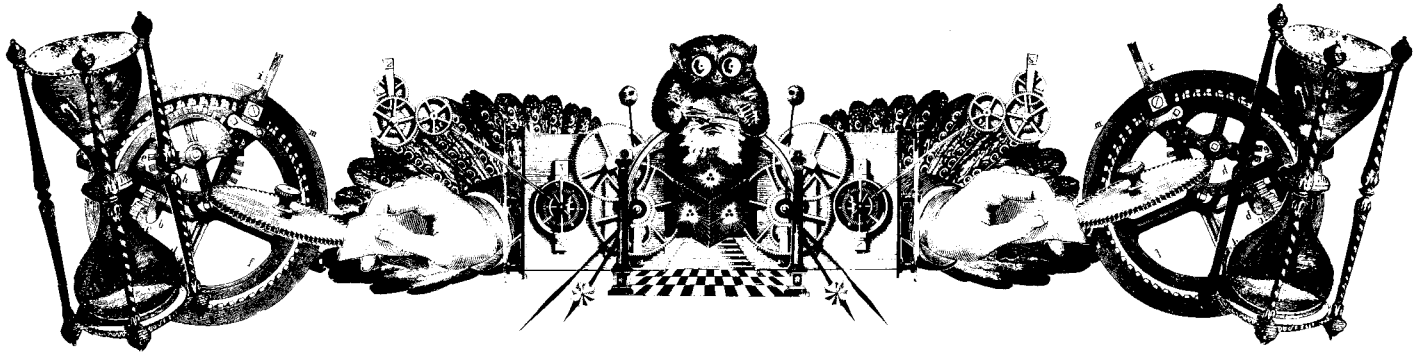
Unlike in general combat, initiative in tilting is not determined by rolling dice. Instead, it is determined by the attack methods chosen by the two knights. In tilting, the knights tend to crash together simultaneously in a flurry of lances, shields, and horses. Initiative is just a matter of that split second determining which lance makes first contact.

If both knights chose the same attack method, then their attacks are considered to take place simultaneously, even though they will be resolved one at a time. If one knight makes a point attack and the other a sweep attack, the knight using the point method resolves his attack before the knight using the sweep method. In this case, only if the first knight's attack fails to unhorse his opponent can the second knight resolve his attack.

In cases when initiative is simultaneous, the GM should resolve his knight's attack first. If two players are jousting with each other, the player closest to the GM's right goes first.

Example: Eric and the GM reveal their knights'





attack methods. Because Sir Philip will make a point attack and Sir Sean will make a sweep attack, Sir Philip's attack will precede Sir Sean's. Sir Sean will only be able to attack if Sir Philip fails to unhorse him.

### The Joust Table

In general combat, attacks are resolved by rolling against the character's Reflexes, modified by specific outside influences. In jousting, however, a knight's skills compare to his opponent's skills on the Joust Table (located on the opposite page) to determine the number needed to hit. This process involves three things.

First, the attacker must determine his Modified Attack Score, or *MAS*. Calculate the *MAS* base score from the knight's Reflexes. If the knight is trying to hit a non-vital or vital target area (rather than general), the reduction to Reflexes takes place before any other *MAS* modifiers are applied. It is assumed that the attacker has the Tilting subskill of Horsemanship. If a knight rides a steed he has no skill riding, (i.e. if his skill is Hoversteed and he rides a robohorse), deduct 10 from the *MAS*. If the knight also has the Armed Combat (From Horseback) skill, add 10 to the *MAS*; and if he has the Lance specialization, add an additional 5 points. Lances themselves add a variable amount to the *MAS*, from 5 to 10. Check the weapon listings in Chapter Two (page 52) for the exact amount applicable. Some cybernetic armor includes computer guidance circuitry to help aim during jousting. The armor chart in Chapter Two (page 54) details the *MAS* modifier for this equipment.

As in general combat, a player may spend experience points to increase his character's chance for success. Each XP spent adds 1 to the attacker's *MAS* for the current pass only. If the player wishes to increase the *MAS* again on a later pass, he must spend more XPs. In any case, the number of XPs spent can never exceed the knight's Reflexes score. The CM may also impose positive or negative modifiers to the *MAS* to reflect environmental conditions such as uneven ter-

rain or inclement weather. Such modifiers, if invoked, must apply equally to the *MAS* of both knights involved in the tilt. No matter the number of modifiers, the *MAS* may never exceed 100.

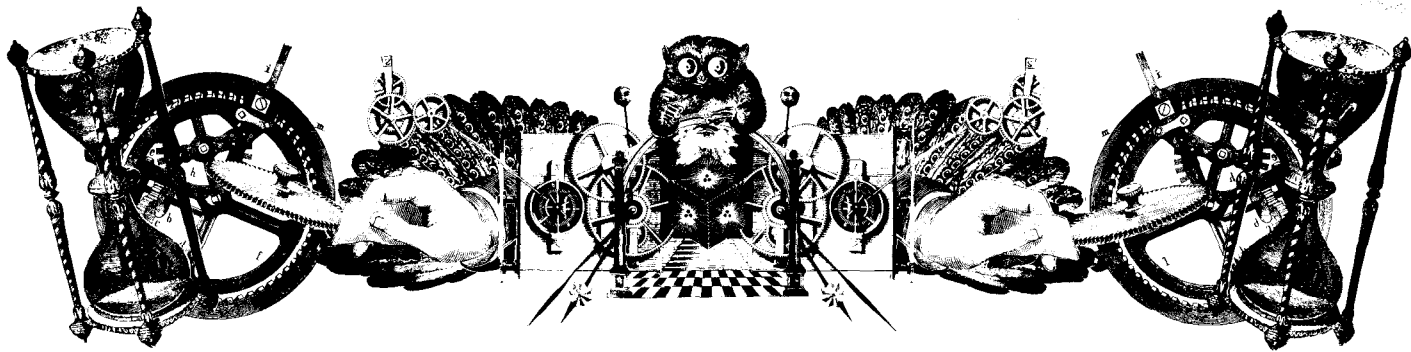
Second, the defender must determine his Modified Defense Score, or *MDS*. The *MDS* is similar to the *MAS* in many ways, but involves different modifiers. Like the *MAS*, use the knight's Reflexes to calculate the initial *MDS*. If the defender is riding a mount that does not match his Horsemanship skill, subtract 10 from his *MDS*. If the defending knight has the Armed Combat (From Horseback) skill as well as Horsemanship, add 10 to his *MDS*. *Note:* The Lance specialty does not improve a knight's *MDS*. Armor, shields, and force fields can add to a knight's *MDS*, however. Consult Chapter Two for the specific amounts that each type of equipment adds.

As with the *MAS*, a player may spend experience to improve his knight's *MDS*, at a rate of +1 per XP spent. These improvements last only for the current pass, and players cannot spend more XPs than their knight's Reflexes score. The CM may also add or subtract from the *MDS*, depending on local conditions. These modifiers must apply equally to both knights. *Note* that a condition detrimental to an attacker's *MAS* (such as rough terrain) may be beneficial to the defender's *MDS*. Like the *MAS*, the *MDS* may never exceed 100.

Finally, after determining the *MAS* and *MDS*, the player must locate his Hit Number for the attack on the Joust Table. Find the attacker's *MAS* in the leftmost column and find the defender's *MDS* in the top row. The number at the intersection of the *MAS* row and the *MDS* column is the Hit Number for the attack.

Example: Eric has initiative, so the players resolve Sir Philip's attack first. Sir Philip's Reflexes are 35, he has the Armed Combat (From Horseback) skill which adds 10, and he wields an energylance for an additional 10 points. Eric also decides to spend 10 XP, so 35+10+10+10 brings his total *MAS* to 65.

Sir Sean has a Reflexes score of 44, but he rides a robohorse rather than a hoversteed (his chosen



## Joust Table

Defender's Modified Defense Score (MDS)

	00-05	06-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55	56-60	61-65	66-70	71-75	76-80	81-85	86-90	91-95	96-100
00-05	50	47	45	42	40	37	35	32	30	27	25	22	20	17	15	12	10	7	5	2
06-10	52	50	47	45	42	40	37	35	32	30	27	25	22	20	17	15	12	10	7	5
11-15	55	52	50	47	45	42	40	37	35	32	30	27	25	22	20	17	15	12	10	
16-20	57	55	52	50	47	45	42	40	37	35	32	30	27	25	22	20	17	15	12	10
21-25	60	57	55	52	50	47	45	42	40	37	35	32	30	27	25	22	20	17	15	12
26-30	62	60	57	55		50	47	45	42	40	37	35	32	30	27	25	22	20	17	15
31-35	65	62	60	57	55	52	50	47	45	42	40	37	35	32	30	27	25	22	20	17
36-40	67	65	62	60		55	50	47	45	42	40	37	35	32	30	27	25	22	20	
41-45	70	67	65	62	60	57	55	52	50	47	45	42	40	37	35	32	30	27	25	22
46-50		70	67	65	62	60	57	55	52	50	47	45	42	40	37	35	32	30	27	25
51-55	75		70	67	65	62	60	57	55	52	50	47	45	42	40	37	35	32	30	27
56-60	77	75		70	67	65	62	60		55	52	50	47	45	42	40	37	35	32	30
61-65	80	77	75		70	67	65	62	60	57	55	52	50	47	45	42	40	37	35	32
66-70	82	80	77	75	72	70	67	65	62	60	57	55	52	50	47	45	42	40	37	35
71-75	85	82	80	77	75	72	70	67	65	62	60	57	55	52	50	47	45	42	40	37
76-80	87	85	82	80		75	72	70	67	65	62	60	57	55		50	47	45	42	40
81-85	90	87	85	82	80		75	72	70	67	65	62	60	57	55	52	50	47	45	42
86-90	92	90	87	85	82	80		75	72	70	67	65	62	60	57	55	52	50	47	45
91-95	95	92	90	87	85	82	80	77	75	72	70	67	65	62	60	57	55	52	50	47
96-100	97	95	92	90	87	85	82	80		75	72	70	67	65	62	60	57	55	52	50

Horsemanship skill), which reduces his MDS by 10. However, he has the Armed Combat (From Horseback) skill (+10), cybernetic tilting armor (+10), and a forcesshield (+5). The GM opts not to spend any of Sir Sean's XP, and since it's a beautiful day and the joust is taking place in a castle's lists, the GM does not invoke any terrain or weather modifiers. 44-10+10+10+5 brings Sir Sean's total MDS to 59.

Consulting the Joust Table, Eric and the GM see that Sir Philip's Hit *if* is 52, the number at the intersection of the 61-65 row and the 56-60 column.

### Making the Attack

To see if a knight successfully strikes his opponent, roll percentile dice and compare the result to the Hit Number. If the roll is equal to or less than the Hit Number, the attack succeeds. *Note:* Remember the actual number on the dice, since that number will determine whether the target was unhorsed (see below).

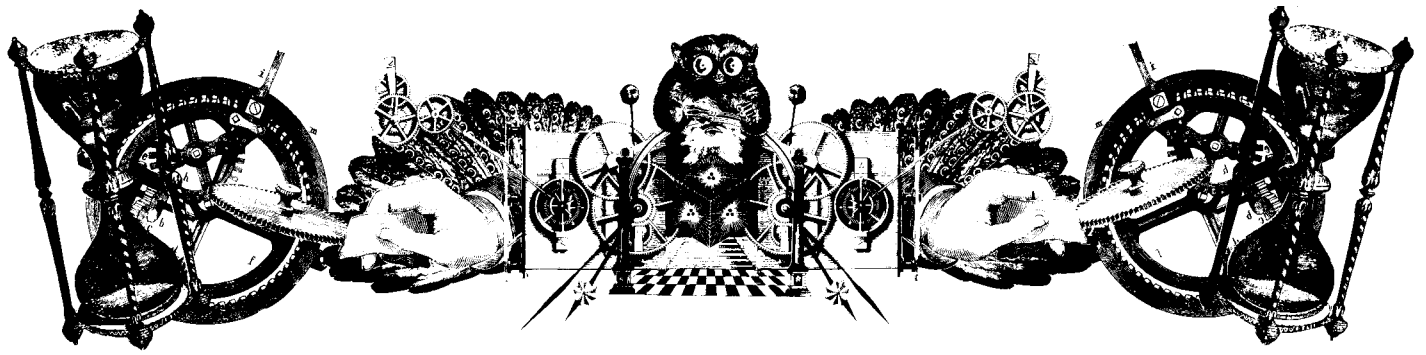
Example: Eric rolls a 37, well below his Hit *if* of 52. Sir Phillip hits Sir Sean with a point attack!

### Damage

In addition to damage from the knight's base damage dice and the lance's damage dice, tilting can cause additional damage based on the speed of the knight's mount at the moment of impact. For every 10 kilometers per hour of speed (rounded down), add an additional 1d6 damage. Should the player roll at or below his weapon's lethality rating in the 1s digit, the damage dice for speed apply to his opponent's body point total. Chapter Two contains the speed information for artificial mounts. Live horses can gallop at speeds ranging from 25 to 65 kph.

Example: Sir Philip's Fitness is 43, which gives him 4 base damage dice. His energylance adds 3 damage dice, and his robohorse was traveling at 32 kph at the moment of impact, for another 3 damage dice. He can roll up to 10d6 for damage against Sir Sean from





this attack. Since the 1 s digit of his roll (7) was well above the energylance's lethality rating of 2, all of the damage applies to Sir Sean's stamina. Eric rolls 43 points, 12 points of which Sir Sean's cybernetic tilting armor absorbs, and 31 of which are subtracted from Sir Sean's current stamina. This leaves Sir Sean with 44 remaining stamina points.

### Unhorsing the Opponent

Each time knights collide while tilting, there is a chance that one or both will be thrown from the saddle. If a knight's stamina falls to 0 as a result of the current pass, he is automatically unhorsed. If not, the player must roll to see if the knight has been dislodged.

The base chance to unhorse an opponent with a point attack is 5%. The base chance with a sweep attack is 15%. This base increases by 5% for the number of rows difference on the joust Table between the Hit Number for the attack and the number actually rolled. If the number rolled is not actually on the Jousting Table (41 for example), round up to the next highest number on the Table. Whenever a knight is unhorsed, subtract an additional 2d6 points of damage from his stamina total for the fall.

For example: Eric's Hit # was 52, but he rolled a 37. Counting rows up from 52 on the MAS side of the Joust Table (still under the 56-60 MDS column), Eric determines there are 6 rows between 52 and 37 (not counting 52). Therefore, he adds 30% (6 x 5%) to his 5% base chance to unhorse Sir Sean, for a total chance of 35%. He rolls a 76, so Sir Sean remains mounted.

### Broken Lance

Each type of lance has a base chance to break, listed with its description in Chapter Two. This chance is modified in the same way that the chance to unhorse an opponent is modified. That is, for each row between the Hit Number and the number rolled, add 5%. Round up to the nearest Table number if the number rolled does not appear on the Table.

Numbers lower than those appearing on the Table round up to the next applicable number. Note that a player only checks for lance breakage if the attack succeeds.

A note about energylances: How does the beam of an energylance break in half? It doesn't, really. If a player rolls an energylance break, the force of the impact has shorted out circuitry in the energylance's haft, causing the beam to distort. Technologists can repair energylances, whereas a knight must discard broken wooden lances or plastilances.

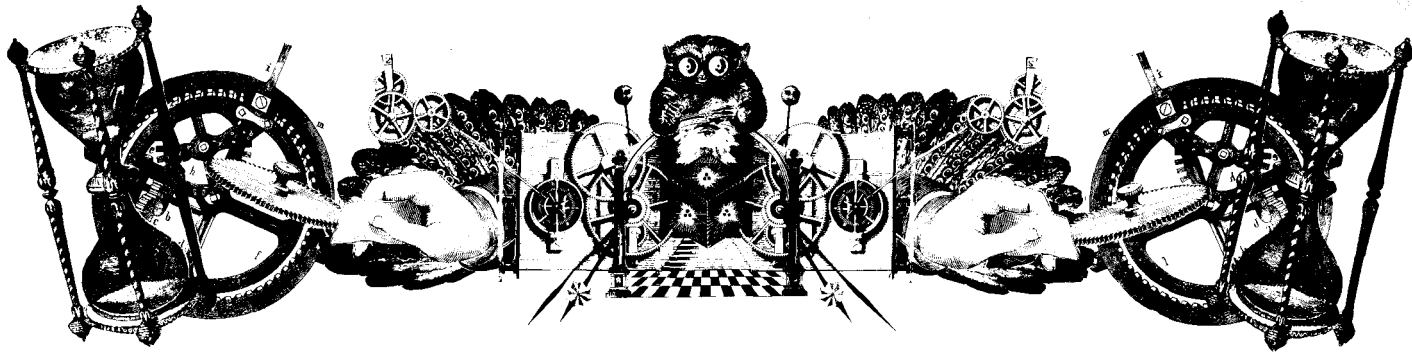
For example: Eric checks to see if Sir Philip's energylance survived the impact. The base chance to break an energylance is 0%, and Eric recalls a 6 row difference on the Joust Table, which adds 30% to the chance that his energylance will break. He rolls a 28, just enough to break the lance. Its beam flickers after it hits Sir Sean and goes out.

### Concluding the Pass

After the first knight has completed his attack, check to see if the other knight still has an attack opportunity. If initiative was simultaneous, the second knight makes his attack despite the results of the first knight's attack (even if it caused the second knight's death). If initiative was not simultaneous, the second knight may attack only if he was not unhorsed, killed, or reduced to 0 stamina points. If the second knight may attack, repeat steps 3 through 9, with the second knight as attacker.

For example: Although he took some stamina damage, Sir Sean remained on his robohorse and can make an attack on Sir Philip. Sir Sean's MAS is 67, and Sir Philip's MDS is 65, which results in a Hit Number of 50. Unfortunately for Sir Sean, the GM rolls an 89, so the sweep attack misses. The knights return to the ends of the lists, where Sir Philip's squire provides him with a plastilance to replace his broken energylance, and they prepare for another pass.

At the end of any pass, the knights may pause to engage in dialogue. This conversation might include



an offer to cease hostilities, or one of the knight's offer of surrender. Other frequent conversation starters in mid-joust include requests for an unknown opponent's identity, or a request for more information about the nature of his quarrel. See page 60 for more information about bringing a joust to a conclusion and its aftermath.

### Dueling On Horseback

If a knight breaks all of his lances without being unhorsed, the combatants may choose to continue the joust with swords while still mounted. This combat uses the dueling rules below, with two slight modifications.

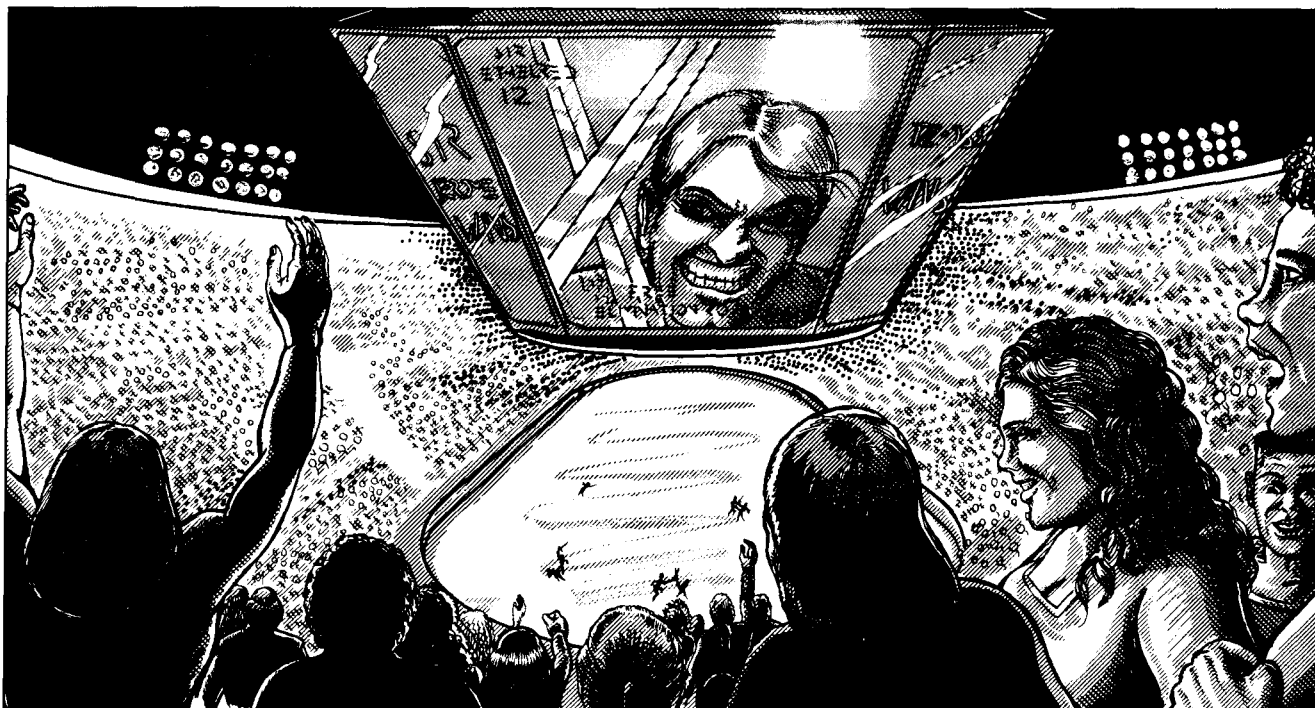
First, the Armed Combat (From Horseback) skill modifies the MAS and MDS rather than the On Foot skill. Second, a successful hit has a chance of unhorsing the opponent instead of knocking him down. The base chance of unhorsing an opponent while dueling with swords is 0%.

### Dueling

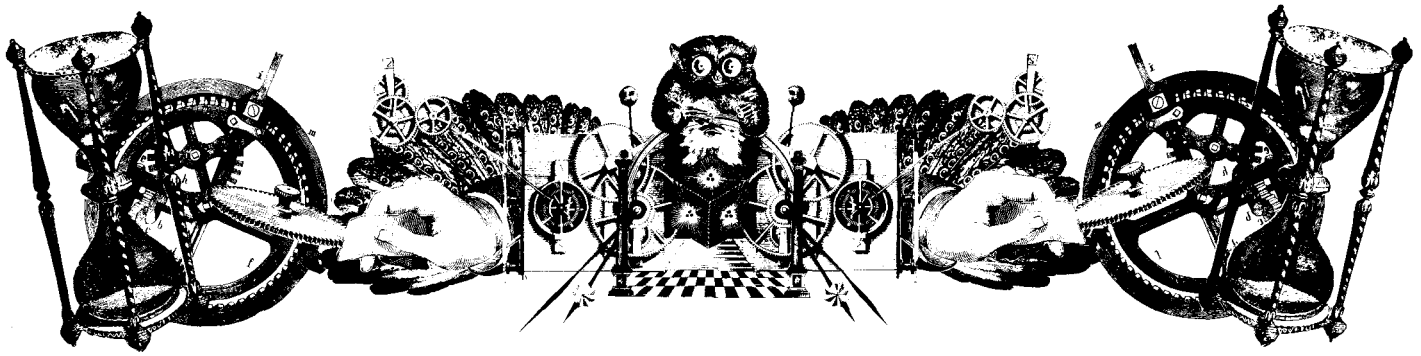
After one or both of the knights in a tilt have been unhorsed, the joust continues on the ground (assuming the unhorsed knights remain conscious). It is against the Code of Arms for a mounted knight to take advantage of an unmounted foe, and it is forbidden to attack while the foe dismounts. Lances are essentially useless on the ground, so most dueling knights use swords or other melee weapons.

Unlike in tilting, a knight needs no specific skill to duel. However, a knight without the Armed Combat (On Foot) skill suffers a -10 penalty to his MAS and MDS. If one or both of the knights refuse to use a weapon and attempt to fight with bare hands or some other combat technique, the battle no longer uses the jousting rules, and the remainder of the fight should use the general combat rules.

Although dueling constitutes hand-to-hand combat on the ground, the Code of Arms applies and







other characters may not interfere. If more than just the two knights join in the fight, then the joust ends and the remainder of the combat uses the general combat rules.

Like tilting, dueling has its own procedure to resolve actions. However, since the combatants no longer charge each other on horseback, each dueling round takes one normal turn, or roughly ten seconds.

#### Dueling Sequence

1. Knights declare actions.
2. Roll for initiative.
3. Attacker calculates MAS.
4. Defender calculates MDS.
5. Locate Hit # on Joust Table.
6. Attacker rolls for attack.
7. If attack succeeds, roll for damage.
8. If attack succeeds, roll to see if defender is knocked down.
9. Repeat steps 3-8 for second knight, if needed.

#### Declaring Actions

As in general combat, players declare actions in a duel before determining initiative. In a duel, however, a knight must make an attack of some sort each turn, whether it is slashing, stabbing, hacking, or whatever. To help vary the attacks in a duel, there are two special combat methods a knight may choose to employ. The players (or player and GM) decide secretly which methods the characters will use before rolling initiative. *Note: Both of these methods are entirely optional; the players do not have to use either method, should they decide against it.*

A knight may choose to *Press the Attack*, which is a flurry of blows intended to break through an opponent's defense to score a hit. However, this aggressive action may leave the knight's own vulnerable areas open for an enemy counterattack. If a player chooses to press the attack, he may increase his MAS on this turn by an amount up to half his Reflexes, but he must reduce his own MDS for the turn by the same amount.

Alternatively, the player can opt for an *Intense Defense*, in which the knight closes in his weapon and shield to minimize the chance of his foe scoring a hit. Of course, this reduces the knight's chances of scoring a hit of his own. To use an intense defense, the player can add a number of points to his MDS for the turn, up to half his Reflexes score. However, he must also reduce his MAS for the turn by the same amount. This move serves as essentially the opposite of pressing the attack.

If, on a previous turn, a knight has been knocked down, he may attempt one of two actions. He may try to jump back up, or he may try to roll out of the way of his enemy's attack.

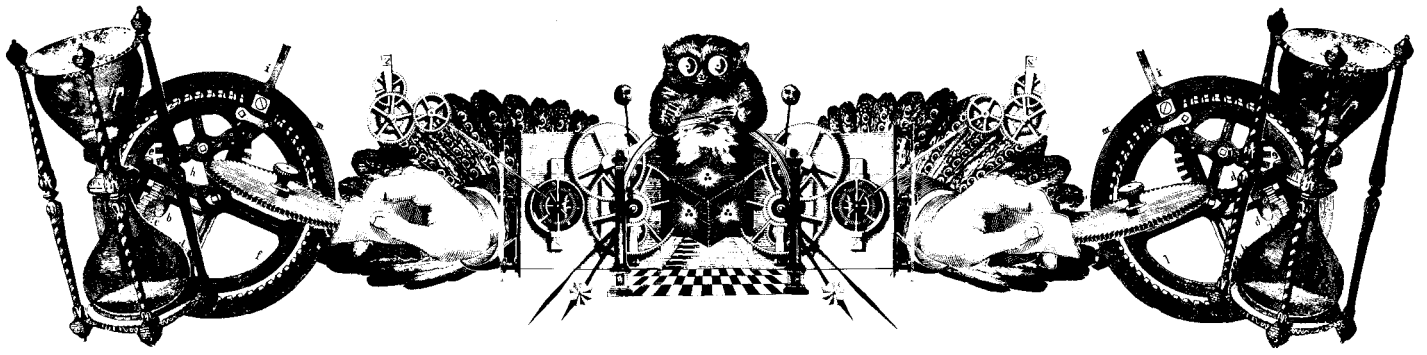
If a player chooses to jump up, but loses initiative, his knight automatically suffers a -10 penalty to his MDS for the turn. If he jumps up and wins initiative, he receives no penalty to his MDS. In either case, jumping up takes his entire action for the turn and he cannot attack until the next round (unless he is knocked down again).

If a player chooses to roll out of his opponent's way, he may increase his MDS for the turn by 10, and on the next round, he receives a +5 bonus when determining initiative. A knight may not try to roll out of the way two turns in a row. Such an action would be base and cowardly.

For example: After several passes, Sir Phillip has unhorsed Sir Sean. Sir Philip dismounts and the two knights continue the joust on foot. On the first turn of dueling, Eric decides that Sir Philip will press the attack, while the GM declares that Sir Sean will not use either of the special attack methods.

#### Initiative

Players roll initiative in dueling the same way as in general combat. Each player rolls 1d10 and adds the result to his knight's Psyche score. The knight with the higher total resolves his attack first. If the two knights tie for initiative, both attacks occur simultaneously, just as in tilting. The GM resolves his attack first, or if two players duel one another, the player closest to the



GM's right goes first. Note that if a downed knight has rolled out of the way on a previous turn, he may add +5 to his initiative roll this turn.

For example: Eric and the GM roll for initiative. Eric rolls a 6, which, added to Sir Philip's Psyche of 32, gives him an initiative of 38. The GM only gets a 1, which gives Sir Sean an initiative of 36. Sir Philip's attack will be resolved first.

### The Joust Table

Like during tilting, resolving attacks during a duel involves comparing your knight's MAS to your opponent's MDS on the Joust Table. The MAS and MDS are calculated in the exact same way, with the following modifications.

Since the knights are no longer mounted, the Horsemanship skill no longer factors into either the MAS or MDS. Instead, the knights receive a -10 penalty to their MAS and MDS if they do not have the Armed Combat (On Foot) skill. If the attacker uses a sword and has the Sword specialty under Armed Combat (On Foot), he may add +5 to his MAS. The same holds true for a knight using any melee weapon with the proper specialization. Weapons, shields, armor, and cybernetics that add to the MAS and/or MDS remain the same as in tilting, as do the rules for spending experience.

Once determining the MAS and MDS, find the Hit Number on the Joust Table, exactly the same way the players did during the tilting phase of the joust.

For example: Eric resolves his attack first. Sir Philip's Reflexes score is 43, and he decides to add 15 for pressing the attack, noting that he will have to subtract 15 from his MDS when the GM makes Sir Sean's attack. He also adds 5 for his lasersword, and spends 5 XPs to bring his total MAS to 68. Sir Sean has Reflexes of 44, from which he loses 4 for his cybernetic tilting armor, but still gains 5 for his forceshield. Since Sir Sean has taken considerable stamina damage already, the GM decides to spend 10 of Sir Sean's XP to bring his total to 55. This makes Eric's Hit # 57 for the attack.

### Making the Attack

Attacking in dueling remains identical to attacking during tilting. Again, note the number on the dice if the attack succeeded.

For example: Eric rolls a 78, so Sir Philip misses Sir Sean. After quickly calculating the MAS and MDS for Sir Sean's counterattack, remembering to subtract 15 from Sir Philip's MDS while he is pressing the attack, the GM determines Sir Sean's Hit Number. He rolls an 11, which hits.

### Damage

Calculate the amount of damage sustained in dueling the same way as in the general combat rules. *Note:* If the dueling knights remain mounted, the horses' speeds no longer factor into the damage done.

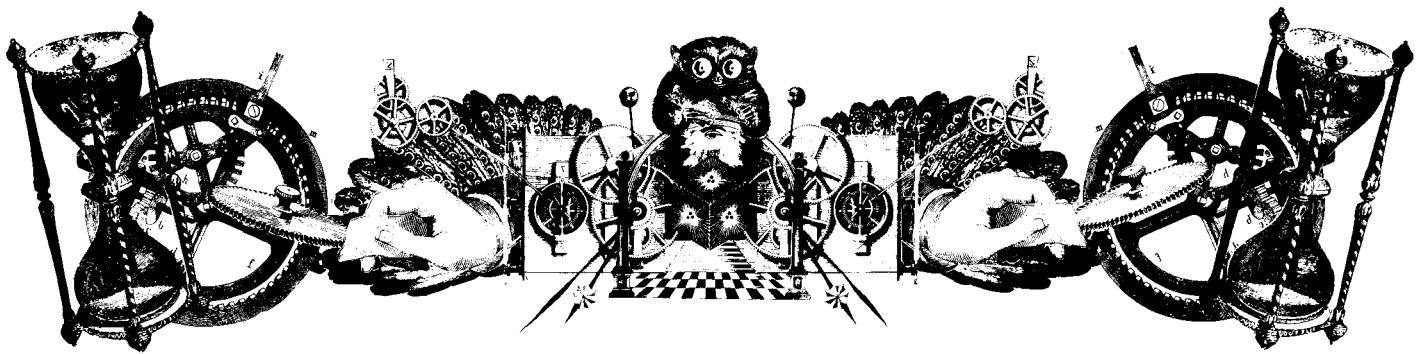
For example: Sir Sean's Fitness is 47, giving him 4 base damage dice, and he is using a lasersword, which has 2 damage dice. The ones' digit of the GM's roll was below the sword's lethality rating, so the damage from the sword applies to Sir Philip's body points. The GM decides to go easy on Eric and uses only 2 of Sir Sean's base damage dice against Sir Philip's stamina. He rolls 5 points of lasersword damage, subtracted from Sir Philip's body points, and he rolls 9 points of base damage, deducted from Sir Philip's stamina. This brings Sir Philip's stamina down to 21, and his body to 16.

### Knockdown

The force of knights' blows to one another is often so great that they knock each other down. To determine if a successful hit knocks a knight's foe to the ground, count the number of rows between the attack's Hit Number and the number rolled. Round up to the nearest number on the Joust Table if the number rolled does not appear. The base percentage for knockdown is 0%, but each row above the Hit # adds 5% to this chance. A knockdown does no additional damage to the knight, but restricts his actions on the next turn (see page 66, above).

For example: Sir Sean's Hit # was 60, but the GM





rolled an astoundingly low 11. He counts upwards 12 rows (in the 46-50 column) to the top of the Table from his hit number, but then has to stop, since 11 is lower than the top number in that column. This gives him a 60% (12 x 5%) chance to knock down Sir Philip. He rolls a 08, and, much to Eric's dismay, Sir Philip goes down.

### Concluding the Turn

After resolving the first knight's attack, check to see if the other knight can complete his action. If initiative was simultaneous the other knight may make an attack, regardless of the effects of the first knight's attack. If initiative was not simultaneous, and the second knight was knocked down, killed, or had his Stamina reduced to 0 by the first knight, then the second knight loses his action for that turn.

As during tilting turns, knights frequently pause in mid-duel to engage in dialogue. If one of the knights wishes to yield to the other, between turns is a good time to do so.

## Tournaments

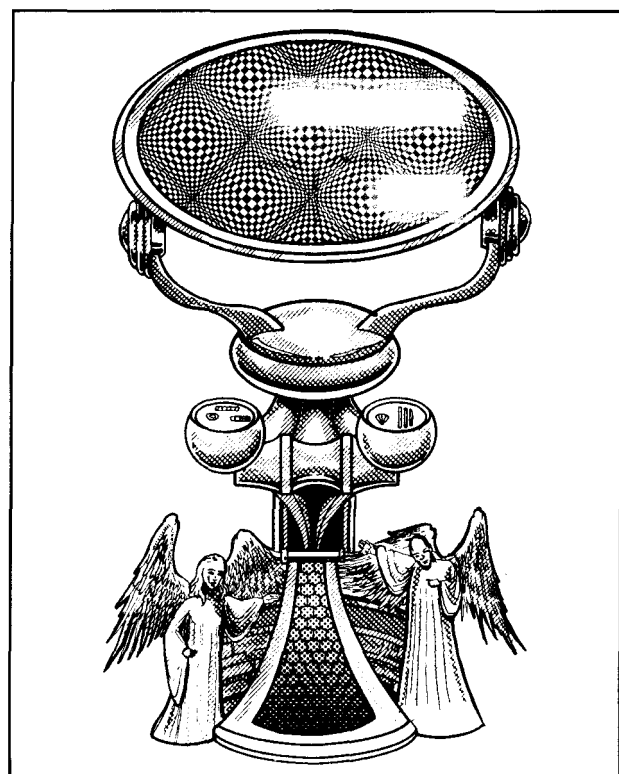
In addition to single combat, knights frequently take part in tournaments, which are basically huge tilting free-for-alls with sometimes hundreds of knights on a side. There is no practical way to Gamemaster an entire tournament, but with slight modifications to the jousting combat rules, it is possible to role-play the PCs' parts in such a tournament.

In tournaments, unlike in tilting, when a knight is unhorsed his opponent does not dismount to fight him on foot. Instead, the knight finds a new foe from the opposing side and tilts with him. If a knight breaks a lance in a tournament, he has two options: he can move to the sidelines to obtain a new one, or he may draw his sword and fight with it. Of course, in accordance with the Code of Arms, a knight may only fight against similarly armed opponents. Use the dueling rules to resolve these battles.

Unhorsed knights are essentially out of the tourna-

ment, until their comrades can remount them. To remount someone, a character simply takes control of a defeated opponent's mount and delivers it to his unhorsed comrade. Unhorsed knights generally move to the side of the lists to keep out of harm's way until they can rejoin the fray.

It is important to remember that unlike jousts, which can be deadly serious, tournaments are like big sporting events. Monitors keep close track of how many knights each side has unhorsed, which knights have unhorsed the most enemies, and myriad other statistics. Even the knights themselves go out of their way to make tournaments fun and exciting. Particularly well-known and skilled knights will often take the field in disguise, and good-naturedly tilt against their friends and comrades. Spectators who follow tournaments closely can often detect the identity of a disguised knight by his tilting technique.





## Chapter Four: *A Brief History of Chivalry*

This chapter contains four sections, giving the GM and players a sense of the large events around which their campaign takes place. The first section describes the ancient history leading to King Arthur's rule. The remaining sections divide the monarch's rule into three major periods, any of which can be used as the time of your campaign.

In addition to their chronological division, the three "campaign" periods involve different primary nemeses, as well as different central heroes. In the early rule, King Arthur himself is the central figure, while his main enemies are the eleven kings who strive to keep him from his rightful kingdom. This period ends with the defeat of the eleven kings and the forming of the order of the Round Table.

The heroic actions of Sir Lancelot du Lac and the Knights of the Round Table and the villainous plots of Morgan Le Fay, King Arthur's sinister half-sister, define the middle years of Arthur's rule. These are the days of high adventure, and the time period in which most *Once and Future King* campaigns are set. This period comes to an end with the beginning of the Quest for the Holy Grail.

The time between the end of the Quest and the death of King Arthur constitutes the final portion of Arthur's rule. While the Knights are still important figures, King Arthur returns to center stage to deal with the Machiavellian plots of his bastard son Sir Mordred. This era ends with the death of King Arthur, which ushers in a new age of peace.

*Note:* This history is not complete by any stretch of the imagination, nor are players and GMs forced to adhere to the events described. If the GM wishes to run a campaign in which Sir Mordred loses and King Arthur lives, she should feel free to do so.

### Ancient History

**452:** In Britain, a Welsh chieftain, Artorius Riothamus, unites native Celtic tribes with remaining Romano-British settlers and becomes high king.

457-472: Artorius fights a series of twelve battles,

allegedly slaying 960 of his foes personally.

**474:** Artorius Riothamus dies at Badon Hill in battle against rebels led by his son, Medraut, who also dies. Artorius leaves no legitimate heir, and his realm dissolves into a patchwork of rival kingdoms.

**800:** The Pope crowns Carolus Magnus, king of the Franks, (also known as Charlemagne) emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. His knights become the model for later chivalry.

**12th-13th Century:** In Europe, particularly in France, knighthood becomes so institutionalized that jousting, swordplay, and tournaments take on an almost sporting quality. By this time, all knights, regardless of birth, are considered part of the nobility.

**2015-2020:** A man known only as the Avatar begins a religion known as the Theanthropy, which combines many of the doctrines of other faiths. The simple truths of Theanthropy gain it many converts.

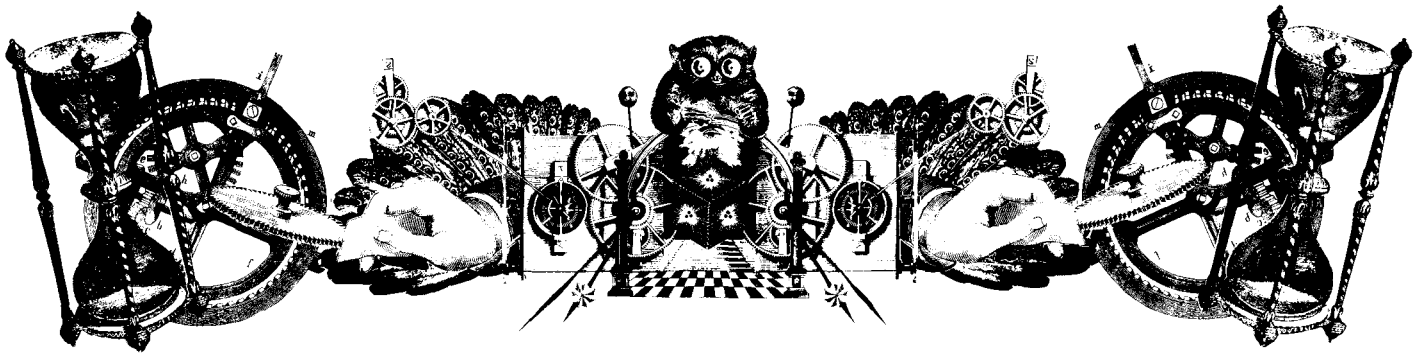
**2034:** Terrorists assassinate the Avatar as he addresses the Security Council of the United Nations. Later legend will hold that the First Avatar was on the brink of presenting the U.N. an ancient chalice with the power to transfigure humankind into a higher life form. After a month of mourning and meditation, one of the First Avatar's chief disciples takes over as the new Avatar of the Theanthropy.

**2065:** Under Theanthropic guidance, the United Nations becomes the sole governing body of the world, beginning one thousand years of peace and prosperity. The office of the Avatar passes down through the generations, gaining a large degree of political as well as spiritual influence.

2287: Professor Moroboshi Hayao postulates the existence of a dimensional space that lies alongside our own Einsteinian universe. According to Moroboshi, "sidespace" distance is much shorter than distance in our own universe. Scientists debate Moroboshi's conclusions about "sidespace" for decades.

**2301:** Arnold Dawson ends the sidespace debate by successfully transmitting a radio wave through sidespace. Dawson's invention allows for nearly





instantaneous communication between worlds and revolutionizes space exploration.

**2309:** While exploring the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter, a science team discovers relics of an ancient civilization. The scientists conclude that the asteroids were once part of an inhabited world, which they name Minerva. Analysis of Minervan technological artifacts leads to the creation of techniques for control of gravity, transmutation of elements, and construction on a planet-wide scale.

**2325-3093:** The United Nations government embarks upon an unprecedented program of expansion, terraforming satellites in the solar system using Minervan techniques.

**3101:** Avatar David II moves the seat of the Theanthropy from Earth to Venus. Most people believe he does this in an attempt to separate the Theanthropy hierarchy from political pressures being placed on it by Federation officials.

**3127:** Hugh Ambrose, president of the Terran Federation, announces the construction of a huge central computer mainframe, which will link all computer systems in the Terran Federation together.

**3130:** The central mainframe goes on-line. Only the highest officials in the Terran Federation and the technicians who program and operate the system know the mainframe resides on the first permanent station constructed entirely in sidespace. A historian based on this station jokingly refers to it as Avalon, a reference to an island in Celtic mythology located in an otherworldly realm.

**3136:** Computer operators on Avalon discover an independently-operating program in the mainframe, which calls itself Merlin and appears to be self-willed and self-aware.

**3903:** The Terran colonies on Io and Europa declare their independence from the Terran Federation. The Federation consults Merlin, requesting assistance in bringing the rebels under control.

**3904:** The rest of the Jovian colonies, as well as several regions of Mars and Venus, follow the example of Io and Europa and revolt.

**3905:** More of the colonies rebel. The Terran Federation government becomes frantic in its desire for an effective countermeasure. Roger St. John Morris, a technician in a secret research lab hidden in Glastonbury, England, outlines a plan for defeating the rebels, which consists of cloning a new race of humans from genetic material found in ancient burial sites near Glastonbury and using these as living weapons against the rebels.

**3906-3927:** The Glastonbury scientists work secretly and desperately to bring Morris's plan to fruition. In the course of their experimentation, they create many new life forms, some of which are dangerous monsters. Unbeknownst to the researchers, Merlin secretly passes much of their work to scientists on the rebel worlds.

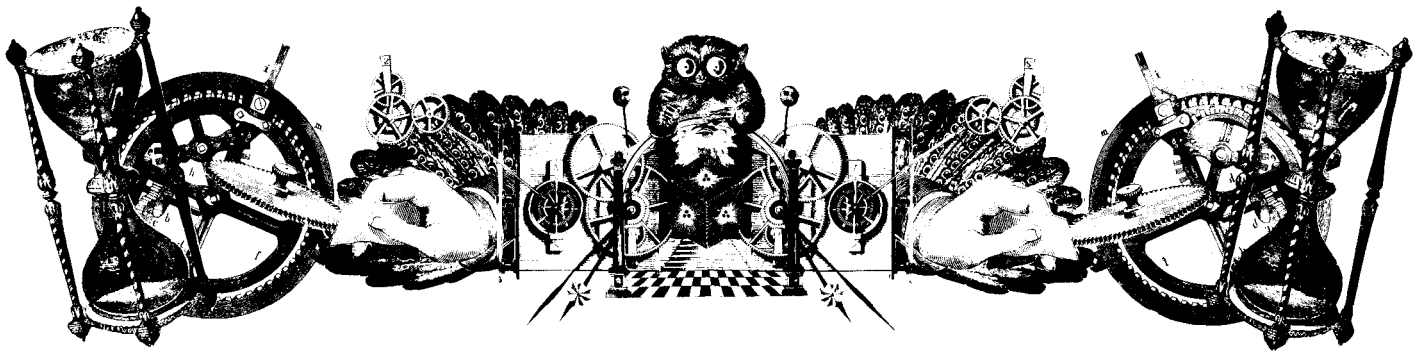
**3928:** Amanda Cameron, a brilliant technologist, manages to decipher and rewrite portions of the central mainframe's source code. She gains the title "sourcerer," and with her assistance the Glastonbury enclave succeeds in creating the first of their warrior clones. Fearful that their creations might get out of control, the scientists imprint the clones' minds with the doctrines of the Theanthropy and the behavior patterns and strict code of conduct of medieval knights.

**3929-3946:** The Colonial Wars begin. To the surprise of the Federation, they discover that the outworlders have created clone knights of their own. Over the course of 17 years, the knights wage a back-and-forth war across the solar system.

**3943:** Hoping to gain a strategic advantage, technologists on the Saturnian moon Titan build a huge force of artificial warriors to fight their battles. These androids prove no more effective than the clones.

**3948-3958:** The Colonial Wars come to an end, but not in a manner foreseen by the Empire. Vortigern and other leaders of the knights turn on humanity and seize power for themselves. The clones set up new kingdoms all across the Solar System, and give their new realms names from antiquity.

**3970-4421:** A feudal society takes form, with lords



and kingdoms constantly making and breaking alliances. The android warriors created by the Titans are discovered to be sentient, thanks to programming installed by Merlin. Unknown to the knights or their human creators, Merlin manipulates people and events towards some purpose of its own.

## The Birth of King Arthur

**4425:** A pair of brothers, Aurelius and Uther, wrest control of Logres, the most powerful nation on Earth, from Vortimer, the great-grandson of Vortigern. Aurelius, under advisement from Merlin, chooses to abdicate all his claims to the throne in favor of his brother.

On the eve of his coronation by Avatar Samuel III, Uther sees a long-tailed comet in the night sky. Liking the image to the fire of a dragon, Uther gives himself the surname Pendragon during his crowning and declares himself high king of the Solar System. He later has a castle built to house his court, which he calls Castle Pendragon.

**4426-4444:** Through a combination of military victories and skilled diplomacy, Uther brings much of the planet Earth and some of the nations of Luna under his rule with Merlin's assistance.

**4446:** Merlin arranges events which bring Uther into contact with Igraine, wife of Duke Gorlois of Cornwall. Uther and Igraine conceive a son destined to unite splintered humanity. During Uther's tryst, Sir Cadur, Uther's general, kills Gorlois.

**4447:** King Uther Pendragon marries Igraine amidst a swarm of controversy. He quickly marries off Gorlois' three daughters to allies whose realms are far from his own. Igraine gives birth to a son, whom Uther names Arthur. Many knights suspect the child's true parentage, and when the story of Arthur's conception emerges, many of Uther's allies desert him.

During his efforts to regain control, Uther receives a message from Merlin, commanding him to place the infant Arthur into a small sidespacecraft. Despite Igraine's appeals, Uther obeys. Merlin guides the

craft to a castle near the Forest Savage. There, he instructs the lord of the castle, Sir Ector, to raise the boy as his own. Merlin then withdraws all its assistance from Uther.

**4448-4452:** Without Merlin's support, Uther's kingdom begins to disintegrate.

**4453:** Uther Pendragon dies in battle, apparently without an heir. Under Merlin's direction, the technologists of Avalon forge a sword with special sensors in the hilt programmed to activate only when an individual with the unique genetic code of the child of Uther and Igraine grasps the sword. Officials of the Theanthropy place the sword, known as Caliburn, in a stone monument at the shrine of the First Avatar in Canterbury. Upon the stone are inscribed the words: "He who draws forth this sword from this stone is the rightful king of the Solar System."

**4454:** An android named Emrys arrives at Sir Ector's castle, and presents himself as a tutor for Arthur and Kay.

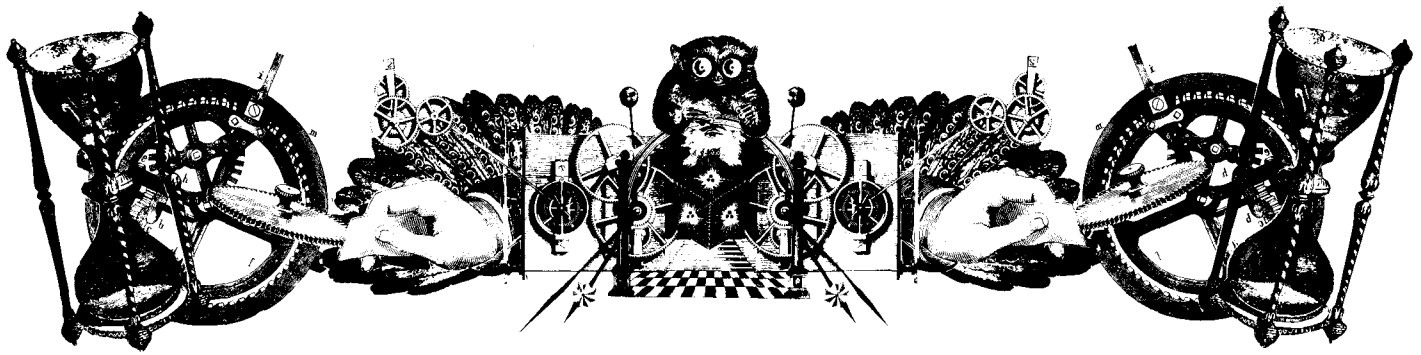
**4455-4465:** Many kings and knights, both Terran and android, attempt to draw the sword from the stone, but none succeeds. The warring between rival kingdoms becomes worse than ever.

**4466:** Kay becomes a knight, and Arthur becomes his squire. Knights from all over the Solar System converge on Canterbury for a tournament, including Sir Kay and Sir Ector.

On the morning of the tournament, Arthur leaves Sir Kay's lasersword in their lodgings. Hastily trying to find a replacement, he draws the sword from the stone and presents it to Sir Kay. Sir Ector insists that Arthur be crowned king. Apart from Sir Ector, Arthur's strongest supporter is King Leodegrance of Camelgard. Many of the rival kings refuse to swear fealty and depart for their home worlds to prepare for war. Sir Ector explains how Arthur was given to him by Merlin, and asks Arthur to make Sir Kay his seneschal. Arthur does so.

In all, eleven kings make an alliance against King Arthur. With the tactical assistance of Emrys, Arthur manages to hold his own against these kings.





During an early battle against his enemies, Arthur damages Caliburn beyond repair. Emrys directs Arthur to Glastonbury, where a secret portal to sidespace connects Earth with Avalon. There, the Lady of Avalon gives Arthur a powerful sword named Excalibur and its sheath, which protects the wearer from harm. With Excalibur and the sheath, Arthur performs many deeds of distinction on the battlefield.

**4467:** Arthur receives help from King Ban of Benwick and King Bors of Gaul, who lend him the strength he needs to defeat his enemies. At the banquet celebrating Arthur's victory, Emrys reveals that he is not an ordinary android. The technologists of Avalon built him, and Merlin controls him directly. He tells all assembled the true father of King Arthur, putting to rest the final opposition to his right to the throne.

**4468-4478:** King Arthur labors to put his kingdom in order. Arthur also goes to the aid of his allies King Ban and King Bors when their ancient enemy, King

Claudus, attacks them.

During this period, Arthur has several affairs with beautiful ladies. The Lady Lionors gives birth to a son, Sir Borre, who will later become a knight of the Round Table, although his parentage is never widely known. Arthur is also seduced by Queen Margause, not knowing that she is his half-sister. Margause gives birth to a son named Mordred as a result of this affair.

## The Round Table

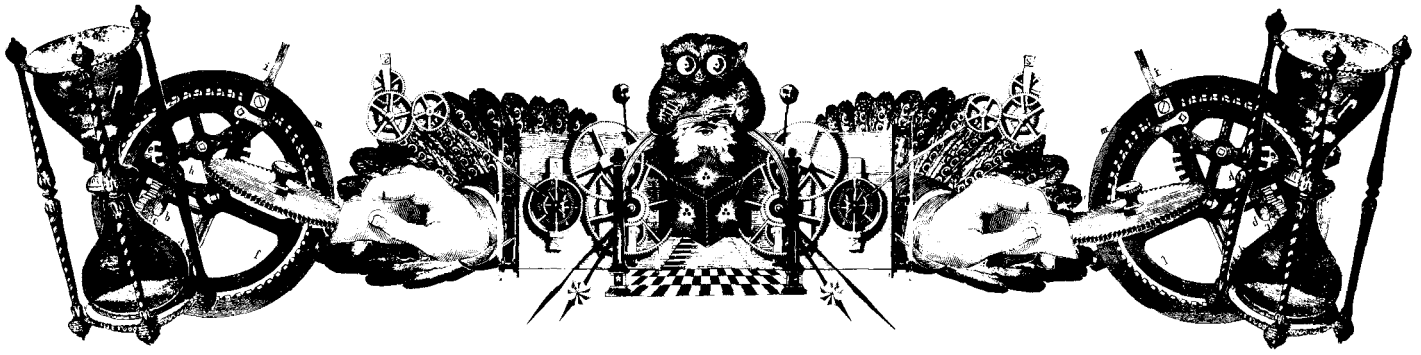
**4479:** Fearing a repeat of the disaster that befell the realm after Uther died without an apparent heir, Arthur's advisers strongly urge him to marry. King Leodegrance offers his daughter Guinevere to the king, and Arthur grudgingly accepts. Leodegrance also gives Arthur a huge, round table as a wedding gift, which inspires the king to create a new order of knighthood: The Knights of the Round Table.

King Arthur dispatches Sir Lancelot, the son of King Ban, to fetch Guinevere and bring her to his new court in the castle of Camelot. Guinevere falls in love with Lancelot at first sight, mistakenly believing that he is her betrothed, King Arthur. On the return trip to Camelot, Sir Lancelot develops a passion for Guinevere as well, but they both deny their feelings for each other, for the sake of the king.

**4480:** King Arthur marries Guinevere in a lavish ceremony at Camelot. He announces the formation of the Order of the Round Table, an order of knighthood dedicated to the highest ideals of truth, justice, and honor. All but one of the 150 seats at the Round Table are occupied. Through the Emrys android, Merlin explains that only a knight of perfect virtue may occupy the empty chair, known as the Siege Perilous, predicting that the day knights sit at every seat of the Round Table will be the last day all the fellowship will be gathered together at one time.

**4481-4486:** King Arthur and his knights become renowned across the Solar System for their chivalry and heroism. Sir Lancelot quickly becomes the most popular and the standard by which all other





knights are judged. His love for Queen Guinevere remains unconsummated, but he fights all of his battles in her name, and refuses to wear the token of any other lady.

During this time, Arthur establishes the custom of recalling all of his knights to Camelot for a great feast once a year, so that they each may relate their exploits. Strange and miraculous events transpire at these feasts, which only add to the reputation and renown of the Round Table.

**4485:** Sir PL-105 becomes the first android knight to join the fellowship of the Round Table.

**4489:** Sir Gawaine, nephew of King Arthur and son of King Lot and Queen Margause, becomes a knight of the Round Table.

**4490:** Morgan Le Fay, Arthur's half-sister, contrives to steal Excalibur and its sheath, replacing them with convincing, but powerless, copies. She gives the genuine items to her paramour, Sir Accolon, a Knight of the Round Table. She nearly succeeds in her conspiracy to have the King killed, but a young sorceress named Nimue gives King Arthur assistance that allows him to foil the scheme. He retrieves Excalibur, but its sheath is lost.

**4503:** The sorceress Nimue, who had been studying and researching the Merlin program for many years, uncovers an ancient password ("Carmarthen") giving her direct access to Merlin's programming. Believing that the AI has had too great an influence on the lives of mankind for the past centuries, Nimue turns Merlin off.

**4505:** After being injured in a tournament, Sir Lancelot is tended by a damsel named Elaine, the daughter of King Pelles of Carbonek. Elaine falls in love with Sir Lancelot, and with the help of a technoiger named Brusen, Elaine transforms her appearance into that of the Queen, and has Sir Lancelot injected with a powerful aphrodisiac. In his drugged condition, Sir Lancelot is fooled by Elaine's disguise and gives in to her. When he awakens the following morning and discovers what he has done, he goes insane with grief and rage and flees from King Pelles' castle.

**4506:** Queen Margause's youngest son, Mordred, comes to Camelot and becomes a knight. In private, King Arthur admits that he is Sir Mordred's father, but he does not make this knowledge public, for fear of scandal. Sir Mordred becomes a Knight of the Round Table.

Elaine of Carbonek gives birth to a baby son, whom she names Galahad. "Galahad" had been Sir Lancelot's name before his knighting.

**4508:** King Pelles finds Sir Lancelot running loose in the wild, and brings him to Carbonek. There, the mad knight eventually returns to normal. He is deeply ashamed of his actions during his madness and decides not to return to Camelot. Sir Lancelot refuses to marry Elaine, but agrees to stay with her and help raise Galahad.

**4509-4520:** Bereft of Merlin, Sir Gawaine, and Sir Lancelot (formerly his closest advisers), King Arthur often turns to Sir Mordred for counsel, despite warnings from Queen Guinevere and Nimue (who has now become the Lady of Avalon). Sir Mordred uses his influence to help promote knights who are loyal to his cause, and to sow dissension secretly among different factions.

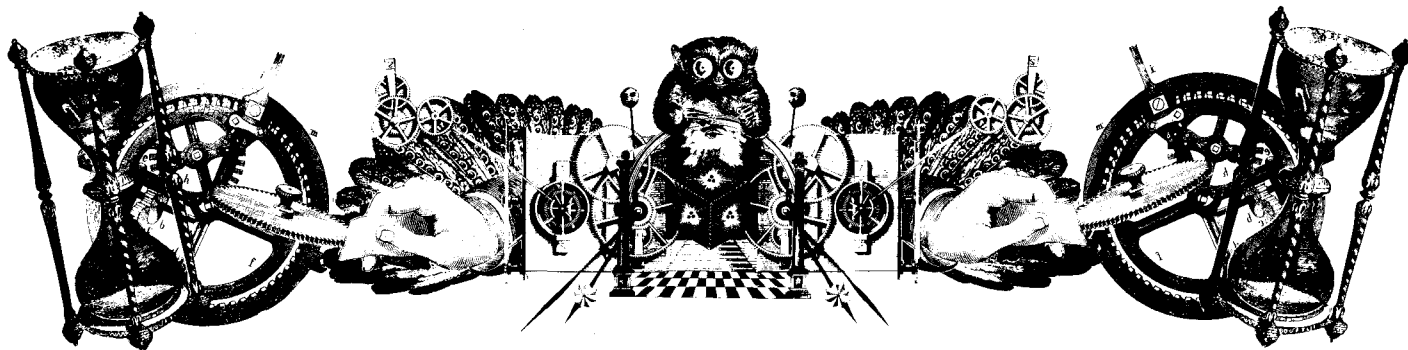
**4521:** Queen Guinevere finally learns that Sir Lancelot lives, and she commands him to return to Camelot. Sir Lancelot, who has been longing for a return to his old life as a knight errant, finds that he cannot refuse the queen's demand. He departs from Carbonek, leaving behind a heartbroken Elaine.

**4522:** Sir Lancelot and Queen Guinevere finally consummate their love, after he rescues her from the clutches of a deluded knight named Sir Meliagrance. They begin an affair that lasts until he undertakes the Quest for the Holy Grail. Sir Mordred's was the hand behind the kidnapping, but he manages to keep his involvement a secret.

**4524:** Just before King Arthur's annual feast, a damsel arrives at the court, and asks Sir Lancelot to accompany her to a nearby hermitage. There, Sir Lancelot meets his son, Galahad, who wishes to become a knight. Seeing that the youth is strong of







body and spiritually pure, Sir Lancelot ordains Sir Galahad a knight.

At the feast, Sir Galahad appears and shocks the Knights of the Round Table by taking his seat in the Siege Perilous. For the first and only time, every chair at the Round Table is occupied. King Arthur takes this as a sign that Sir Galahad is to be his successor and names the newly-made knight heir to the throne.

No sooner has he done so than an image of a mysterious golden goblet that seems to radiate spiritual power visits the gathering. Avatar Clyde IV declares that the vision must be the Holy Grail, the lost chalice of the First Avatar. When it vanishes, Sir Galahad vows to seek out this object and to learn its true meaning. Not wanting to be outdone by the newest of their order, virtually every other Knight of the Round Table makes a similar vow. King Arthur is dismayed that so many of his knights are to embark upon the same quest, but cannot order them to rescind their vow.

**4526:** Sir Gawaine returns first from the Quest for the Holy Grail, having been unsuccessful. As the months pass, more knights return, all bringing news of their failure, and often bringing news of the deaths of other knights, as well. Many tell tales of miraculous events that occur wherever Sir Galahad has been.

**4528:** Finally, Sir Lancelot returns, and tells a sad tale of his quest: how he was defeated in combat by Sir Galahad, and by virtue of his love for the queen, was deemed unworthy to complete the Quest for the Holy Grail. He also tells how Sir Galahad, Sir Percival, and Sir Bors, after many harrowing adventures, embarked in a mysterious sidespaceship for parts unknown.

**4530:** Sir Bors returns at last, and tells King Arthur how the three Grail knights discovered a planet within the sidespace dimension itself, where they had a vision of the Holy Grail. The Grail has transformed Sir Galahad into a creature of pure light and beauty, far surpassing the human species. Sir Percival remained behind to guard the Grail for all time, while Sir Bors returned to Camelot to report on the successful conclusion of the Quest.

The king is devastated at the loss of his heir, and having no legitimate child of his own, names Sir Gawaine (who has several sons of his own) heir to the throne. This decision infuriates Sir Mordred.

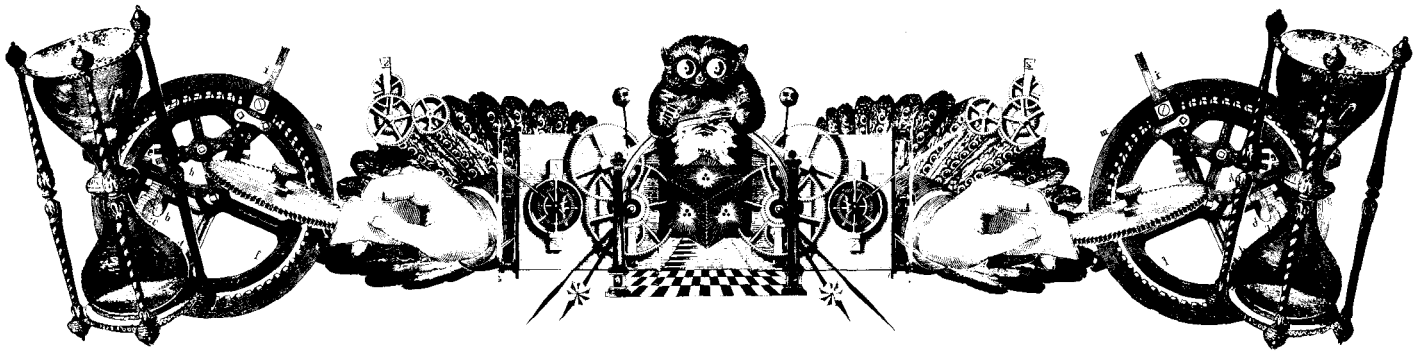
## The Death of Arthur

**4531-4540:** For several years, Sir Lancelot, having been severely chastened by his experiences during the Grail quest, breaks off his affair with Queen Guinevere. Eventually, the two lovers reunite, and they continue their secret affair. At the urging of Sir Mordred, Sir Agravaine spies on the two, hoping to uncover evidence that will convince the king of their infidelity. Sir Lancelot and Queen Guinevere manage to avoid detection for some time.

**4541:** Sir Agravaine calls a meeting of his brothers, hoping to gather support in his campaign against Sir Lancelot and Queen Guinevere. Sir Gaheris and Sir Gareth refuse to listen to Sir Agravaine's accusations, and Sir Gawaine insists that they come solely from Sir Mordred's attempts to divide the court. Sir Agravaine tells the king of his suspicions against the lovers. Although reluctant to believe that his wife and closest friend have betrayed him, the king gives Sir Agravaine permission to attempt to catch them in the act.

Several days later, King Arthur leaves Camelot to visit his holdings on Luna. While he is gone, Sir Lancelot visits the queen in her chambers, where they are caught by Sir Agravaine, Sir Mordred, and eleven other knights. At Queen Guinevere's urging, Sir Lancelot escapes, killing all of the knights except Sir Mordred, who flees. With Sir Bors, Sir Lionel, and other kinsmen, Sir Lancelot retreats to his castle, the Joyous Card, which he renames the Dolorous Card.

When King Arthur returns, he must try Queen Guinevere on a charge of treason. Sir Gawaine speaks on the queen's behalf, even going so far as to accuse his dead brother Sir Agravaine of being responsible for the situation. Nevertheless, Arthur finds the queen guilty and sentences her to execution. Sir Lancelot comes to her rescue, and in the



ensuing battle, he unwittingly kills Sir Gareth and Sir Gaheris, both of whom are unarmed.

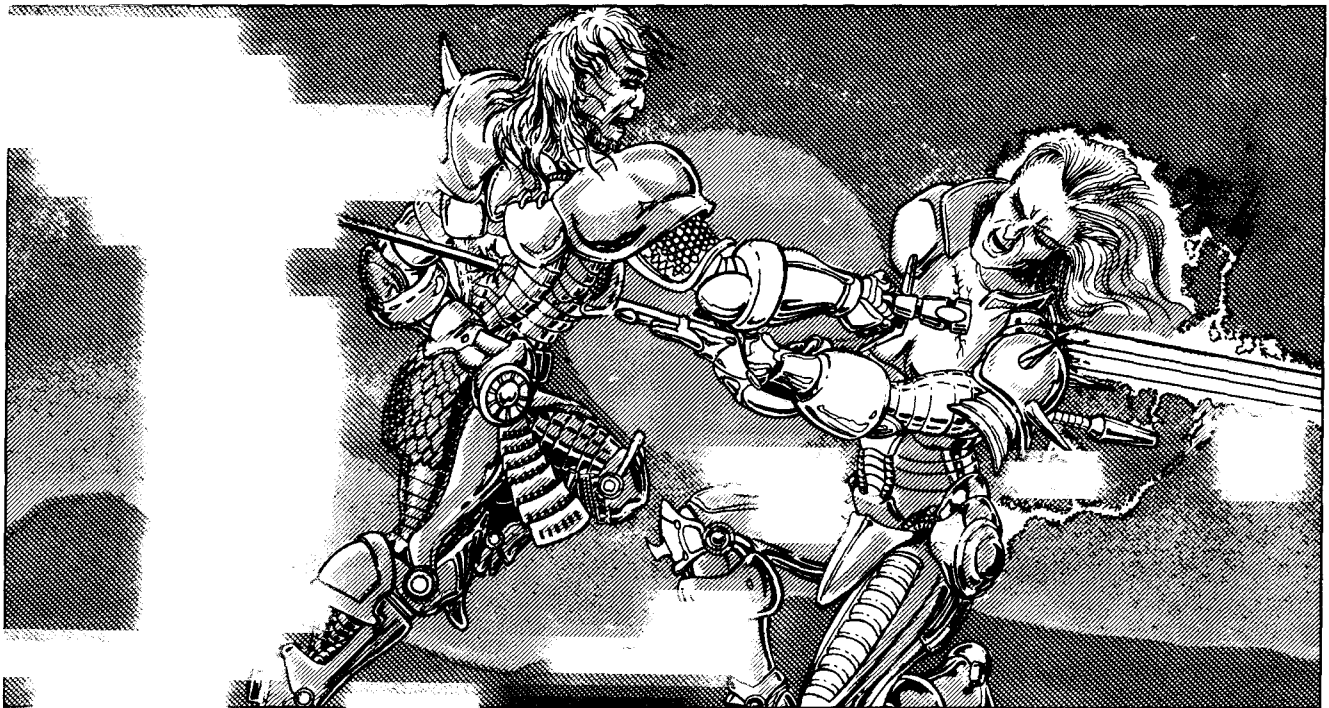
Sir Gawaine is infuriated by the deaths of his brothers, and insists that King Arthur declare war upon Sir Lancelot. With a heavy heart, the king orders his forces to lay siege to Dolorous Card. Many of the king's subjects take up Sir Lancelot's cause, thus dividing the kingdom. The siege is lifted when messengers from Avatar Collin IV arrive from Venus. Collin orders Sir Lancelot to deliver the queen to King Arthur, and the king must grant her amnesty. Sir Lancelot returns Queen Guinevere to the king, but Sir Gawaine swears that he will not rest until Sir Gareth and Sir Gaheris are avenged.

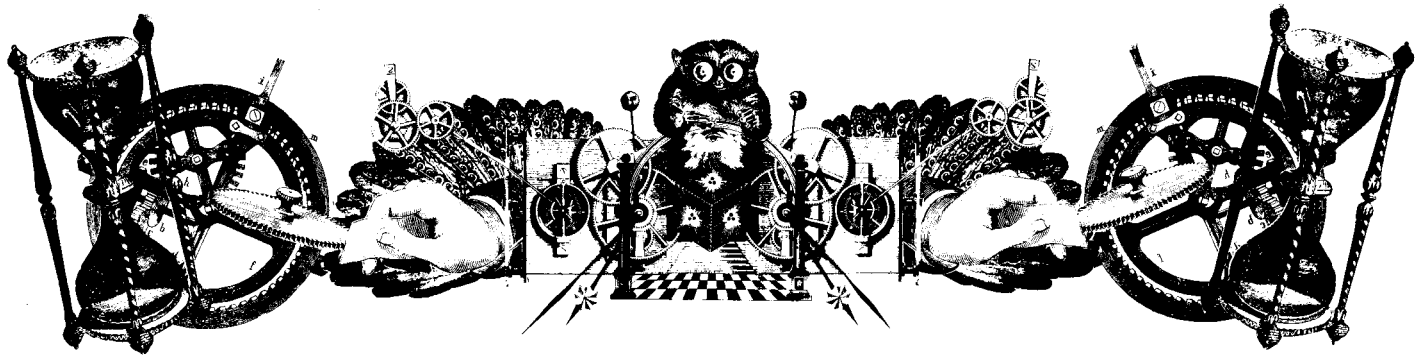
**4542:** Sir Lancelot becomes ruler of his father's kingdom, and gives great rewards to those knights who remained with him. He sues for peace with King Arthur, but Sir Gawaine's fury is unabated, and the king's forces prepare to besiege Benwick. King Arthur entrusts Queen Guinevere to the care of Sir Mordred,

whom he names regent in his absence.

After a long siege, Sir Lancelot gives in to Sir Gawaine's continual demands and meets his sworn foe in mortal combat. In the most ferocious and furious single combat ever recorded, the two knights battle for hours. In the end, Sir Lancelot mortally wounds Sir Gawaine. Gawaine curses Lancelot when the knight refuses to slay him outright, but later, on his deathbed, Gawaine repents of his harsh words and deeds. Sir Gawaine dictates a letter of apology and forgiveness to Sir Lancelot before he passes away.

Meanwhile, Sir Mordred has publicly announced that King Arthur died in the war with Sir Lancelot, and he declares himself king. In an unheard-of breach of etiquette, he equips his army with a variety of projectile weapons. The evil knight attempts to marry Queen Guinevere to secure his claim, but she escapes him by taking refuge in a castle screened by a powerful force field. When news of these events reaches the king, he immediately returns to Logres to





confront his bastard son.

In hopes of ending the bloodshed peacefully, King Arthur offers Sir Mordred half of his kingdom. The two parties meet to discuss terms in the midst of a field, but the truce is accidentally broken when a knight ignites his lasersword to slay a snake slithering through the grass. Both armies attack, accusing the other of treachery.

King Arthur meets Sir Mordred in the midst of the battle. The king asks his son to stop the madness, but consumed with hate and envy, Sir Mordred delivers a severe blow to his father's head. King Arthur slays Sir Mordred by running him through with Excalibur.

After the battle, Sir Bedivere and Sir Lucan the Butler find the dying king. They try to move the king to safety, but the effort causes Sir Lucan to die from his own wounds. King Arthur then commands Sir Bedivere to cast Excalibur into a nearby lake. The knight refuses to do so at first, but the king insists. Just before the sword strikes the water, a portal to sidespace opens, and the sword is drawn through, reclaimed by the Lady of Avalon.

When Sir Bedivere returns to the spot where he left the king, he finds that King Arthur has been taken aboard a sidespaceship of unusual design, piloted by three queens. From the ship's general appearance, Sir Bedivere realizes that this is the same ship that bore Sir Gaiahad, Sir Percival, and Sir Bors to the world of the Holy Grail. In later years, many people believe King Arthur to have been transformed in the same manner as Sir Galahad, now existing on a higher plane of existence.

**4543:** Queen Guinevere renounces her titles and worldly possessions, becoming an acolyte of the Theanthropy.

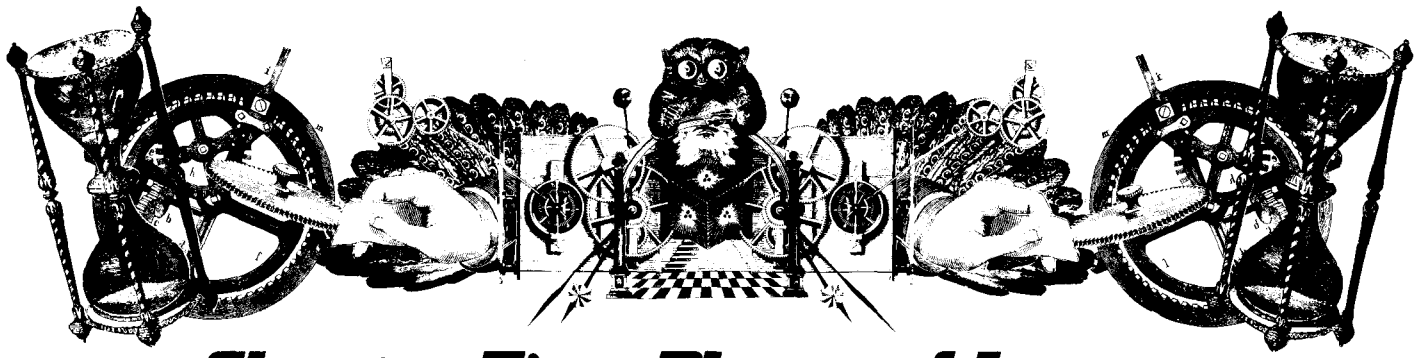
Sir Constantine, the son of King Arthur's ally Sir Cador, becomes king. Thanks to the sacrifice of King Arthur, the forces of Sir Mordred disperse, and never regain their former power. This era of peace and prosperity lasts a thousand years.

**4545:** Sir Lancelot visits Guinevere, and decides to follow her example, becoming an acolyte of the

Theanthropy. Sir Ector De Marys, his brother, becomes ruler of Benwick in his stead.

**4565:** Guinevere passes away. Lancelot makes a pilgrimage to visit her tomb.

**4566:** Lancelot dies on the anniversary of Guinevere's death. A group of his kinsmen, including Sir Bors and Sir Ector De Marys, with the permission of King Constantine, embark on a journey into sidespace, hoping to bury the great knight on the Grail world. They are never heard from again.



## ***Chapter Five: Places of Interest***

### **Introduction**

**H**umans established the first permanent bases on Luna—Ceti Alpha Base and Sigma Iotia Base—in 2093. These were primarily landing and construction facilities, but they paved the way for the foundation of a number of mining, industrial, and scientific research colonies.

Epsilon Delta Base, located near the Bullialdus crater in the Mare Nubium, became humankind's foremost center of space technology research and development by the middle of the 23rd century. Physicist Dr. Moroboshi Hayao first postulated the existence of sidespace while working in these laboratories.

The success of the lunar facilities encouraged the United Nations government to accelerate its exploration of the other planets. In 2301, the invention of sidespace communication, which allowed instantaneous contact over interplanetary distances, led to a boom in space exploration. The United Nations established several bases on Mars, from which it launched manned probes into the asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter. Evidence found on Ceres and Vesta, the largest of the asteroids, indicated that the belt had once been part of a single planet. Furthermore, evidence indicated that a technologically-advanced race had inhabited the planet. Among the ruins, scientists found equipment that led them to such discoveries as the fusion drive, the relativity-damping field, advanced holography, and most importantly, molecular transmutation.

Humans first used large-scale transmutation to transform arid areas of Terra, such as the Saraha and Mojave deserts, into lush, arable land. Later, explorers employed transmuters to terraform other planetary bodies into habitable worlds, beginning with Luna in 2325, followed by Mars in 2404 and Venus in 2416. The terraforming process used to alter the colonial worlds also increased the density of those planets, giving them a more earthlike surface gravity. By this time manned expeditions had reached the moons of Jupiter, but even terraforming could not enable these

bodies to support life.

In the mid-27th century, a group of Martian scientists developed a way to enclose each Jovian moon entirely within its own protective barrier, or ecosphere. These ecospheres allowed the creation of artificial environments on the moons' surfaces, resulting in another colonization boom. In the 32nd century, after the development of the sidespace displacement field, pioneers used improved ecospheres to establish colonies on the larger Saturnian moons.

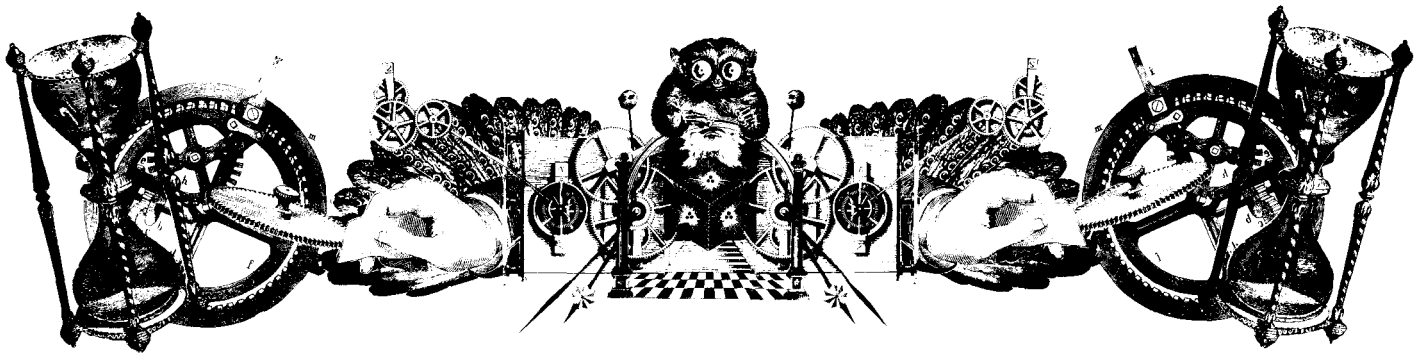
For nearly 800 years, the Terran Federation united the solar system. Then came the Colonial Wars and the establishment of new feudal kingdoms on all the human worlds.

### **Interplanetary Travel**

Two ways exist to travel between planets. Sidespace-ships, using sidespace as a travel medium, present the most frequently used method. Distance between worlds constantly changes, so it is impossible to provide exact travel times between worlds. However, distance in sidespace remains so much smaller in relation to distance in direct space that even the longest journeys (from Mercury to Saturn, for instance) take barely a day. A person can make shorter trips (between Jovian moons, for example) in a matter of minutes. Sidespace itself is a shapeless gray void, so pilots must possess accurate and painstaking navigational skills to avoid losing their way.

Travel through direct space presents the second method commonly used to travel the solar system. The fusion drive that direct spaceships employ allows an average spacecraft to travel at a top speed of 25,500 kilometers per hour, but as fast as this may seem, traveling via sidespace remains many times faster. Again, due to constant planetary motion, no exact travel times exist. However, a trip from Terra to Luna through direct space (384,400 km) takes approximately 1.5 hours. The chart below lists the average distance of each planet from the sun, which the GM may use to approximate a travel time. Please





note, however, that travel in direct space is done almost exclusively by commoners, as the nobles consider direct space beneath their station.

### Planetary Distances

<i>Planet</i>	<i>Mean Distance from Sun (kilometers)</i>
Mercury	57.9 million
Venus	108.2 million
Terra	149.6 million
Mars	227.9 million
Jupiter	778.3 million
Saturn	1.427 billion
Uranus	2.8696 billion
Neptune	4.4966 billion
Pluto	5.9 billion

## Ecospheres

Spheres of transparent polyaluminum, known as ecospheres, surround the inhabited moons of Jupiter and Saturn. The ecospheres protect the moons from external forces and provide a constant controlled climate. Servomechanisms keep the spheres in place, at an average height of four kilometers above the moon's highest point. A series of automated airlocks located at the equator allows travel to and from the surface of the moon. Each airlock is large enough to allow passage for any size spacecraft or sidespaceship. One could avoid the ecosphere airlocks by moving through sidespace into the moon's atmosphere. However, pilots must calculate their direct-space reentry very carefully to avoid crash-landing.

## The Planets

The following listings give brief descriptions of each inhabited planet and moon in the Solar System during the reign of King Arthur. Except for Terra, the precise geography of each world remains vague, so the CM can adjust the worlds for use in her own campaign.

*Note:* In instances where the name of more than one

ruler for a kingdom appears, the second name represents a subsequent ruler to the first.

### Mercury

**Diameter:** 4,880 km

**Population:** approx. 2,000

**Kingdoms (Rulers):** None

During the earliest era of terraforming, scientists made several attempts to transform Mercury into a habitable world. All such attempts failed, due to the planet's proximity to the sun and its extremely slow rotation, which causes the same side of the planet to face the sun for extreme lengths of time. Only the border area between the day and night side of Mercury could be even remotely capable of supporting life, and even then only with heavily-shielded life support structures.

Oddly enough, Mercury's inhospitable climate makes it a favorite hiding place for bands of pirates. Anywhere from two to eight pirate bands keep bases on Mercury at any given time, although such bases never stay in place for more than six years before the dayside/nightside border moves into the blazing sun or the frigid night.

The only life form indigenous to Mercury is the huge, heat-devouring avian called the phoenix (see page 111).

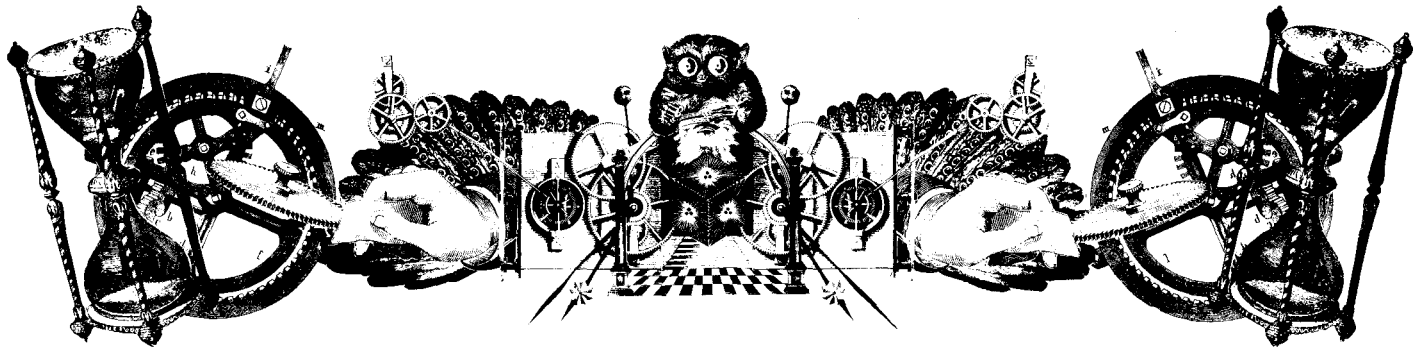
### Venus

**Diameter:** 12,104 km

**Population:** 2,750,000,000

**Kingdoms (Rulers):** Almain (Emperor Lucius/King Arthur), Brittany (King Howell), Garlot (King Arthur), Lyoness (King Meliodas)

Despite massive transmutation and terraforming, Venus remains a hot, humid world. Nearly three-fourths of the planet's surface consists of saltwater oceans, although forests and tropical jungles cover 60% of the three major continents. The planet has



only two seasons, corresponding to the Terran spring and autumn, but the distinction between the two Venusian seasons remains vague at best. On any given Venusian day, there is a 50% to 75% chance of rain, and a 1 00% chance of precipitation of some kind, even if only in the form of fog or dew.

Almain stands as the most notable kingdom on Venus, covering the whole of the largest continent and part of the second-largest. New Rome is the capital of Almain, including in its limits a huge capitol complex that also serves as the seat of the Theanthropy and home of the Avatar. Nearly a quarter of Venus' population lives in New Rome.

After the death of Uther Pendragon, Sir Augustus, who had been the king's governor, ruled Almain. When Sir Augustus died, his foppish son Lucius declared himself ruler of Almain, and later forced the Avatar to declare him the new Holy Terran Emperor. King Arthur responded to Lucius' demands for tribute by invading Almain, defeating the Emperor's forces and being named Holy Terran Emperor himself. During the later reign of King Arthur, Sir Marcus, Lucius' much more noble younger brother, rules Almain.

The other kingdoms on Venus are Brittany, Lyonesse, and Garlot. King Howell rules Brittany, which some know by the name Armorica. Garlot is best known for the mysterious forest called Caldeon, exceeded in evil reputation only by the Forest Savage on Luna. In contrast, Lyonesse remains a peaceful, serene kingdom, somewhat marred by tragedy and minor political infighting. Sir Tristan, the son of King Meliodas and the now-deceased Queen Elizabeth, stands as the kingdom's most famous citizen.

## **Terra**

**Diameter:** 12,759 km

**Population:** 3,200,000,000

**Kingdoms (Rulers):** Logres (King Arthur), Benwick (King Ban), Canbenet (Sir Eustace), Gaul (King Bors), Servage (King Arthur), East Britain (King Royns/King Arthur), West Britain (King Claudus/King Arthur)

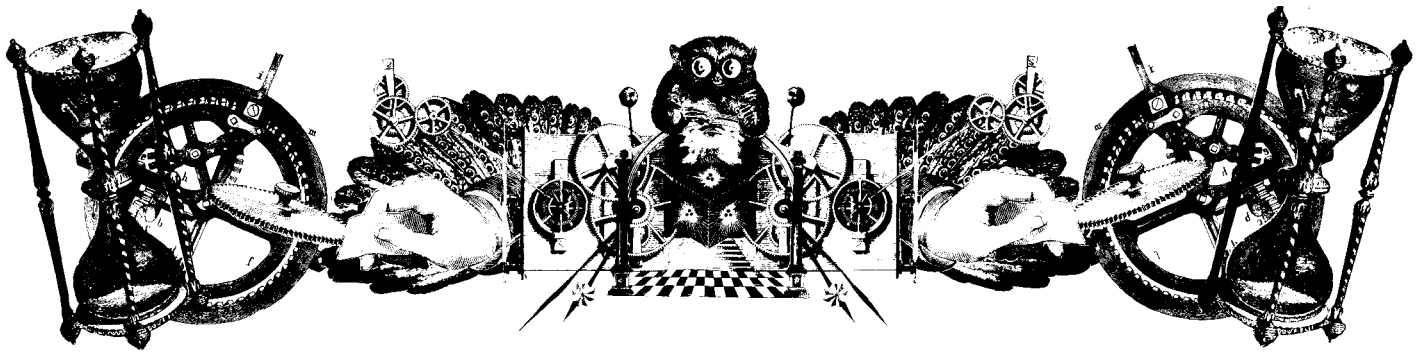
Terra has changed significantly in the millennia between the 20th and 46th centuries. Large-scale colonization of other worlds made it possible to reclaim much of the land on Earth once destroyed by overpopulation and industrialization. Terraforming technology also made it possible to transform previously harsh areas of the world, such as deserts and tundra, into more temperate environments. Scientists used transmuters in the 25th and 26th centuries to repair and to revitalize the planet's atmosphere, ending forever the threat of global warming.

As widespread as the changes to Earth's terrain and climate have been, the difference in nations and national boundaries constitutes the largest change. Terra now comprises five kingdoms, each of which claims a different continental land mass as its realm.

The largest and most powerful kingdom, occupying the whole of Eurasia, is Logres, King Arthur's fiefdom. Arthur's seat of power is the city and castle of Camelot, located in the midst of what was once Great Britain. Refer to page 85 at the end of this chapter for more information. Of the wonders of the ancient world, only the formation of large standing stones known as Stonehenge still survives. Technologists in the 46th century now believe natives of the planet Minerva constructed this monument before their world cracked into rubble. The great forest known as Caleterium stands in the west of Logres, covering nearly 9,000,000 square kilometers. Extremely dense jungle in the south, Caleterium becomes rain forest and then deciduous forest as it extends north. Logres also includes the islands of Japan, now collectively called Abblasore.

North America, from the former Panama Canal (now referred to as the First Avatar's Channel) north, belongs to the kingdom of Benwick. For many years, Benwick waged a defensive war against the forces of King Claudus in West Britain. Benwick also lays claim to Canbenet, a dukedom on the island once called Greenland.

South America became a single kingdom called Britain after the end of the Colonial Wars. When its last king died, Britain split into eastern and western



kingdoms, each ruled by one of the old king's sons. King Claudus of West Britain waged an aggressive war against King Ban of Benwick and King Bors of Gaul for many years, with neither side gaining a conclusive victory until King Arthur took the side of King Ban and King Bors, slaying King Claudus and taking over West Britain. King Royns of East Britain remained officially neutral during the war, though he made many secret forays against King Arthur and his knights. Ultimately, Sir Balin le Savage slew Royns, and East Britain also fell under King Arthur's rule.

The kingdom of Gaul, on the continent of Africa, has remained in the hands of a single governing family since the Colonial Wars. Bors is the current king of the continent, though his royal castle stands on the island of Ganis (the former Madagascar). His people love and respect Bors for his skills on the field of battle, his mercy, and his just decisions. He has been one of King Arthur's most valuable allies since the high king drew the sword from the stone.

The continent of Australia and the islands of the South China Sea make up the realm of Servage. A wild, inhospitable land, Servage remains nominally King Arthur's realm, but only savage natives and fugitives inhabit the land. The only known settlement is the mysterious Castle of Maidens, located on Australia's east coast.

## Luna

**Diameter:** 3,476 km

**Population:** 1,800,000,000

**Distance from Terra:** 384,400 km

**Kingdoms (Rulers):** Avelion (Lady Lile/King Arthur), Cameliard (King Leodegrance), Cornwall (Duke Gorois/King Mark), Ireland (King Aguishance), Northumberland (King Clarivance)

Humans made their first celestial colonization effort on Earth's moon, and Luna endured the first terraforming experiments, making it a habitable world. Of all the colony worlds, Luna remains the most earthlike,

and it keeps the closest ties to Terra. Water covers only a third of Luna's surface, in the form of fresh water inland seas. The entire surface of Luna has a temperate climate, with the relative shortage of moisture in the air keeping precipitation to a minimum. A large portion of Luna's northern hemisphere—roughly 5,000,000 square kilometers—consists of the Forest Savage, a dense woodland inhabited by all types of ferocious beasts. Several castles stand in the depths of the Forest, and many suspect they serve as refuges for evil knights. King Arthur lived his childhood in a castle on the outskirts of the Forest.

Citizens from the old United Kingdom on Earth constituted the majority of colonists on Luna, thus many of the present-day nations of Luna retain ancient names from that area. The new kingdoms also retain many of their old Terran feuds, especially the friction between Ireland and Cornwall, which always compete with one another. Rumors establish Ireland as a haven for ogres, but this has never been conclusively proven. Cameliard remains one bastion of sanity on Luna, ruled by King Arthur's staunch ally, King Leodegrance.

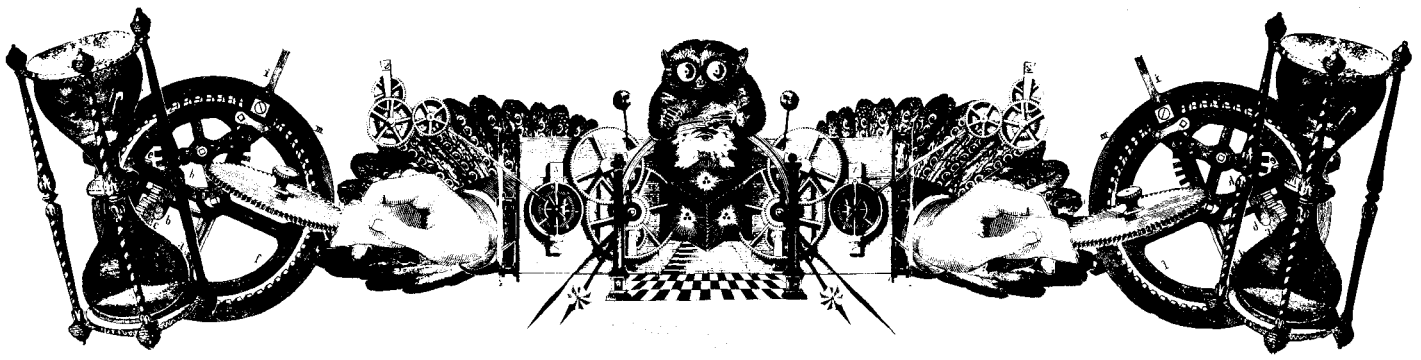
## Mars

**Diameter:** 6,787 km

**Population:** 1,750,000,000

**Kingdoms (Rulers):** The Red Lands (King Hermance), Scotland (King Carados), Surluise (King Galihodin, Sir Galihaut the Haut Prince), Wales (King Cradelment), North Wales (King Rience/King Cradelment)

While pioneers terraformed Mars, a strong faction in the United Nations government fought to preserve the natural environment of the planet. Their efforts succeeded, and thus a 200,000 square kilometer area near Olympus Mons remains pristine. The citizens of the solar system now know this preserve as the Red Lands. A hardy, nomadic people rule this crimson kingdom, and though they obey the rules of chivalry, they remain more brutal and aggressive than knights



elsewhere, perhaps as a result of the nature of their harsh red-sand kingdom.

The rest of the surface of Mars is very similar to Terra, with different biomes and regular seasonal changes, although Martian seasons last longer than comparable seasons on Earth. Water covers a third of Mars' surface, including a large saltwater ocean in the eastern hemisphere and a number of large freshwater lakes and river systems.

Some years prior to the reign of King Arthur, the kingdom of Wales split into two separate nations, known as Wales and North Wales. After King Rience of North Wales died without an heir, however, his cousin King Cradelment reunited the country. The kingdom of Surluise carries the fame of the greatest and most exciting tournaments available in the solar system. Sir Galahaut the Haut Prince organizes and directs the tournaments, and knights travel from every world to participate in his games.

## Asteroid Belt (The Lonely Isles)

### Ceres

**Diameter:** 1,003 km  
**Population:** 125,000

### Melpomene

**Diameter:** 130 km  
**Population:** 30,000

### Others

**Diameter:** 1 km-650 km  
**Population:** 650,000

The population of the asteroids consists almost entirely of dwarves, who do not live on the surface of the asteroids, but inside them. Centuries of mining and tunneling have made the asteroids into great, hollow, stone mazes, and each asteroid is home to a different dwarven tribe. The largest of these is the cha'nuk tribe, which resides in the asteroid Ceres.

Goblins have taken over several of the medium-

sized asteroids (those 25 to 75 kilometers in diameter) and enslaved their dwarven natives. Dwarven blood feuds and periodic human crusades have kept the goblin population in check. However, it seems that each time the forces of good eliminate a goblin enclave, another nest of goblins appears somewhere else.

## Jovian Moons

The following are the only moons of Jupiter that can support Terran life. In addition to these five, the Jovian system includes 12 other satellites, ranging in diameter from 8 to 270 kilometers. These minor satellites generally remain uninhabited, but a few have been known to conceal temporary bases for pirates.

### Io

**Diameter:** 3,632 km  
**Distance from Jupiter:** 421,600 km  
**Population:** 120,000,000  
**Kingdoms (Rulers):** Lothian (King Lot/Queen Margause/Sir Gawaine/King Gingalin)

Reflecting the nature of its ruler, Io is cold and unfeeling. Although the entire surface of the moon can support life, the people of Lothian are restricted to the area defined by their cities and agricultural domes. While some flora and fauna exist outside the boundaries of civilization, most of the Lothian landscape is harsh, forbidding wilderness.

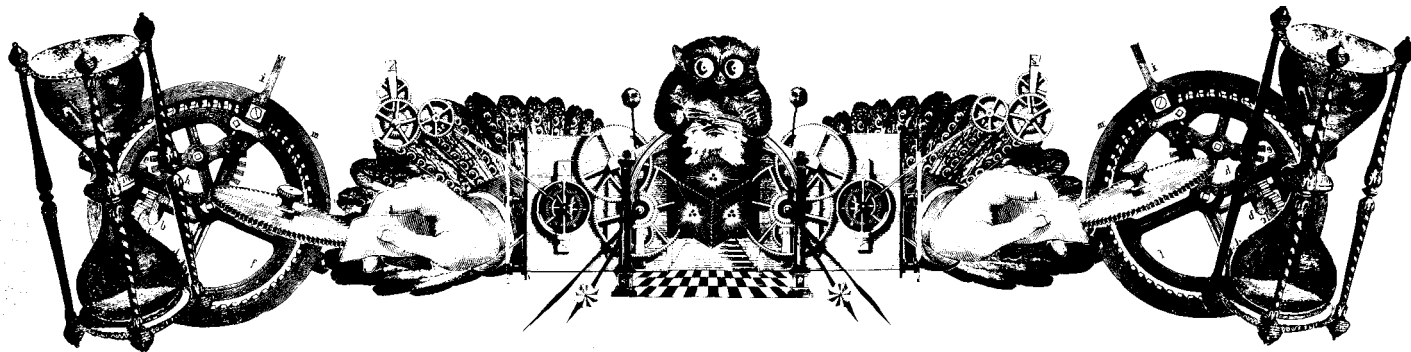
The ruler of Lothian, the only kingdom on Io, is King Lot. While still a young prince, Lot led an invasion to Europa, seizing control of the kingdom of Orkney. While still technically a separate kingdom, it is well known that King Lot rules both worlds with an iron hand.

### Europa

**Diameter:** 3,126 km  
**Distance from Jupiter:** 670,900 km  
**Population:** 90,000,000  
**Kingdoms (Rulers):** Orkney (King Lot/Queen Margause/Sir Gawaine/King Gingalin)







Europa is only somewhat less desolate than its companion moon, Io.

#### **Ganymede**

**Diameter:** 5,276 km

**Distance from Jupiter:** 1,070,000 km

**Population:** 2,000,000 (pre-4487)

**Kingdoms (Rulers):** Surhaute (King Pellam)

#### **Callisto**

**Diameter:** 4,870 km

**Distance from Jupiter:** 1,883,000 km

**Population:** 1,800,000 (pre-4487)

**Kingdoms (Rulers):** Listenoise (King Pellam)

Ganymede and Callisto were both marvelous examples of the glorious potential of ecospheres, transmutation, and terraforming. They were idyllic, prosperous worlds containing a variety of flora and fauna. However, this all changed with the coming of Sir Balin Le Savage.

When Lot of Lothian launched his attack on Orkney, King Pellam of Listenoise simultaneously invaded Surhaute, thus separating both Orkney and Surhaute from immediate aid and insuring the invaders' victory. King Pellam, whose sanity was suspect, later ordered a number of powerful thermonuclear bombs hidden in strategic locations on both moons. Pellam also had a device, designed to detonate the bombs should he endure serious wounds, surgically implanted in his own body. In this way, he hoped to protect himself from assassination.

Sir Balin arrived in Listenoise, searching for an invisible knight known as Sir Garlon, who happened to be King Pellam's brother. Sir Balin slew Sir Garlon, and during his attempts to escape, struck a blow to King Pellam's belly causing the bombs to explode. Surhaute and Listenoise were laid waste, but the ecospheres surrounding the moons remained intact. Ironically, both King Pellam and Sir Balin survived, both having been instantly sur-

rounded by a stasis field when the implant detonated the bombs. Sir Balin soon escaped with the help of Merlin, but King Pellam remained in suspended animation until Sir Galahad arrived many years later and healed him.

#### **Himalia**

**Diameter:** 1 70 km

**Distance from Jupiter:** 11,470,000 km

**Population:** 200,000

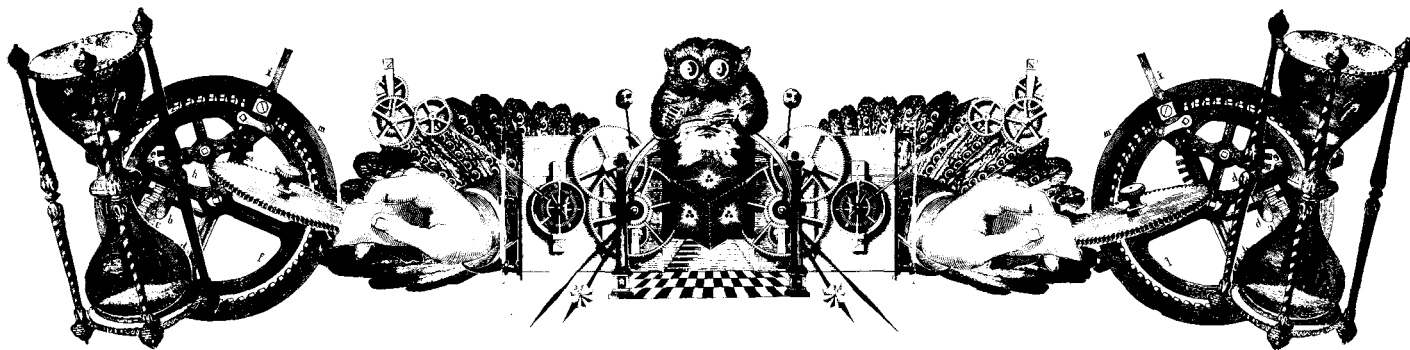
**Kingdoms (Rulers):** Gales (King Pellinore)

The best words to describe Himalia and the kingdom of Gales are quaint and pastoral. No cities exist on the entire world, the only major structure being the royal castle of King Pellinore. The people of Gales are mostly farmers, woodsmen, or fishermen, possessed of a simple but deep spirituality. Pellinore's citizens effectively govern themselves, a fact proved by their thirty-year self-sufficiency while he was off-world seeking the Questing Beast. Although they understand and appreciate technology, most citizens of Gales find that they are just as well off without a lot of fancy gadgets.

#### **Saturnian Moons**

The following Saturnian moons are those surrounded by ecospheres and possessing permanent Terran kingdoms. In addition to these five, the Saturnian system includes 16 other moons, the smallest of which are only icy blocks. Some of the uninhabited Saturnian moons and the rings have been known, as some Jovian moons and Mercury, to be hiding places for pirates.

The rings of Saturn extend across a 272,300 kilometer diameter 16 kilometers deep. If traveling between Saturnian moons in direct space, any Navigation (Direct Space) skill checks have margin ratings of S5/F8; critical success denotes absolute clearance of all ring matter, critical failure denotes body damage to the craft of no fewer than 50 points (GM's discretion on greater damage).



### ***Tethys***

**Diameter:** 1,050 km

**Distance from Saturn:** 294,600 km

**Population:** 5,000,000

**Kingdoms (Rulers):** Corbin (King Pelles)

Water covers nearly 75% of Tethys, making the moon a very damp place to live, to say the least. There are no continents to speak of, only a single large archipelago comprising 50 islands of various sizes. The largest of these islands, the site of Carbonek, King Pelles' castle, is 25 kilometers wide by 36 kilometers long. Because fishing serves as the chief industry of Corbin, some refer to King Pelles as the Fisher King.

### ***Dione***

**Diameter:** 1,120 km

**Distance from Saturn:** 377,400 km

**Population:** 6,000,000

**Kingdoms (Rulers):** Apres (King Berrant)

In 4460, a meteor struck the ecosphere surrounding Dione, pushing it slightly off center. Consequently, winter perpetually rages in the eastern hemisphere of the moon, while a desert bakes the western side. A 120-kilometer-wide temperate zone exists between the two hemispheres. The technologists of Avaion have made several offers to repair the damage, but King Berrant has always refused for political reasons.

The ruler of Apres, King Berrant, was once known as the King of a Hundred Knights, due to the valor and sheer number of his followers. He lost this nickname after he decided to ally with ten of his fellow monarchs in a futile war against King Arthur, which resulted in the deaths of over half of his knights.

### ***Rhea***

**Diameter:** 1,530 km

**Distance from Saturn:** 526,800 km

**Population:** 10,000,000

**Kingdoms (Rulers):** Nentres (King TK-421)

Rhea is an unremarkable moon with a temperate climate and the usual mixture of forest, plains, and civilization. During the Colonial Wars, however, Rhea stood out from the other worlds as the only site of android manufacture. The factory where androids first emerged still stands, and androids throughout the solar system treat it almost as a shrine. Rhea remains a major supplier of android replacement parts and modification kits. An android, King TK-421, rules the kingdom of Nentres, and both his android and human subjects love and respect him. He has no specific mate, but has designated Lady BN-983 as his heir, should he die.

### ***Titan***

**Diameter:** 5,150 km

**Distance from Saturn:** 1,200,000 km

**Population:** 160,000,000

**Kingdoms (Rulers):** Gore (King Uryens), Strangore (King Brandegoris)

Titan is literally two worlds in one. In 3722, engineers erected a polyaluminum barrier at the equator, circling the globe and stretching all the way up to the ecosphere. The reason for this division has been lost with the ages. Today, the two kingdoms remain on agreeable terms, and engage in some commerce via openings cut into the barrier.

The monarch of Gore, King Uryens, became a reluctant ally of King Arthur after Arthur defeated the eleven kings. It later became known that his wife, the sorceress Morgan Le Fay, was King Arthur's half-sister, a fact which King Uryens hoped to use to his advantage. However, Le Fay had no room for King Uryens in her plans and tried to kill him, only to have her plans foiled by their son, Sir Uwayne. After his brush with death, Sir Uryens returned to Gore, where he does his best to mind his own business.

### ***Iapetus***

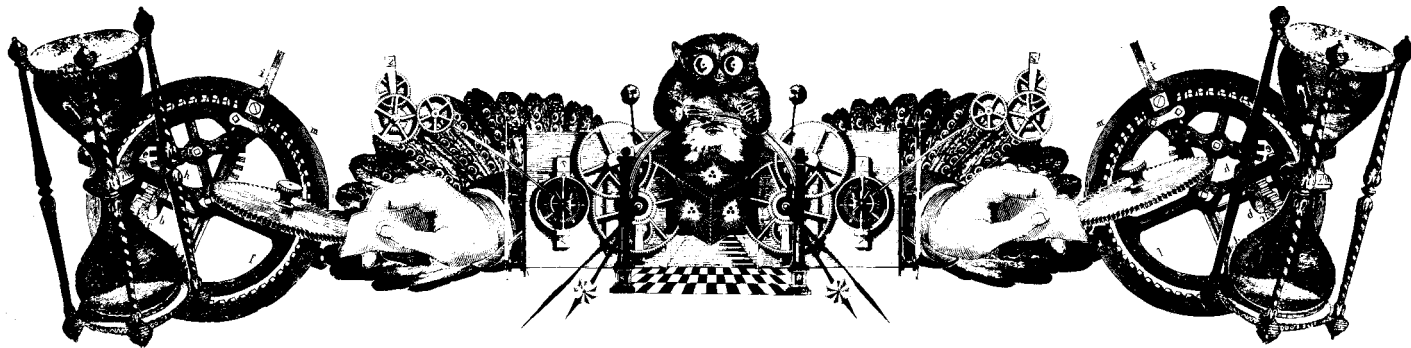
**Diameter:** 1,440 km

**Distance from Saturn:** 3,000,000

**Population:**

**Kingdoms (Rulers):** Astolat (King Bernard)





Iapetus is the most rugged and mountainous world in the Solar System. From space, it resembles Earth's moon before terraforming, but closer examination reveals that despite its mostly rocky surface, a thriving ecosystem exists, Iapetus is also the only world in the Solar System having no bodies of water larger than lakes. This makes the lowlands fairly arid, almost deserts. For this reason, most settlements on Iapetus sit in the foothills.

Astolat, though normally an unassuming kingdom, became the center of a scandal in 4536, when the king's daughter killed herself for love of Sir Lancelot. The great Lancelot wished to disguise himself for a tournament, and so he asked the young maid for a token, in order to confuse his opponents. The young girl believed that Sir Lancelot asked for her token because he loved her, and when later he rebuffed her advances, she died of despair.



## Avalon

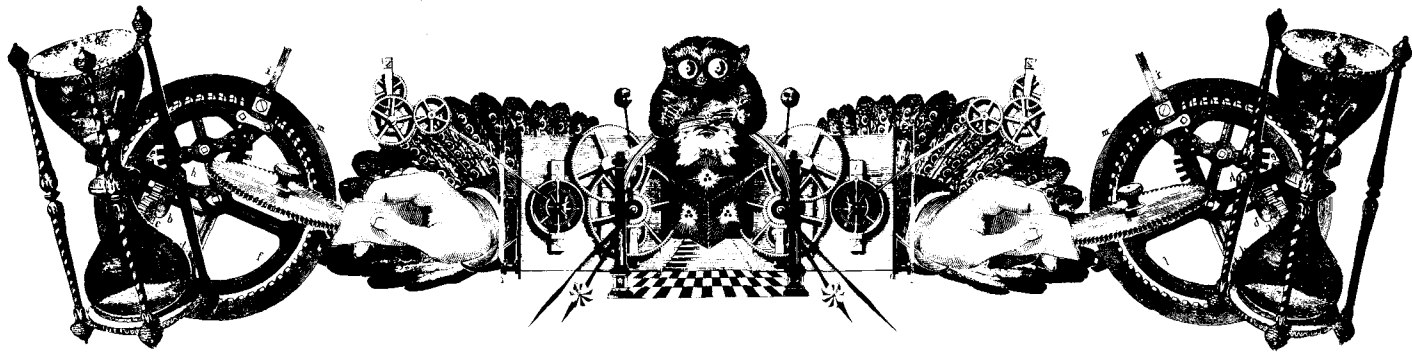
Constructed over a five-year period from 3126 to 3131, the massive Avalon station stands as the only human-made object permanently located in sidespace. Since its original dedication, Avalon has endured 20 major construction overhauls, and new sections are constantly added to its floor plan. Avalon is important to the *Once and Future King* universe for two major reasons: it is the home of the School of Avalon, where technologists of all kinds learn the ways of science; and it is the location of the central computer mainframe that connects and monitors nearly every computer in the Solar System.

## Construction

Nearly a perfect sphere, Avalon stretches across an equatorial diameter of 1,500 kilometers, making it larger than some of the inhabited moons in direct space. Nearly one-eighth of its outside surface area consists of primary and secondary sidespace transceivers, which constantly connect the computer mainframe with similar transceivers in computers all throughout direct space. The surface of the station includes 200 airlocks designed for sidespacecraft of all types. Any sidespacecraft traveling to Avalon receive navigation and pilot control from within the station, so Avalon's exact location remains a secret, even to those who live, study, and work there.

One-thousand, two-hundred reinforced polyaluminum beams running the length of the station provide structural support. X-, Y-, and Z- coordinates identify every interior room and corridor, with 0-0-0 representing the exact center of Avalon. A special portal in location 35-22-42 connects Avalon with a similar gateway located near Glastonbury Lake, in the kingdom of Logres on Terra.

In addition to containing living quarters, school rooms, and scientific laboratories, Avalon also includes several large-scale hitech device facto-



ries. Factories on the station construct everything from common time-saving instruments to weapons to spacecraft.

### **The School**

At any given time, up to 10,000 instructors reside permanently on Avalon, with an additional 21,000 support people. The student population averages 100,000, but this population has been known to rise as high as 150,000.

Instructors separate the student body by age group, and later by specialization. A healthy amount of academic crossover occurs, but students sharing a particular professor or study usually group together. Chapter One discusses the curriculum and school organization.

### **The Computer**

The computer mainframe makes up the entire core of the station, and it occupies over half of the station's entire volume. Service passages and maintenance bays of every description cross the entire computer core. On average, five individuals every year lose their ways in the computer's massive data banks, but with the aid of finely tuned internal sensors and diligent searchers such as bewildered individuals always return safely.

The mainframe contains such huge amounts of total computing capacity that no single number can describe its functions. As far as any determined technologist can discover, the mainframe's computing capacity is infinite. It holds such a vast number of programs in storage that even the most experienced and canny sourcerer has only been able to decipher and rewrite small portions of its source code. In the many years of its existence, the mainframe has experienced all manners of attempts at illegal access, and has protective barriers against them all.

The exact location within the mainframe of the Merlin AI remains one of the great mysteries of Avalon. Before its deactivation, Merlin enjoyed

access to every file in the huge mainframe, and it most certainly had reserved data banks for its own private use. Even the sourceress Nimue, who deactivated Merlin, never found its hiding place. Since becoming the Lady of Avalon, Nimue has forbidden any further research into Merlin, its programs, files, or physical location, lest the program inadvertently be freed from its confinement.

### **Camelot**

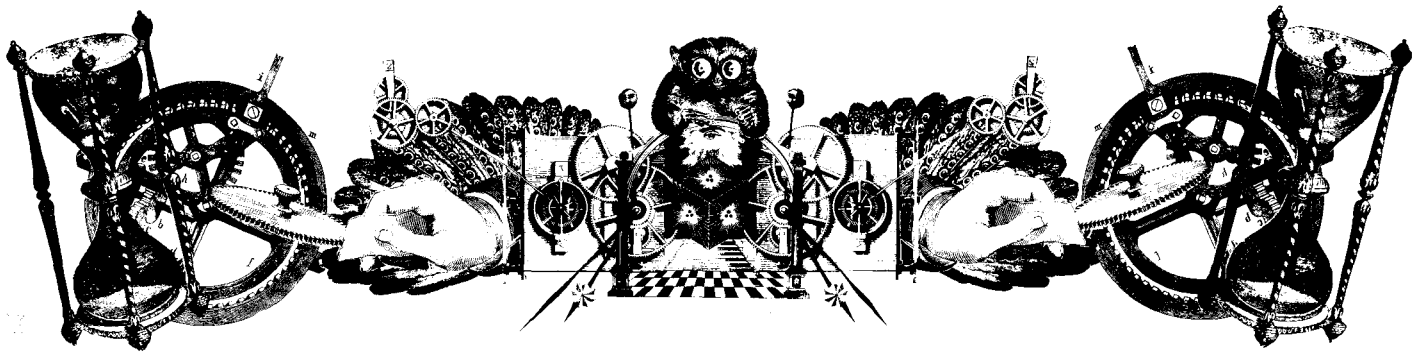
Camelot is both a great city and a castle, home to King Arthur Pendragon and his court. It was designed and constructed to Merlin's exacting standards and took nearly 10 years. The ancient realm once known as Wales, some 400 kilometers southwest of King Arthur's original court of Caerleon, serves as the site of Camelot. Camelot includes a permanent population of almost 1.5 million people, including nobles, clergy, and commoners.

### **The Castle**

The castle of Camelot serves as the center of King Arthur's government, as well as the monarch's home and court. From the outside, it resembles a medieval castle, only much larger, reaching 70 stories into the sky. Close examination of the walls reveals something other than simple medieval stone and mortar. Merlin ordered the walls constructed of reinforced polyaluminum, resembling stone only superficially. In addition to the aboveground floors, the castle includes 15 underground stories, containing the castle's computer banks.

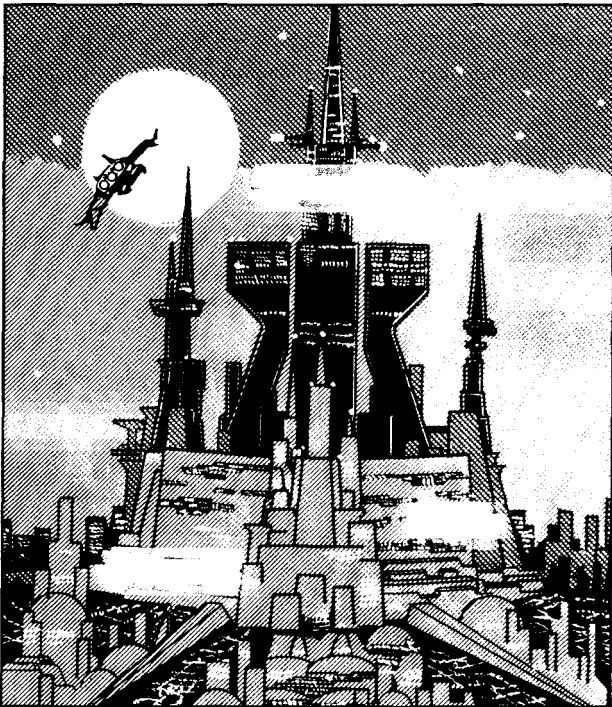
Arthur's grand hall encompasses the ground floor and first three stories of the castle. The Round Table is the showy centerpiece of the hall, stretching a full 100 meters in diameter. During those occasions when the hall serves as a throne room, ballroom, or reception hall, workers can lower the Table and the sieges in which the knights sit into a special holding facility beneath the floor. An ancient crystal chan-





delier hangs from the ceiling, illuminating the many elaborate tapestries that adorn the walls. These wall hangings depict scenes from King Arthur's battles, the life of the First Avatar, and courtly activities such as hunting.

The floors immediately above the grand hall make up the kitchens and other service areas of the castle. Above these floors various administrative offices, storage rooms, living quarters for the Knights of the Round Table, guest rooms, and assorted multi-purpose rooms reach for the sky. King Arthur and Queen Guinevere reserve the top four floors for their personal abode. These rooms are appointed with rich yet modest furnishings.



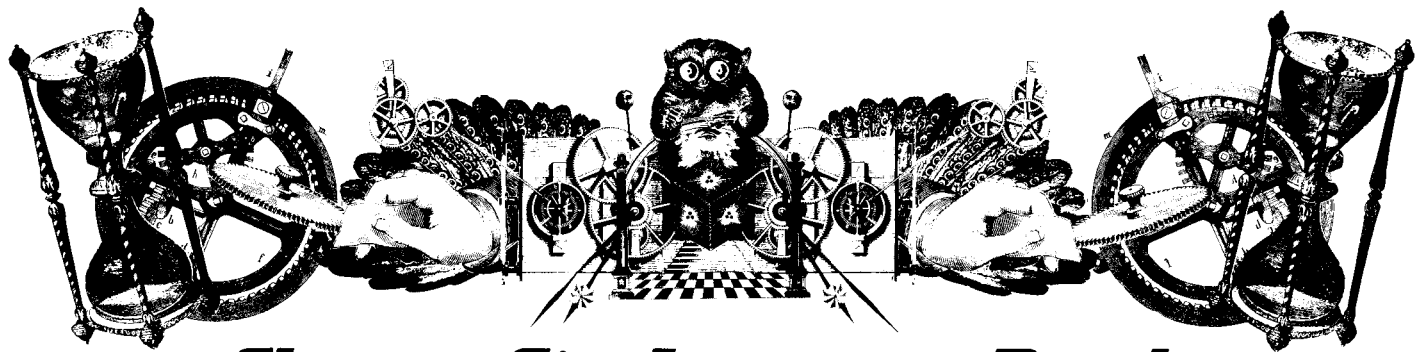
## The City

The city surrounding the castle of Camelot sets a standard by which all other cities in the Solar System are judged. Its streets extend outward according to the ancient method known as the "star system." From a central point, the royal castle, avenues stretch out to each major point of the compass. Cross streets then connect the main avenues, with even narrower streets interconnecting those. Each of the eight major avenues runs approximately four kilometers from the castle to the outskirts of the city.

In times of war, a powerful force field generated within the castle protects the city. This field allows light and air into Camelot, but it repels any kind of bombardment, even assault with energy weapons.

The citizens of Camelot represent all walks of life. There are merchants, lawyers, physicians, laborers, technologists, knights, and clergy. Loyalty to King Arthur and admiration for the Knights of the Round Table bind all of these groups together. King Arthur recognizes and acknowledges the rights of all his subjects, from the most common to the most noble. Once a year, on the Celebration of Humility, he opens the grand hall of Camelot to all citizens who wish to petition the king. Assistants screen applicants beforehand to assure those appearing before the king evince true need or make a just complaint. On occasion, though, the king will notice an individual in the crowd, granting him or her a royal boon.

The largest and most dynamic spaceport in the solar system serves Camelot. Nearly 150 spacecraft of all types, sizes, and shapes arrive and leave each hour.



## Chapter Six: Important People

**N**ote: In the following descriptions, some mention of the characters' final fates may appear, as described in Chapter Four. Of course, during the play of a *Once and Future King* campaign, the GM or the players' characters may alter these. Such histories appear in order to give a sense of the Arthurian epic as a whole.

### Knights of the Round Table

The Knights of the Round Table are King Arthur's closest and most trusted followers. Including the king himself, the order consists of 150 of the bravest and noblest knights in the Solar System. The specific list of knights belonging to the order varies constantly, as knights die or retire and worthy successors replace them. In many cases, one or more player characters may become Knights of the Round Table themselves. The following are some of the most notable knights of Camelot, but this is by no means a complete listing.

#### King Arthur Pendragon

**Profession Group:** Knight      **Core Experience:** 400  
**Player Core:**

<b>Phy.</b>	<b>Int.</b>	<b>Spr.</b>	<b>Inf.</b>
<i>Rank:</i> 2	<i>Rank:</i> 3	<i>Rank:</i> 4	<i>Rank:</i> 1
<i>Dice:</i> 13	<i>D/ce:</i> 11	<i>Dice:</i> 11	<i>Dice:</i> 13
<b>F:68</b>	<b>L:39</b>	<b>Ps:46</b>	<b>C:31</b>
<b>R:65</b>	<b>I:70</b>	<b>W:62</b>	<b>Po:92</b>

**Body Points:** 136

**Stamina Points:** 127

**Character Experience:** 2,700

**Profession:** King of  
the Solar System

**Gender:** Male

**Species:** Interbreed

**Hand:** Right

**Hgt.:** 188 cm

**Wgt.:** 95 kg

**Eyes:** Brown

**Hair:** Brown

**Skills:** Armed Combat (From Horseback/Lance/Sword, On Foot), Unarmed Combat (Fisticuffs), Hoversteed (Riding, Tilting, Dueling), Live Horse (Riding), Chivalry, Behavior (Etiquette, Protocol), Politics, Theology, History, Philosophy

**Equipment:** Caliburn (4466), Excalibur (4467 on), Excalibur Sheath (4467-4490), any armor, lance or mount as needed (prefers cybernetic plate armor & helmet, forceshield, energylance, and hoversteed), any vehicle as needed

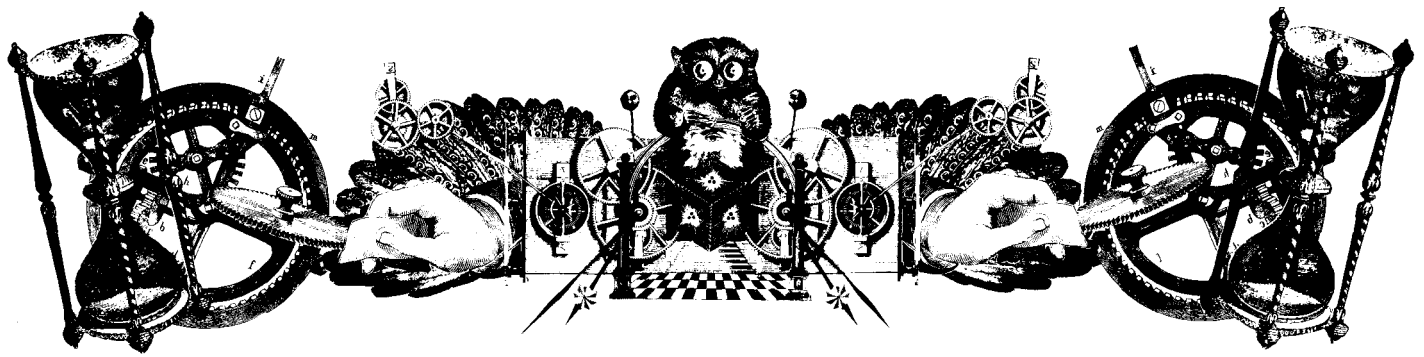
**Background:** King Arthur is the end result of a series of schemes and events manipulated by the Merlin AI. Merlin intended Arthur to have the best genetic material available, from both human and clone ancestors. Merlin even secretly exposed Arthur's father, Uther, to Omicron-Omega radiation to ensure a male child by Igraine.

Arthur grew up secretly on Luna, at a remote castle near the Forest Savage, raised by a follower of Uther's named Sir Ector. Sir Ector taught Arthur the principles of the Theanthropy and trained him to be the squire of his natural son, Kay. When he was seven years old, an android with the appearance of an old man came to Sir Ector's castle and presented himself as a tutor for the two boys. Emrys, as the android called himself, taught Arthur history, politics, ethics, and human nature.

At the age of 19, Arthur withdrew the sword from the stone and became king. As described in Chapter Four, he defeated all those who protested his claim to the throne, married Guinevere of Cameliard, built the castle of Camelot, and founded the order of the Knights of the Round Table. The nobility and chivalry of Arthur's followers became the ideal to which all others aspired and helped usher in a new era of peace and prosperity for all mankind.

**Role-Playing Notes:** King Arthur is a very complex individual, whose personality grows and matures during the course of his reign. In the early days of the Round Table, Arthur is very energetic and is just as likely to embark upon a hazardous quest himself as he is to assign the mission to one of his knights. As his realm grows, the king becomes less involved with adventures himself, allowing his knights (particularly Sir Lancelot) to seek the glory of adventure. At the end of his career, especially after losing so many of his best knights on the quest for the Holy Grail, Arthur begins to exhibit a lingering sorrow and a





sense that all of his works will come to nothing.

Through all stages of Arthur's rule, he never wavers in his loyalty to his queen and to his knights. When it becomes obvious that Guinevere cannot produce an heir, Arthur refuses to divorce her to remarry. Even during the most trying times, Arthur's best friend remains Sir Lancelot, whom Arthur sees as the realization of the knight errant he longed to be as a boy, before the burden of kingship fell to him.

### Sir Lancelot du Lac

**Profession Group:** Knight      **Core Experience:** 700

#### Player Core:

Phy.	Int.	Spr.	Inf.
Rank: 1	Rank: 4	Rank: 2	Rank: 3
Dice: 18	Dice: 8	Dice: 11	Dice: 13
<b>F:88</b>	<b>L:29</b>	Ps: 60	C: 52
<b>R:90</b>	<b>I:44</b>	W: 49	Po: 70

**Body Points:** 1 76

**Stamina Points:** 139

**Character Experience:** 5,100

**Profession:** Knight of  
the Round Table/Queen's Champion

**Species:** Interbreed

**Hand:** Right

**Hgt.:** 193 cm

**Wgt.:** 114 kg

**Eyes:** Blue

**Hair:** Black

**Skills:** Armed Combat (From Horseback/Lance/Sword/Mace/Axe, On Foot/Sword/Mace/Axe), Unarmed Combat (Fisticuffs, Wrestling), Hoversteed (Riding, Tilting, Dueling), Chivalry (Disguise), Courtly Love, Theology, Religious History

**Equipment:** Any armor, weapon or mount as needed (prefers polyaluminum plate armor & helmet, forceshield, energylance & lasersword, and hoversteed), Scourge (4524-4530), Electric Hairshirt (4524^528)

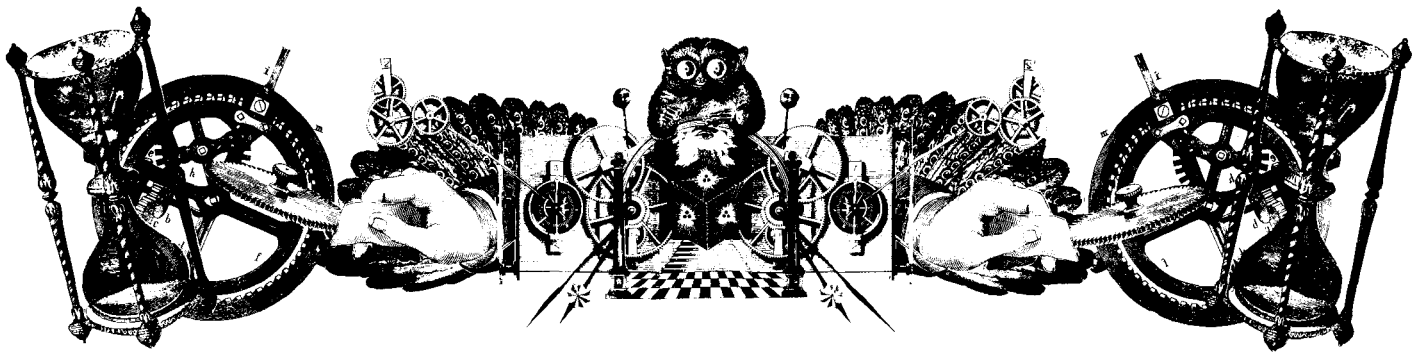
**Background:** As a boy, the future Sir Lancelot du Lac used the name Galahad. He originally intended to join the priesthood when he grew up, but as a son of the king of Benwick, Galahad also learned the arts of tilting and dueling. The young prince proved to have a natural talent for the skills of war, particularly when it came to use of the lance.

Just prior to Galahad's 18th birthday, the Lady of the Lake visited the court of King Ban. She talked privately with Galahad and persuaded him that he could better serve the Higher Power by becoming a knight, adding his strength to the new regime. When his birthday arrived, Galahad surprised his father (and all of Benwick) by announcing that he would become a knight, rather than an initiate of the Theanthropy. In recognition of his skill with the lance, King Ban dubbed his son "Sir Lancelot," and to honor the Lady of the Lake who had helped Galahad make his decision, the king added the honorific "du Lac" (of the Lake).

Sir Lancelot became the greatest Knight of the Round Table and the model for chivalry everywhere. He fell in love with Queen Guinevere, but for many years he contented himself with being the queen's champion. Only long years after they professed their love did Sir Lancelot and the queen seek consummation. This action led to Sir Lancelot's failure to achieve the quest for the Holy Grail, and ultimately, caused the civil war between King Arthur and Sir Lancelot and the destruction of the Round Table.

**Role-Playing Notes:** Sir Lancelot is a study in the power of contradictions. He deeply loves Queen Guinevere, but his loyalty to King Arthur and his fundamental Theanthropic beliefs keep him from becoming her lover for decades. As the queen's champion, he fights all of his battles in her name, and whenever he accepts quarter from an opponent, he commands the knight to travel to Camelot and surrender to Guinevere's mercy.

Part of Sir Lancelot's popularity results from his refusal to take part in political infighting or court intrigue. He believes such ignoble activities to be beneath a knight's dignity. Ironically, it is well known that to have the favor of Sir Lancelot is also to court the good will of King Arthur and Queen Guinevere. Many knights have attempted to curry Sir Lancelot's favor, but Lancelot has a remarkable talent for determining a person's sincerity or lack thereof. Sir Lancelot's closest friends among the Knights of the Round Table are Sir Gareth, Sir Gaheris, Sir Lamorak, Sir Tristan, Sir Lionel, and Sir Bors de Ganis.



## Sir Gawaine

**Profession Group:** Knight      **Core Experience:** 300

**Player Core:**

Phy.	Int.	Spr.	Inf.
Rank: 1	Rank: 4	Rank: 3	Rank: 2
Dice: 12	Dice: 4	Dice: 7	Dice: 10
<b>F:60</b>	<b>L:18</b>	Ps: 28	C31
<b>R:60</b>	<b>I:22</b>	W: 42	Po: 66

**Body Points:** 120

**Stamina Points:** 102

**Character Experience:** 2,000

Profession: Knight of  
the Round Table

**Gender:** Male

**Species:** Interbreed

**Hand:** Right

**Hgt.:** 188 cm

**Wgt:** 134 kg

**Eyes:** Blue

**Hair:** Red

**Skills:** Armed Combat (From Horseback/Lance/Sword, On Foot/Sword), Unarmed Combat (Fisticuffs, Wrestling), Robohorse (Riding, Tilting, Dueling), Throwing, Lifting

**Equipment:** Any armor, weapon or mount as needed (prefers polyaluminum tilting armor & helmet, forceshield, energylance & lasersword, and robohorse), Sidespace Transceiver, Pavilion

**Background:** Sir Gawaine's parents, King Lot and Queen Margause, ordered and supervised a genetic engineering experiment that produced Gawaine. Although it was Lot's hope that his offspring would have superhuman strength and abilities, his efforts were only partially successful. Gawaine possesses a cyclical, rather than episodic, endocrine system. Normal Terran humans experience a rush of adrenaline in stressful situations, which stimulates the brain, heart, and muscles. In Gawaine's case, however, his adrenal glands produce adrenaline in gradually-increasing amounts for 12 hours, then in gradually decreasing amounts over the following 12 hours. Thus, his strength and speed improve and decline over the course of a standard 24-hour day.

Lot raised Gawaine and trained him to be a knight in the traditional manner. When he came of age, Gawaine became a knight and traveled to Terra,

where King Arthur welcomed him as a kinsman and made him a Knight of the Round Table.

Over the years, Gawaine won great renown and embarked on a number of unusual adventures. In 4453, he accepted the mysterious Green Knight's challenge and nearly lost his head. In 4507, Sir Gawaine voluntarily exiled himself from Camelot to protest the banishment of his brother, Sir Gaheris. He did not return until 4521. Sir Gawaine spent most of his exile in the realms of Lothian and Orkney, which technically became his kingdoms upon the death of King Lot in 4503. However, Sir Gawaine never formally took the crown, and one of his sons eventually assumed the throne. He also took part in several quests at the urging of the mysterious technologist Joachim. When the Holy Grail appeared in Camelot, Sir Gawaine was one of the knights who chose to seek out its resting place. After Sir Galahad defeated him in a joust, and a hermit chastised him for his worldly ways, Sir Gawaine admitted that he would never find the Grail and abandoned the quest.

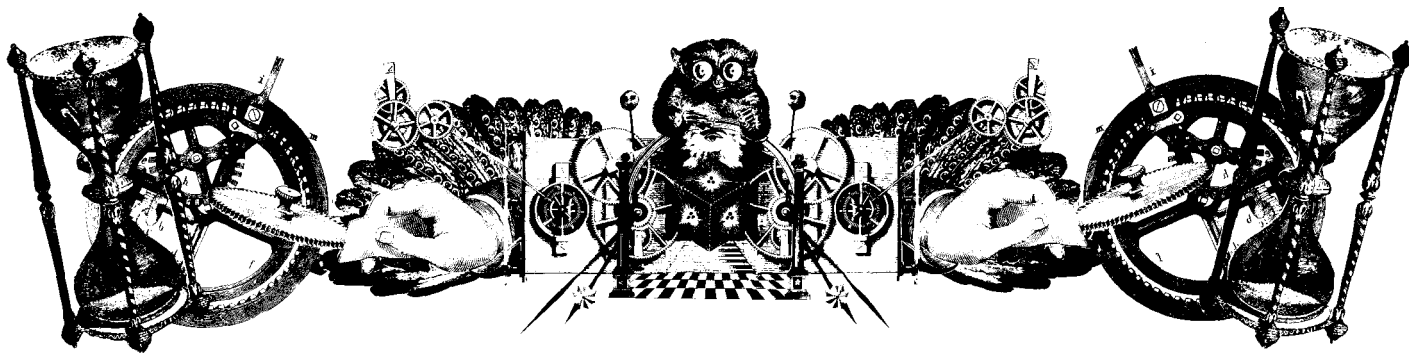
The later years of King Arthur's reign were dark ones for Sir Gawaine. Like most other knights, he had long admired and respected Sir Lancelot du Lac. In the events following the revelation of the queen's affair, Sir Lancelot inadvertently slew two of Gawaine's brothers, Sir Gaheris and Sir Gareth, while rescuing the queen from her death sentence. Their deaths infuriated Sir Gawaine, who used his position as Arthur's heir to pursue his vendetta against Sir Lancelot.

Little did Gawaine realize that he was playing into the hands of Sir Mordred, his evil half-brother. While Sir Gawaine engaged Sir Lancelot in mortal combat in Benwick, Mordred made an attempt to usurp King Arthur's throne. Sir Lancelot mortally wounded Sir Gawaine, but Gawaine repented his anger on his deathbed and dictated a letter of apology and forgiveness before he died.

**Role-Playing Notes:** Although Sir Gawaine is, strictly speaking, an interbreed, he has much more clone ancestry than human. Basically good at heart, Sir Gawaine suffers from a very short temper, limited intellectual ability, and a lack of subtlety. He prefers







to attack his problems, even when using diplomacy or reasoning might be more appropriate.

Sir Gawaine's specialized adrenal system gives him unique modifiers in combat (to both his MAS and MDS), depending on the time of his daily cycle. At 6 o'clock AM and PM he has no modifiers, at 9 AM and 3 PM he has a +5, and at noon he has a +10. At 9 PM and 3 AM he has a -5, and at midnight he has a -10. Gawaine uses the modifiers only in jousting, not in general combat. For simplicity's sake, assume that noon on any planet is always the peak of his cycle and midnight is always the low point.

## Sir Galahad

**Profession Group:** Knight **Core Experience:** 50

**Player Core:**

**Phy. Int. Spr. Inf.**

**Rank:** 2      **Rank:** 3      **Rank:** 1      **Rank:** 4

**Dice:** 7      **Dice:** 4      **Dice:** 13      **Dice:** 4

**F:** 37      **L:** 20      **Ps:** 90      **C:** 11

**R:** 33      **I:** 16      **W:** 21      **Po:** 22

**Body Points:** 74      **Stamina Points:** 53

**Character Experience:** 200

**Profession:** Knight of      **Gender:** Male  
the Round Table

**Species:** Interbreed      **Hand:** Right

**Hgt.:** 183 cm      **Wgt.:** 48 kg

**Eyes:** Blue      **Hair:** Black

**Skills:** Armed Combat (From Horseback/Lance), Live Horse (Riding, Tilting, Dueling, Training), Theology, Religious History, Philosophy

**Equipment:** The Sword of Sir Balin (see page 53), Polyaluminum Plate Armor, Polyaluminum Helmet, Polyaluminum Shield, Wooden Lance, Live Horse

**Background:** Nine months after King Pell's daughter, Elaine, seduced Sir Lancelot, she gave birth to Galahad. Although the great Lancelot refused to marry Elaine, he took a personal and direct role in educating his son. Ashamed of the events that had led to Galahad's conception, Sir Lancelot stressed virtue, chastity, and strict Theanthropic values in the youth's

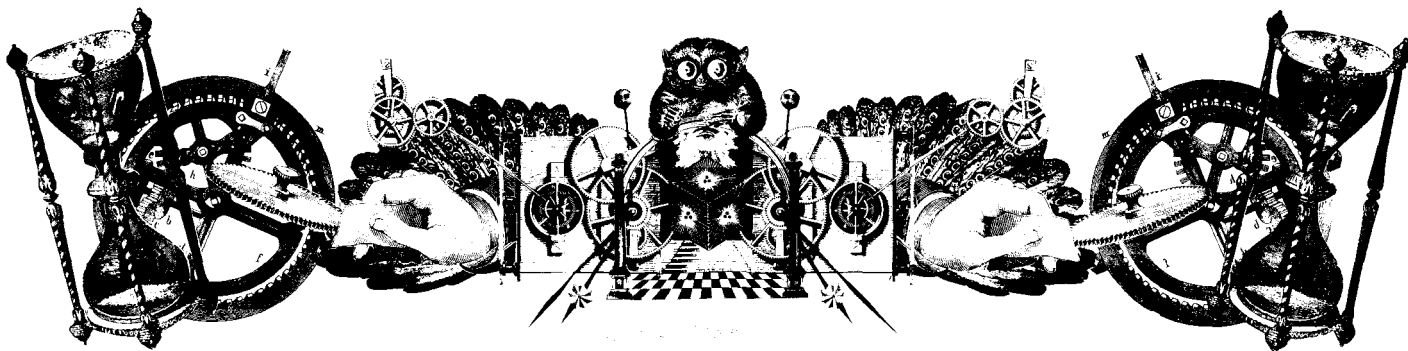
education. He intended for Galahad to enter the priesthood when he came of age, and gave him no martial training whatsoever.

Galahad, however, had ideas of his own. The seven deadly enemies of man found no place in Galahad's heart, and he enjoyed an unparalleled link to and perception of the Higher Power. He knew that his destiny was to become a knight of absolutely flawless virtue. After his father left Luna to return to Terra, Galahad began to study riding, tilting, and dueling in earnest. To the amazement of King Pell's, Galahad easily defeated every opponent he faced, even knights of superior experience and skill. It was as though the young squire was under the personal protection of the Higher Power.

In 4524, Galahad came to Terra, and his father knighted him. In quick succession, he performed several miraculous feats, including winning the Sword of Sir Balin and sitting in the Siege Perilous. These events led King Arthur to declare that Sir Galahad would be his successor. During the feast to celebrate Sir Galahad's arrival, a vision of a mystical chalice appeared over the Round Table. Many of Arthur's knights embarked upon a quest to find this Holy Grail, but Sir Galahad knew that this was to be his great task.

During the search for the Holy Grail, Sir Galahad overcame many tests of his virtue, defeated all knights who challenged him (including Sir Lancelot, Sir Gawaine, and Sir Ector de Maris), and performed a number of miracles (among these were the healing of King Pellam and the revitalization of the Waste Lands). Sir Galahad eventually joined forces with Sir Percival and Sir Bors de Ganis, and together the three knights embarked upon a long journey into sidespace. Somewhere in the gray dimension, an unfathomable distance from their starting point, they found a planet within the sidespace dimension itself. Despite all known laws of sidespace physics, the world contained life, although the trio found no sign of intelligent inhabitants.

After weeks of exploration and prayer, the three knights stumbled upon a small Theanthropy shrine in the middle of a dense jungle. There, they found the



Holy Grail, and its light lifted their hearts and cleared their minds of any vestiges of the seven deadly enemies of man. Sir Galahad drank from the sacred chalice and experienced a vision of the First Avatar. Finding enlightenment like no human had before, Sir Galahad became a being of pure light and thought, whereupon he vanished to a higher plane of existence.

**Role-Playing Notes:** Played in the time before his transfiguration, Sir Galahad is a paragon of virtue, so much so that he frequently appears cold and impersonable. It is simply impossible for him to be dishonest, unfair, envious, jealous, or spiteful. His virtue is so great that no one less pure than Galahad himself can defeat Galahad in combat; the power of his own goodness keeps him from harm. Any combat roll directed against Sir Galahad automatically becomes 01, a failed attack. This applies in either general combat or jousting. Only a character with a higher Psyche score than Sir Galahad may ignore this rule.

### Sir Kay

**Profession Group:** Knight      **Core Experience:** 100  
**Player Core:**

#### Phy. Int. Spr. Inf.

**Rank:** 1      **Rank:** 4      **Rank:** 2      **Rank:** 3

**Dice:** 6      **Dice:** 4      **Dice:** 5      **Dice:** 5

**F:** 27      **L:** 16      **Ps:** 31      **C:** 28

**R:** 24      **I:** 15      **W:** 18      **Po:** 21

**Body Points:** 54

**Stamina Points:** 42

**Character Experience:** 500

**Profession:** Knight of      **Gender:** Male  
the Round Table/Royal Seneschal

**Species:** Interbreed

**Hand:** Right

**Hgt.:** 185 cm

**Wgt.:** 79.5 kg

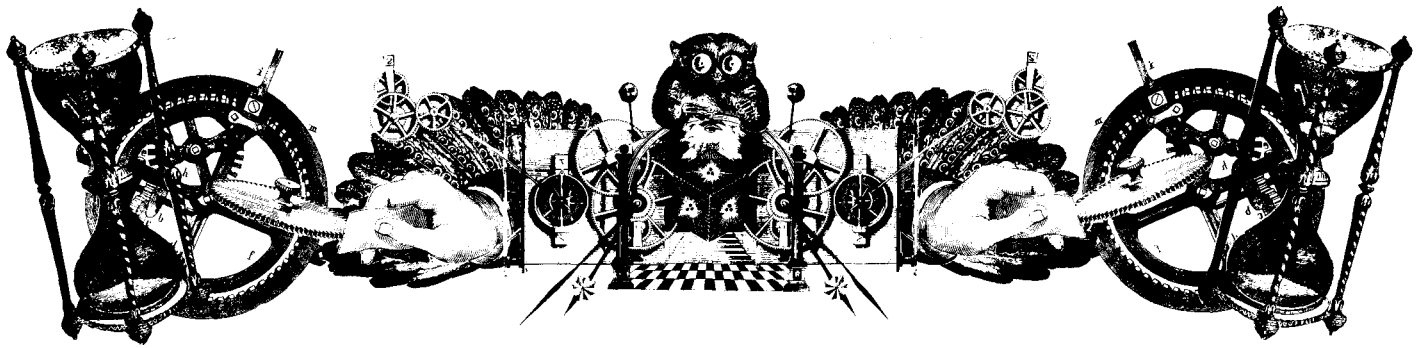
**Eyes:** Hazel

**Hair:** Brown

**Skills:** Armed Combat (From Horseback/Lance, On Foot/Sword), Robohorse (Riding, Tilting), Behavior (Etiquette, Protocol)

**Equipment:** Any armor, weapon or mount as needed (prefers cybernetic tilting armor & helmet, forceshield, energylance & lasersword, and robohorse), Field





Medical Rod, Sidespace Transceiver, Pavilion, Robo-horse, Personal Hovership

**Background:** Sir Kay is the natural son of Sir Ector, King Arthur's foster father. When Arthur drew the sword from the stone, Sir Ector asked the king to make Sir Kay his seneschal (a seneschal is an administrator who is responsible for managing his monarch's estate). Over the years, Sir Kay proved to be a competent manager, but not much of an adventurer. Eventually, Sir Kay restricted his knightly activities to occasional participation in tournaments.

**Role-Playing Notes:** Having known and lived with King Arthur as a boy, Sir Kay enjoys a brotherly familiarity with the king that even Sir Lancelot does not share. As seneschal, Sir Kay is something of a perfectionist, demanding nothing less than the best from the servants and staff working under him. Subconsciously, Sir Kay recognizes that his obsessiveness about his job as seneschal relates to his shortcomings as a knight.

### Sir Balin Le Savage

**Profession Group:** Knight  
**Player Core:**

**Core Experience:** 150

Phy.	Int.	Spr.	Inf.
Rank: 1	Rank: 4	Rank: 2	Rank: 3
Dice: 7	Dice: 4	Dice: 5	Dice: 5
<b>F:38</b>	<b>L:26</b>	Ps: 18	<b>C:24</b>
R:32	I:10	W:23	Po:22

**Body Points:** 95

**Stamina Points:** 82

**Character Experience:** 750

**Profession:** Knight of  
the Round Table

**Gender:** Male

**Species:** Clone

**Hand:** Right

Hgt: 180cm

Wgt: 91 kg

Eyes: Brown

**Hair:** Brown

**Skills:** Armed Combat (From Horseback/Lance/Sword/Mace, On Foot/Sword/Mace), Unarmed Combat (Fisticuffs), Robohorse (Riding, Tilting, Dueling)

**Equipment:** The Sword of Sir Balin (see page 53), Plate Plastarmor, Plastihelmet, Plastishield, Plastilance, Lasersword

**Background:** Sir Balin, also known as the Knight of Two Swords, was one of the first of King Arthur's knights to win renown. His tragic end and legacy, however, overshadow his valorous deeds. In 4487, Sir Balin defeated King Arthur's enemy, King Royns of West Britain; slew Sir Garlon, a treacherous knight who used an invisibility field to slay knights without warning; and accidentally set off a series of thermonuclear devices that laid waste to the kingdoms of Listenoise and Surhaute.

Sir Balin met his end in a joust with his own brother, Sir Balan, whom the King of the Red Lands tricked him into fighting. His sword later passed to Sir Galahad.

**Role-Playing Notes:** Sir Balin is known as Le Savage because of his tendency to behead anyone who crosses him. Ironically, he does not indulge in such savagery out of malice or wickedness, but because he has a skewed sense of the rights and duties of knighthood. He rushes around, trying to accomplish great deeds, bull-headedly pursuing a goal, but invariably misses some vital piece of data, leading to disaster.

### The Court of Camelot

In addition to the knights of the Round Table, many other characters live at Camelot and play an important role in King Arthur's court. The following are the most well-known of these.

#### Queen Guinevere

**Profession Group:** Courtier  
**Player Core:**

**Core Experience:** 200

Phy.	Int.	Spr.	Inf.
Rank: 4	Rank: 3	Rank: 2	Rank: 1
Dice: 7	Dice: 13	Dice: 10	Dice: 17
<b>F:25</b>	<b>L:61</b>	Ps: 50	C: 76
<b>R:-38</b>	<b>I:63</b>	W: 49	Po: 88

**Body Points:** 13

**Stamina Points:** 29

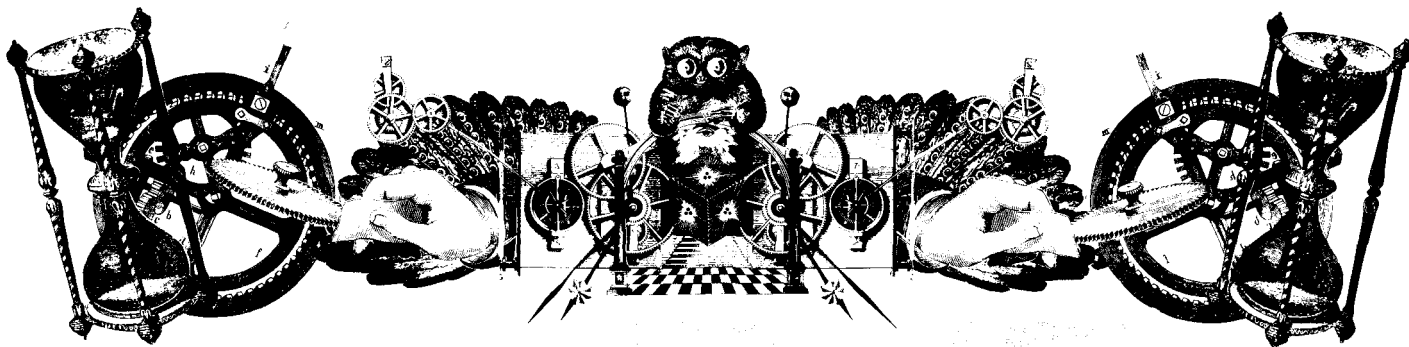
**Character Experience:** 1,300

**Profession:** Queen

**Gender:** Female

**Species:** Inter.

**Hand:** Right



Hgt.:173cm

Wgt.: 52 kg

Eyes: Blue

Hair: Blond

**Skills:** Behavior (Etiquette, Protocol), Courtly Love, Chivalry, Art, Music, Literature (Romantic Poetry), Theology, Religious History, Acrobatics, Swimming, Computer Systems, Hoversteed (Riding), Live Horse (Training, Riding), Terran Medicine (Emergency)

**Equipment:** Any vehicle or mount as needed, Pavilion, Sidespace Transceiver, Hoversteed

**Background:** Guinevere was born and raised in Cameliard, the eldest daughter of King Leodegrance. Even as a young girl, people deemed her among the fairest women in the entire Solar System. In 4479, shortly after Guinevere's 20th birthday, King Leodegrance announced that he had arranged for his daughter to marry King Arthur. Guinevere did not appreciate being used as a pawn in a political bargain, and she refused to have anything to do with the king.

Some weeks later, Sir Lancelot du Lac arrived in Cameliard to escort Guinevere to Camelot for the wedding, and Guinevere fell passionately in love with him. She agreed to go with Sir Lancelot, hoping that perhaps she could persuade the great knight to marry her himself. During the journey, however, Sir Lancelot did nothing but praise King Arthur's nobility and virtue, so that eventually Guinevere consented to the match.

Over the following decades, Guinevere proved to be a most excellent queen. She became one of King Arthur's most valuable advisers, she helped to modify and to expand the rules of courtly love, and she provided an example of virtue and modesty to nobles throughout the Solar System. The one thing she failed to do, however, was to provide King Arthur with an heir.

Queen Guinevere's relationship with Sir Lancelot remained unconsummated for many years, although she jealously resented the attention paid to him by other women. During the nearly 25 years of Sir Lancelot's absence, when most thought him dead, the queen never gave up the faint hope that he lived

somewhere. When her hope proved to be true, the joy at their reunion finally broke down the final barriers between them, and Sir Lancelot and Queen Guinevere became lovers.

Their tryst went undiscovered for some time, but eventually became the undoing of the Round Table. As explained in Chapter Four, Sir Agravaine discovered the lovers, and Guinevere stood trial for treason. She was later exonerated and returned to King Arthur. When the civil war ended, King Arthur and Sir Mordred were dead, and Guinevere became an initiate of the Theanthropy, in hopes of atoning for the suffering she had unwittingly caused.

**Role-Playing Notes:** Queen Guinevere is intelligent, strong-willed, and resolute. Her relationship with Sir Lancelot exemplifies the practice of courtly love.

## Emrys

**Profession Group:** Technologer **Core Experience:** N/A

**Player Core:**

**Phy. Int. Spr. Inf.**

Rank: 3 Rank: 1 Rank: 4 Rank: 2

Dice: 5 Dice:14 Dice: 8 Dice: 8

**F:25 L:120 Ps:25 C:25**

**R:25 I:25 W:50 Po:50**

**Body Points: 50**

**Stamina Points: 37**

**Character Experience:** N/A

**Profession:** Tutor,

**Gender:** Male

later Chief Adviser

**Species:**Android

**Hand:** Right

**Hgt.:** 180 cm

**Wgt.:** 182 kg

**Eyes:** Blue

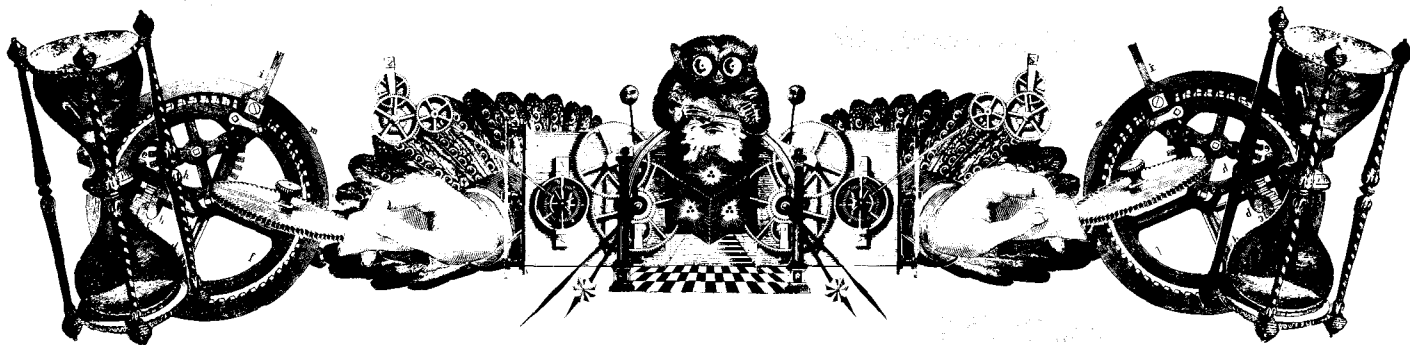
**Hair:** White

**Skills:** All Learned skills (see below), Hoversteed (Riding), Behavior (Etiquette, Protocol), Chivalry (Heraldry, Disguise), Navigation, Piloting

**Equipment:** Emrys can build or obtain any kind of equipment listed in the central mainframe computer.

**Background:** After the birth of King Arthur, Merlin contacted a select cadre of Avalon technicians and instructed them to build a specialized android. Superficially, this android resembled any other, but





it had no independent consciousness of its own. When the android construction was finished, Merlin moved the central core of its own programming into the android's neurotronic processor, bringing the android to "life."

Merlin's android had the aspect of an elderly man with long white hair and a flowing beard. To protect its identity, Merlin took the name "Emrys" while in the android body. As Emrys, Merlin tutored the young Arthur in a number of subjects, grooming him for the task ahead. Once King Arthur had drawn the sword from the stone and assumed the throne, Emrys continued to advise him, but Merlin grew anxious to return to the computer mainframe. Finally, in 4485, Merlin abandoned the android body of Emrys, which Arthur laid to rest in Camelot's mausoleum.

**Role-Playing Notes:** Since Emrys connects directly to the Merlin AI, he may access any file on any subject. Therefore, he is considered to have every skill that uses the Learning attribute, as listed on page 35.

## Nimue

**Profession Group:** Technologer **Core Experience:** 230

**Player Core:**

**Phy. Int. Spr. Inf.**

Rank: 3 Rank: 1 Rank: 4 Rank: 2

Dice: 5 Dice: 10 Dice: 5 Dice: 7

F:25 L:62 Ps:17 C:21

**R:20 I:30 W:26 Po:42**

**Body Points:** 12

**Stamina Points:** 15

**Character Experience:** 1,200

**Profession:** Sourceress,  
later Lady of Avalon

**Gender:** Female

**Species:** Human

**Hand:** Left

**Hgt.:** 175 cm

**Wgt.:** 66 kg

**Eyes:** Green

**Hair:** Light Brown

**Skills:** Computer Systems (Central Mainframe, Access Terminals), Computer Programming (System/Source Code/Merlin, Module), Physics (Direct Space, Sidespace), Technology (Device Creation, Deciphering, Maintenance & Repair), Behavior

**Equipment:** Any device known to the School of Avalon

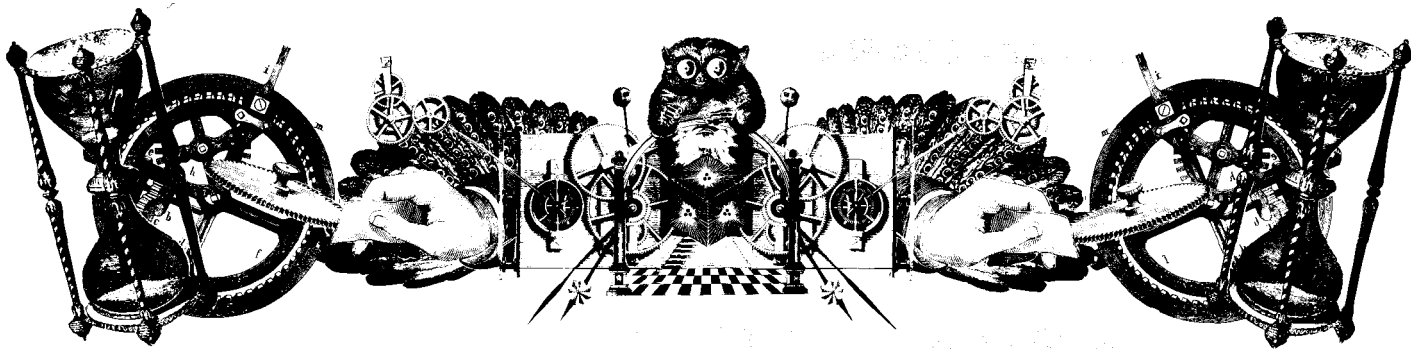
**Background:** Nimue's father served as a minor knight under the banner of King Uryens of Gore. At birth, tests determined her to be an acceptable candidate for the School of Avalon and her parents sent her to learn technology. She chose computer science as her field of specialization and graduated with acceptable, if undistinguished, marks. Nimue then began working on the technical staff of Queen Morgan Le Fay.

In 4490, Nimue discovered Le Fay's plot to kill King Arthur and place Sir Accolon of Gaul on the throne. She helped the king to thwart this plan, and he rewarded her by using his influence to secure her a teaching post in Avalon. Over the next ten years, Nimue intensively studied the origins of the Merlin AI. She found the long-lost journals of Kevin Blaise, Merlin's originator, and a list of the program's core commands. Nimue slowly came to realize that Merlin's efforts to succor humanity would eventually lead it to take over the solar system. Rather than allow Merlin to continue unhindered, she used Blaise's long-forgotten password to turn Merlin off and place it in an unending data loop deep in the central mainframe.

This unprecedented feat of sorcery brought Nimue immediate notoriety. During the peak of excitement and dismay concerning Merlin's deactivation, the post of Lady of Avalon became available. With little fanfare, Nimue assumed the post, which she held for the duration of King Arthur's reign. Shortly after becoming the Lady of Avalon, Nimue married Sir Pelleas, a noble knight of the Round Table.

**Role-Playing Notes:** Unlike previous heads of the School of Avalon, Nimue participates actively in solar system politics. She firmly supports King Arthur, although they do not always agree on all issues. Nimue believes King Arthur to be best qualified to bring peace and prosperity to the solar system.





## Dagonet

**Profession Group:** Courtier **Core Experience:** 75

**Player Core:**

**Phy. Int. Spr. Inf.**

**Rank:** 4      **Rank:** 2      **Rank:** 3      **Rank:** 1

**Dice:** 4      **Dice:** 5      **Dice:** 5      **Dice:** 6

**F:**19      **Lrn:**27      **Ps:**22      **C:** 42

**R:12**      **I:18**      **W:**26      **Po:**22

**Body Points:** 6

**Stamina Points:** 9

**Character Experience:** 750

**Profession:** Jester

**Gender:** Male

**Species:** Human

**Hand:** Left

**Hgt.:**165cm

**Wgt.:** 54.5 kg

**Eyes:** Blue

**Hair:** Blond

**Skills:** Behavior (Etiquette, Protocol), Chivalry, Music (Lute), Art, Philosophy, Computer Systems (Central Mainframe)

**Equipment:** None

**Background:** Though born a commoner, Dagonet possesses a sharp wit, paired with a rare gift for satire. He came to Camelot shortly after Arthur became king, and he so amused the court with his jests and japes that Arthur made him official court jester. Technically speaking, people should address Dagonet as "Sir Dagonet," since Arthur gave him an honorary knighthood some years ago.

**Role-Playing Notes:** Dagonet makes light of his "knighthood," but takes his post of jester very seriously. It is his job not only to entertain the king and his court, but to comment (through jests) on social and political issues. Dagonet never broaches the subject of the relationship between the queen and Sir Lancelot, however.

## King Arthur's Enemies

A great hero like King Arthur naturally comes into contact with the worst villains of his time. The following are some of the most notable enemies to oppose the knights of Camelot, arranged in chronological order.

## King Lot

**Profession Group:** Knight

**Core Experience:** 350

**Player Core:**

**Phy. Int. Spr. Inf.**

**Rank:** 1      **Rank:** 2      **Rank:** 4      **Rank:** 3

**Dice:** 10      **Dice:** 5      **Dice:** 6      **Dice:** 7

**F:**50      **Lrn:**19      **Ps:**16      **C:**20

**R:50**      **I:30**      **W:40**      **Po:**49

**Body Points:** 125

**Stamina Points:** 135

**Character Experience:** 2,500

**Profession:** King of

**Gender:** Male

Lothian and Orkney

**Species:** Clone

**Hand:** Right

**Hgt.:**185cm

**Wgt.:** 120 kg

**Eyes:** Gray

**Hair:** Red

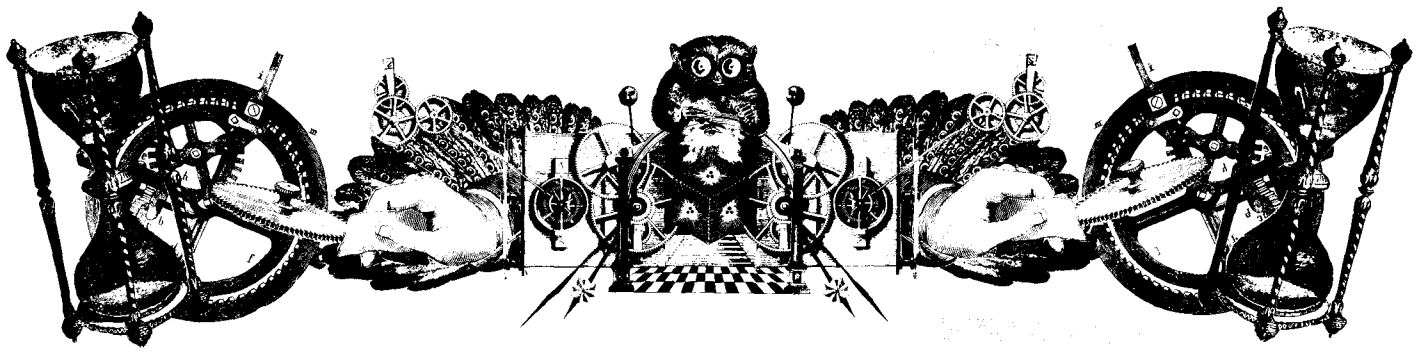
**Skills:** Armed Combat (From Horseback/Lance/Sword, On Foot/Sword), Robohorse (Riding, Tilting, Dueling), Politics, Military Strategy & Tactics, History (Colonial Wars era), Navigation

**Equipment:** Any armor, weapon or mount as needed (prefers polyaluminum plate armor & helmet, forceshield, energylance & lasersword, and robohorse), Personal Sidespaceship, Gauntlets of Strength

**Background:** When Lot was still a young prince, he led an ingenious attack on the kingdom of Orkney, winning it for his own. In addition to his feats of arms, Lot proved to be a shrewd politician, making and dissolving alliances when it suited his needs. After the death of Uther Pendragon, King Lot believed he could draw the sword from the stone and gain control over Uther's lands. When he failed, he simply retreated from public life and continued to accumulate power secretly.

When the young Arthur drew the sword from the stone, King Lot seized his opportunity. He denounced the young king and declared open war. Ten other kings joined him in the rebellion, but King Arthur and his allies defeated them. To King Lot's surprise, the victorious king did not demand tribute or obeisance. Instead, he offered to become Lot's ally. King Lot agreed to his terms, and later became a knight of the Round Table. He was accidentally killed by Sir Lam-





orak in a tournament in 4503.

**Role-Playing Notes:** King Lot is not truly wicked or evil; rather, ambition rules his heart. After the defeat of the eleven kings, King Lot reassessed his goals in life and abandoned his previous ways, becoming a noble knight and worthy monarch.

### Queen Margause

**Profession Group:** Technologer **Core Experience:** 250

**Player Core:**

**Phy. Int. Spr. Inf.**

Rank: 2 Rank: 1 Rank: 3 Rank: 4

Dice: 5 Dice: 6 Dice: 4 Dice: 8

F:23 L:30 Ps:15 C:28

R:21 I:30 W:20 Po:47

**Body Points:** 11

**Stamina Points:** 13

**Character Experience:** 2,000

**Profession:** Queen of

**Gender:** Female

Lothian and Orkney

**Species:** Interbreed

**Hand:** Right

**Hgt.:** 173 cm

**Wgt.:** 61 kg

**Eyes:** Brown

**Hair:** Light Brown

**Skills:** Technology (Device Creation), Computer Systems (Central Mainframe, Access Terminals), Computer Programming, Behavior, Courtly Love, Seduction, Projectile Weapons (Energy Weapons)

**Equipment:** Type II Laser Pistol, Pavilion, Personal Hovership, Personal Sidespaceship, Medical Tube, Sidespace Transceiver, Crystal Ball, Orb of Hypnosis

**Background:** Margause is the eldest daughter of Duke Gorlois and Lady Igraine of Cornwall, and half-sister to Arthur. She attended the School of Avalon as a youth. Shortly after she returned to Cornwall, Gorlois died and Igraine married Uther Pendragon. Uther did not want Gorlois' children in his house, so he quickly married Margause off to King Lot of Lothian as part of a treaty.

Margause and Lot proved to be a formidable pair. His ambition and military genius complimented her subtle mind and technical know-how. She often acted as King Lot's spy in enemy courts, including the court of King Arthur. It was during this period that she

seduced Arthur and conceived Sir Mordred, not knowing that the king was her half-brother.

Queen Margause took over the throne of Lothian and Orkney after King Lot died at a tournament. Her reign did not last long, however. Her son, Sir Gaheris, slew her and her lover, Sir Lamorak, after he discovered some of the queen's treachery.

**Role-Playing Notes:** Unlike her sister, Morgan Le Fay, Queen Margause remains content in her situation. Her hatred focused mainly toward Uther Pendragon, and after his death Margause did not transfer that hatred to King Arthur. Margause has a kind of sly, devil-may-care nature; she might act on the side of good or the side of evil, depending upon her whim at the moment. In addition to the bastard Sir Mordred, Queen Margause has four other sons, by King Lot, all of whom are knights of the Round Table: Sir Gawaine, Sir Agravaine, Sir Gaheris, and Sir Gareth.

### Morgan Le Fay

**Profession Group:** Technologer **Core Experience:** 500

**Player Core:**

**Phy. Int. Spr. Inf.**

Rank: 3 Rank: 1 Rank: 4 Rank: 2

Dice: 9 Dice: 17 Dice: 12 Dice: 12

F:60 Lrn:87 Ps:41 C:49

R:21 I:75 W:70 Po:62

**Body Points:** 30

**Stamina Points:** 30

**Character Experience:** 4,000

**Profession:** Technician/

**Gender:** Female

Queen of Gore

**Species:** Inter.

**Hand:** Left

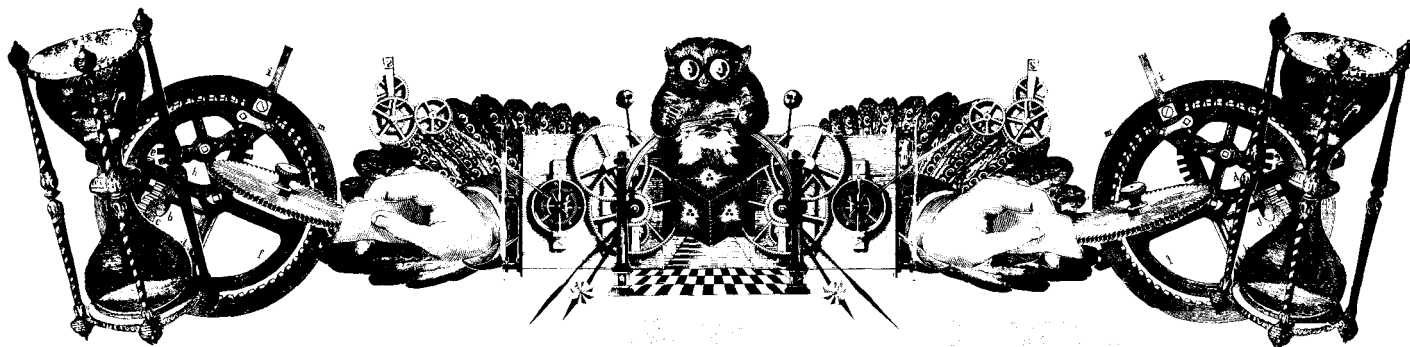
**Hgt.:** 157 cm

**Wgt.:** 46 kg

**Eyes:** Violet

**Hair:** Black

**Skills:** Computer Systems (Central Mainframe, Access Terminals), Computer Programming (System/Source Code, Module), Android Maintenance and Repair, Astronomy, Biology, Chemistry, Physics (Direct Space, Sidespace), Technology (Device Creation, Deciphering, Maintenance & Repair), Projectile Weapons,



Behavior (Etiquette, Protocol), Courtly Love, Seduction, Hoversteed (Riding), Navigation, Piloting

**Equipment:** Amulet of Illusion, Cloak of Protection, Crystal Ball, Hoop of Teleportation, Rod of Paralysis, Personal Sidespaceship, Personal Hovership, Hoversteed, Pavilion, Sidespace Transceiver

**Background:** Morgan Le Fay is King Arthur's half-sister and his greatest enemy. Like her elder sister, Morgause, Morgan went to Avalon as a child, where she excelled. Many of her instructors believed she would become the most gifted technologist of her generation and might ultimately become the Lady of Avalon. Any hopes she may have had along these lines dissolved when Uther Pendragon married Igraine, Morgan's mother. Uther withdrew Morgan from the school only two years before she would have graduated, and gave her to King Uryens of Gore to seal a treaty. Morgan hated Uther with a passion, and when she learned years later that King Arthur was Uther's son, she developed a great hatred for him, as well.

At first, Morgan kept her malevolence a secret from everyone, even her husband. She came to King Arthur's court at Camelot and quickly gained his trust and friendship, despite warnings from Queen Guinevere and Emrys about her nature. Morgan finally displayed her true loyalties when she stole the king's sword, Excalibur, and its sheath as part of a plot to kill King Arthur and place her paramour, Sir Accolon, on the throne. With the help of Nimue, the king was able to defeat Sir Accolon and regain Excalibur, but Morgan escaped with the sheath, which she later destroyed.

From that time forward, Morgan Le Fay continued to plot and to scheme against King Arthur and all of his knights.

Morgan Le Fay's final fate remains a mystery, but some say that she repented her evil ways and was one of the queens who bore King Arthur's body away after his final battle with Sir Mordred.

**Role-Playing Notes:** Only one thing motivates Morgan Le Fay—her desire to see King Arthur killed and his entire realm brought to ruin. However, her hatred does not blind her to more immediate concerns, and



she always carefully plans for every contingency. She never does anything spontaneously. In person, she can behave in a quite civilized manner, which often puts unsuspecting individuals off their guard.

### Sir Turquine

**Profession Group:** Knight **Core Experience:** 25

**Player Core:**

Phy.	Int.	Spr.	Inf.
Rank: 1	Rank: 4	Rank: 3	Rank: 2
Dice: 6	Dice: 4	Dice: 4	Dice: 5

**F:31 L:15 Ps:19 C:33**

**R:30 I:16 W:15 Po:15**

**Body Points:** 77

**Stamina Points:** 67

**Character Experience:** 75

**Profession:** Mercenary Knight **Gender:** Male

**Species:** Clone

**Hand:** Right

**Hgt.:** 193cm

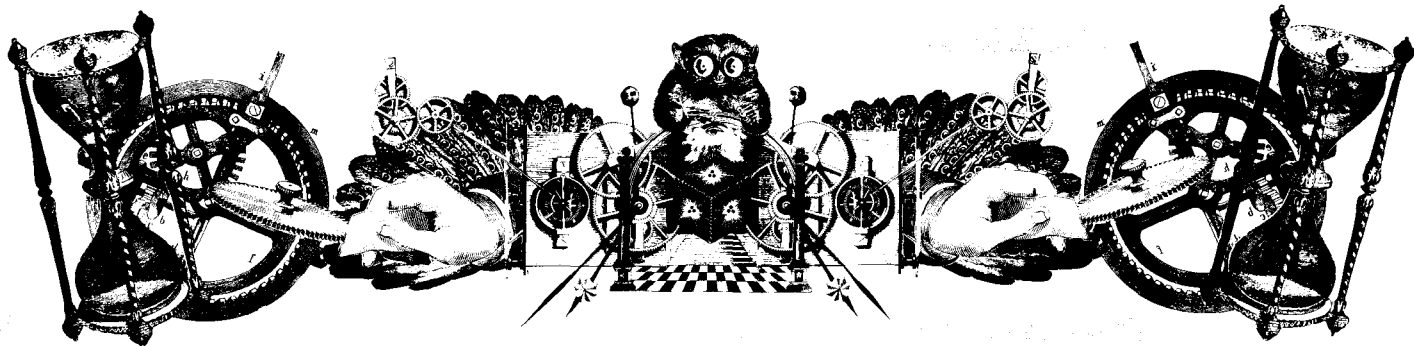
**Wgt.:** 129.5 kg

**Eyes:** Green

**Hair:** Black







**Skills:** Armed Combat (From Horseback/Lance/Sword, On Foot/Sword), Hoversteed (Riding, Tilting)

**Equipment:** Cybernetic Plate Armor, Cybernetic Helmet, Forceshield, Lasersword, Hoversteed, Magno-tip Energylance (Type: H, Complexity: 10, Body: 45, Wgt: 4 kg, Cost: 500 bt, XP Cost: 40, MAS: +20, Damage Dice: 3d6/2)

**Background:** Sir Turquine is a renegade knight who, along with his brother Sir Carados of the Dolorous Tower, made a pact with the evil technologist Morgan Le Fay. She gave them unique weapons that granted them an unfair advantage over their opponents. In exchange for these weapons, the brothers agreed to waylay Knights of the Round Table and to imprison them. Sir Turquine alone defeated 20 knights before Sir Lancelot stumbled upon their scheme and defeated them.

**Role-Playing Notes:** Sir Turquine and his brother Sir Carados of the Dolorous Tower (use Turquine's statistics for Carados, if needed) are both cowardly knights who take a perverse delight in defeating others. When faced by a foe that they can not overcome by trickery or deceit, their cowardice becomes apparent.

## Sir Mordred

**Profession Group:** Knight      **Core Experience:** 300  
**Player Core:**

### Phy. Int. Spr. Inf.

<i>Rank:</i> 2	<i>Rank:</i> 1	<i>Rank:</i> 4	<i>Rank:</i> 3
<i>Dice:</i> 9	<i>Dice:</i> 9	<i>Dice:</i> 9	<i>Dice:</i> 8
<i>F:</i> 52	<i>L:</i> 32	<i>Ps:</i> 17	<i>C:</i> 48
<i>R:</i> 35	<i>I:</i> 55	<i>W:</i> 65	<i>Po:</i> 26

**Body Points:** 104      **Stamina Points:** 100

**Character Experience:** 1,250

**Profession:** Knight of the      **Gender:** Male  
Round Table, later Usurper

**Species:** Interbreed      **Hand:** Right

**Hgt.:** 183 cm      **Wgt.:** 91 kg

**Eyes:** Brown      **Hair:** Brown

**Skills:** Armed Combat (From Horseback/Lance, On Foot/Sword), Hoversteed (Riding, Tilting), Projectile Weapons (Energy Weapons, Solid Weapons), Behav-

ior, Politics, Navigation, Piloting

**Equipment:** Cybernetic Plate Armor, Cybernetic Helmet, Forceshield, Energylance, Lasersword, Hoversteed, Type II Laser Pistol (4541-4542), Personal Sidespaceship, Personal Hovership, Sidespace Transceiver, Computer Terminal, Field Medical Rod, Orb of Hypnosis

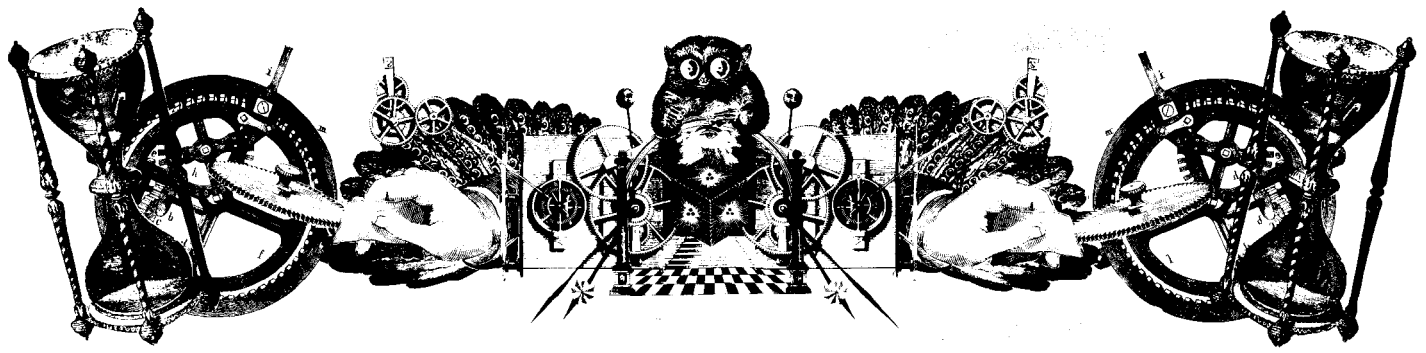
**Background:** A tryst between King Arthur and his half-sister Queen Margause of Lothian produced Mordred, though at the time, neither Arthur nor Margause knew they were half-siblings. When Mordred was born, his true parentage was kept a secret, but the obvious differences between himself and his older brothers led him to seek the truth about his origins.

Mordred came to Camelot in 4506. King Arthur privately admitted to the youth that he was his father, but insisted that the information could not be made public. In hopes of appeasing his son's harsh reaction to this decision, King Arthur knighted him and gave him a seat at the Round Table.

The following year, Sir Mordred learned that his mother was having an affair with King Lot's killer, Sir Lamorak. Sir Mordred maliciously gave this information to his hot-headed older brother, Sir Agravaire. This led another half-brother, Sir Gaheris, to kill Sir Lamorak and Queen Margause. Sir Mordred soon came to rely on others as instruments for his Machiavellian schemes, and he sowed disorder and dissension among the Knights of the Round Table while keeping his own reputation with King Arthur untainted.

Sir Mordred's long years of spying, backstabbing, and political infighting finally bloomed into full maturity in 4541, when he exposed the love affair of Sir Lancelot and Queen Guinevere. Chapter Four details the civil war that followed this sad event. Suffice it to say Sir Mordred did finally slay King Arthur but died himself at his father's hands.

**Role-Playing Notes:** On the surface, Sir Mordred appears to be a courteous, friendly, and honorable knight. This pose hides his true nature, which is spiteful, malicious, jealous, and full of evil thoughts. Sir Mordred has a hand in every nasty thing that happens in Camelot, but no one can ever directly trace any evidence back to him. He is a



master at covering his tracks.

## Other Notable Figures

In addition to King Arthur and his followers, there are many other individuals of distinction in the *Once and Future King* universe.

### Avatar Agnes I

**Profession Group:** Acolyte **Core Experience:** 100

**Player Core:**

**Phy. Int. Spr. Inf.**

Rank: 4 Rank: 2 Rank: 1 Rank: 3

Dice: 5 Dice: 10 Dice: 15 Dice: 11

F:22 Lrn:50 Ps: 72 C: 32

R:26 I:46 W:69 Po:78

**Body Points:** 22 **Stamina Points:** 31

**Character Experience:** 1,000

**Profession:** Avatar of **Gender:** Female  
the Theanthropy

**Species:** Human **Hand:** Right

**Hgt.:** 170 cm **Wgt.:** 102 kg

**Eyes:** Gray **Hair:** Gray

**Skills:** Theology, Religious History, Religious Practices (Devotion, Penance, Miscellaneous Rituals), Psychology (Dream Interpretation, Counseling), History (21st Century), Literature, Linguistics, Philosophy, Navigation (Direct Space), Piloting (Planetary, Direct Space)

**Equipment:** Any equipment available in New Rome as needed, including a variety of vehicles and mounts

**Background:** Avatar Agnes I began life as a simple shepheress in the kingdom of Brittany. She had no ambition, and lived a simple, wholesome life. Then disaster struck. Pirates sacked her homestead and carried her off to their lair as a slave. She toiled for them for six months, before a band of courageous Knights of the Round Table invaded the pirate enclave and put her tormentors to the sword.

Haunted by the horrors of her experience, Agnes turned to the Theanthropy for healing. From her immersion in spirituality, Agnes learned to draw strength from her past and to put down the fear and

despair that had haunted her. She rose through the ranks of the Theanthropy, eventually gaining the position of cardinal. As a cardinal, Agnes worked closely with Avatar Linus III, and upon his death in 4498 she took up the mantle of the Avatar, temporal leader of the Theanthropy. She held this post until 4519, when she herself passed away and Avatar Clyde IV replaced her.

**Role-Playing Notes:** Avatar Agnes I is a very wise, serene, and spiritual person. She does not interfere in the affairs of others often, but when she does, her actions are always well thought-out and premeditated. She treats all individuals equally, regardless of social class or title, although she does have a warm spot in her heart for King Arthur and his knights.

### Sir Tristan of Lyonnese

**Profession Group:** Knight **Core Experience:** 175

**Player Core:**

**Phy. Int. Spr. Inf.**

Rank: 1 Rank: 4 Rank: 2 Rank: 3

Dice: 9 Dice: 6 Dice: 6 Dice: 6

F:37 Lrn:26 Ps:25 C:29

R:45 I:25 W:35 Po:23

**Body Points:** 74 **Stamina Points:** 80

**Character Experience:** 1,750

**Profession:** Knight Errant, **Gender:** Male  
later Knight of the Round Table

**Species:** Interbreed **Hand:** Right

**Hgt.:** 188 cm **Wgt.:** 102 kg

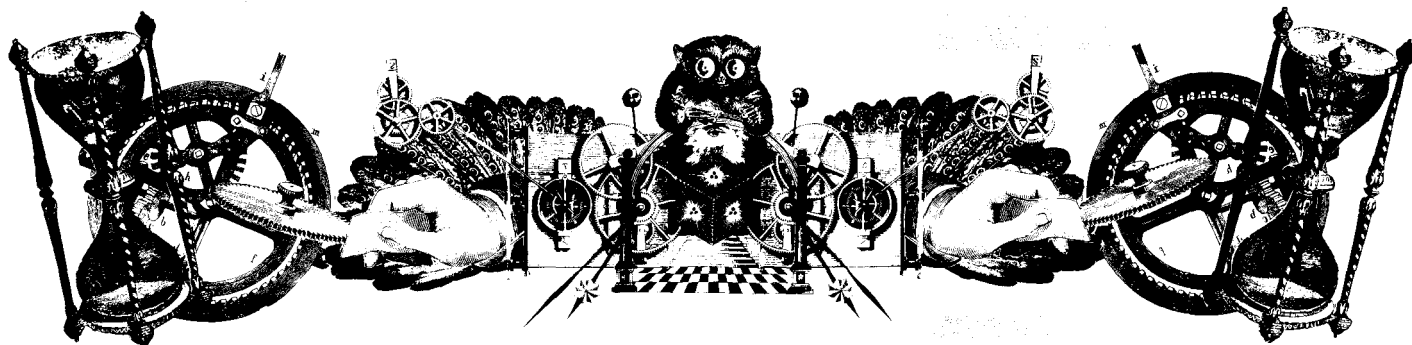
**Eyes:** Hazel **Hair:** Light Brown

**Skills:** Armed Combat (From Horseback/Lance/Sword, On Foot/Sword), Unarmed Combat (Fisticuffs, Wrestling), Hoversteed (Riding, Tilting, Dueling), Music (Lute), Chivalry, Courtly Love

**Equipment:** Plate Plastarmor, Plastihelmet, Plastishield, Plastilance, Plastisword, Hoversteed, Pavilion

**Background:** Sir Tristan is widely considered the second-greatest knight in the Solar System, behind Sir Lancelot du Lac. His long, complex life began with his mother's death while birthing him, and ended with his assassination by agents of King Mark of





Cornwall. He is best known for his long romance with La Belle Isolde, a relationship at once passionate and sublime, painful and full of joy, and a wonder to all who beheld it.

For many years, he was well known to the Knights of the Round Table, who begged him to come to Camelot so that he might join their order. He always refused, until he happened to joust with Sir Lancelot du Lac, the only knight who ever bested him. Afterwards, Sir Lancelot presented him to King Arthur, who immediately made him a Knight of the Round Table.

**Role-Playing Notes:** Many compare Sir Tristan to Sir Lancelot, saying that they are cut from the same cloth. This is not entirely true, however. In a way, Sir Tristan is much more passionate than Sir Lancelot, in that he refused to stand by and allow his lover to remain with King Mark.

Sir Tristan also has an uncomfortable habit of accidentally slaying knights he jousts against. In game terms, increase the lethality rating of any weapon Sir Tristan uses by 1.

## La Belle Isolde

**Profession Group:** Courtier **Core Experience:** 25

**Player Core:**

<b>Phy.</b>	<b>Int.</b>	<b>Spr.</b>	<b>Inf.</b>
Rank: 4	Rank: 2	Rank: 3	Rank: 1
Dice: 4	Dice: 5	Dice: 5	Dice: 7

**F:11 L:20 Ps:30 C:31**

**R:22 I:25 W:20 Po:33**

**Body Points: 3** **Stamina Points: 10**

**Character Experience: 100**

**Profession:** Lady, **Gender:** Female

later Queen of Cornwall

**Species:** Human **Hand:** Right

**Hgt.:** 165 cm **Wgt.:** 50 kg

**Eyes:** Blue **Hair:** Blond

**Skills:** Behavior (Etiquette, Protocol), Courtly Love, Seduction, Music (Lyre), Terran Medicine, Hoversteed (Riding)

**Equipment:** Any vehicle or mount as needed, Pavillion, Sidespace Transceiver, Hoversteed

**Background:** Isolde, called "La Belle" because of her great beauty, is the daughter of King Aguishance of Ireland. A skilled physician, Isolde treated an injured knight named Sir Tantris, who had come to her father's court seeking medical attention. Isolde fell in love with the knight, only to learn that he was actually Sir Tristan, the knight who had slain her cousin, Sir Marhaus.

Isolde planned to take revenge on Sir Tristan, but eventually her passion overcame her murderous thoughts. Against her will, Isolde wed King Mark of Cornwall. She and Sir Tristan continued their love affair, which caused them both innumerable hardships and heartbreak. Sir Tristan gave in to his passionate nature and took Isolde away from Cornwall and King Mark. Eventually, Sir Tristan returned her to Cornwall, only to be stabbed by King Mark while playing music to her on a harp. Isolde threw herself upon Sir Tristan's grave and died of a broken heart.

**Role-Playing Notes:** Although she would never admit it, Isolde holds a certain grudge against Queen Guinevere. Because of the queen, people refer to Isolde as the second most beautiful woman in the Solar System, the second greatest lover, the second best queen, and so on.

La Belle Isolde is very frank and forthright about her love for Sir Tristan, not really caring who knows about it. Though she does not love King Mark, she does try to keep her affair a secret from him, out of respect for his position.

## Nacien

**Profession Group:** Acolyte **Core Experience:** 85

**Player Core:**

<b>Phy.</b>	<b>Int.</b>	<b>Spr.</b>	<b>Inf.</b>
Rank: 3	Rank: 2	Rank: 1	Rank: 4
Dice: 6	Dice: 4	Dice: 6	Dice: 4

**f:30 L:18 Ps:23 C:20**

**R:28 I:20 W:30 Po:19**

**Body Points: 45** **Stamina Points: 29**

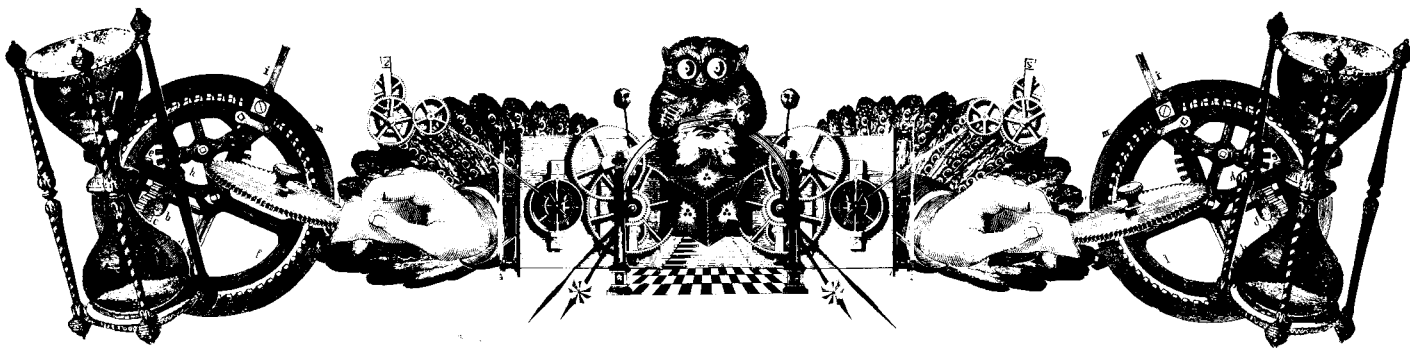
**Character Experience: 300**

**Profession:** Hermit **Gender:** Male

**Species:** Interbreed **Hand:** Right

**Hgt.:** 175 cm **Wgt.:** 75 kg





**Eyes:** Gray

**Hair:** White

**Skills:** Theology, Religious Practices (Devotion, Penance, Miscellaneous Rituals), Psychology (Dream Interpretation, Counseling), Prophecy

**Equipment:** None

**Background:** Nacien is a hermit and widely considered the holiest man in the Solar System. Though his origins and his age remain unknown, his gifts of prophecy and his keen insight into the hearts of men have earned Nacien renown. During the quest for the Holy Grail, he advised Sir Lancelot to give up his love for Queen Guinevere and provided many other knights with guidance.

**Role-Playing Notes:** Nacien comes and goes as he pleases, owing fealty to none but the Higher Power. He seems to know the innermost secrets of any individuals he meets, and gives sound advice on how they might improve their spiritual life. Nacien treats his gift of prophecy as a thing used sparingly at best, believing that too much knowledge of future events is a dangerous temptation.

## Joachim

**Profession Group:** Technologist **Core Experience:** 300

**Player Core:**

**Phy. Int. Spr. Inf.**

**Rank:** 2      **Rank:** 1      **Rank:** 4      **Rank:** 3

**Dice:** 6      **Dice:** 9      **Dice:** 5      **Dice:** 6

**F:** 32    **L:** 53    **Ps:** 16    **C:** 33

**R:** 28    **I:** 46    **W:** 40    **Po:** 25

**Body Points:** 10

**Stamina Points:** 17

**Character Experience:** 1,800

**Profession:** Technician

**Gender:** Male

**Species:** Human

**Hand:** Left

**Hgt.:** 188cm

**Wgt.:** 79.5 kg

**Eyes:** Gray

**Hair:** Red

**Skills:** Technology (Device Creation, Deciphering, Maintenance & Repair), Physics (Direct Space, Sidespace), Chemistry, Biology, Electrical Engineering, Computer Systems (Central Mainframe, Access Terminals), Computer Programming, Android Maintenance & Repair, Vehicle Maintenance & Repair

(Sidespaceship, Land Vehicles)

**Equipment:** Personal Sidespaceship, Personal Hover-ship, Sidespace Transceiver, Computer Terminal, Medical Tube, Pavilion, Cloak of Protection, Crystal Ball, Orb of Hypnosis, Rod of Paralysis

**Background:** Although he graduated in the middle of his class from the School of Avalon, Joachim's independent studies quickly set him apart from his peers. Today, Joachim is a technologist of great skill and murky reputation. People call him, among other things, "Joachim the Meddler," "Joachim the Schemer," "Joachim the Obscure," and "Joachim the Nebulous." He constantly sends knights on hazardous quests, either singly or in groups, to find some lost artifact, to track down a missing person, or to bring back a sample of some rare species. To date, no one has determined what Joachim's motives in all these activities are.

**Role-Playing Notes:** The first person who will admit to you that Joachim is a genius is Joachim himself. Joachim never mastered the virtue of Humility. He believes he has been put into this universe to act as a catalyst for wide-reaching and extraordinary events. To this end, he always searches for the strange and unusual, which he then brings to the attention of a knight or group of adventurers, hoping grand adventure and noble deeds result. Joachim will only ask for a reward for his efforts if he thinks he might find some new, interesting piece of technology.





## Chapter Seven: *Monsters and Other Creatures*

**D**uring the course of their adventures, characters in the *Once and Future King* universe frequently find themselves exploring areas of the Solar System that have been long abandoned by mankind and are now overgrown and wild. In these wild areas, there exist many unusual species of creature that questing knights and other wanderers may encounter. Some of these are native to their worlds, others are the result of genetic engineering experiments many centuries ago, and the rest are of unknown origin. Some have a human shape, but a brutal and animalistic mentality, while others are truly monstrous, but with an intellect that can equal or surpass man's. Some are beneficent, others are malevolent, and some wish only to be left alone.

### Creature Attributes

**Ability Pools:** Except in the case of one-of-a-kind creatures, such as the Questing Beast, each Ability Pool has a rating describing the range of values that the Attributes of that Pool fall into for that creature. Before beginning play, the GM should take a few minutes to calculate the specific scores for the monsters she plans to use in the adventure. The following chart shows the specific formulae used to calculate monster Attributes:

Rating	Attribute Range	Dice Rolled
Mediocre (M)	5-20	5d4
Average (A)	10-40	1d4x10
High (H)	20-80	2d4x10
Superior (S)	50-100	1d6+4x10

In some cases, a particular attribute does not apply to a certain variety of monster. In these cases, the GM will find an abbreviation of the Attribute in question, followed by "N/A" to indicate that it is not applicable. For instance, ogres have no social standing at all, so under the Influence Ability Pool, you will find the notation "Po: N/A," which indicates that ogres never use the Position Attribute.

**Stamina and Body Points:** To calculate any non-human creature's stamina points, simply add its Reflexes and Willpower scores together (R+W). The body points of all creatures equal twice their Fitness score (Fx2). Like characters, a monster whose stamina drops to 0 falls unconscious, and a creature whose body falls to 0 dies.

**Size:** All monsters fall into one of four size categories: Small (S), Medium (M), Large (L), or Huge (H). Small creatures tend to be a meter or less in height. Medium-sized creatures stand almost the same size as humans. Large creatures are the size of predatory animals like lions, tigers, or bears. Huge creatures range from three meters in height to 30m or more.

**Damage:** A nonhuman creature calculates damage dice in the same manner humans do: take the 10s digit of the creature's Fitness (dropping the remainder) and roll that many dice. Unlike human characters, who always roll 6-sided dice for damage, nonhuman creatures use dice determined by their average size and strength, as listed below. For instance, a bear's claws do Fd8 damage, so a bear with a Fitness of 45 would have 4d8 damage dice. Unless otherwise specified, all damage from creatures has a lethality rating of 7. If a creature uses more than one attack form, the other attack forms appear in parentheses after the damage dice.

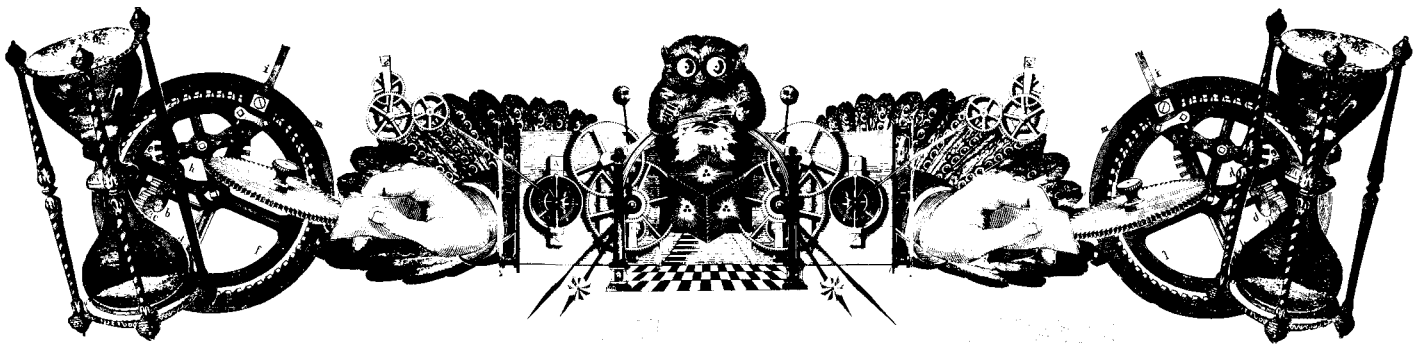
**Planet(s) Found:** Planets and moons in the solar system where characters might find the creature.

**Habitat:** The general setting where the characters might find the creature. Examples include forests, mountains, deserts, and so on.

**Special Abilities:** Any abilities a creature possesses that its basic Attributes do not cover. Most special abilities take the form of a certain attack or defensive ability unique to the creature. Examples include the ability to fly, an inherent weapon, or telepathic powers.

**Skills:** Any skills inherent to the creature. *Note:* Some creatures may have skills unavailable to player characters.

**Description:** A physical description of the creature's appearance, and any other distinguishing characteristics, such as distinctive odors.



**Combat:** The tactics and strategies the creature might use in combat. This heading also includes any specific rules needed to cover special attacks.

**Background:** How the creature came into being, its behavior patterns, and if applicable, its social organization.

### Basilisk

Phy.	Int.	Spr.	Inf.
A	M	M	M
	L: N/A		Po: N/A

**Size:** S

**Damage:** Fd4 (claws), Fd6 (bite)

**Planet(s) Found:** Venus

**Habitat:** Dense jungle

**Special Abilities:** The basilisk uses a form of broadcast telepathy to paralyze its prey. When a basilisk makes eye contact with another creature or character, the victim cannot avoid the attack. The victim must immediately roll an attribute check against his Intuition. If the check succeeds, the victim is paralyzed for 1 d4 turns. If the check fails, the victim is paralyzed for 1 d4 minutes.

Skills: None

**Description:** A basilisk is a green, lizard-like creature approximately three-quarters of a meter in length. Its black eyes shine with a hypnotic intensity.

**Combat:** A basilisk prefers to wait for its prey to come into range, then use its telepathic gaze. After its victim succumbs, the basilisk leisurely kills and eats the victim. If confronted by an enemy it cannot lock eyes with (such as a knight using a cybernetic helmet), the basilisk will attempt to flee to its lair to wait for easier game.

**Background:** Terran Federation scientists first created basilisks during early attempts to develop psionic powers through genetic engineering. After the basilisks killed and ate a researcher, supervisors ordered the lizards destroyed. Merlin, however, managed to smuggle a few basilisks out of the laboratory to a new home in the densest jungles of Venus. Merlin's ultimate purpose remains a mystery.

### Bear

Phy.	Int.	Spr.	Inf.
H	M	A	M
	L: N/A		Po: N/A

**Size:** L

**Damage:** Fd8 (claws), Fd10 (bite)

**Planet(s) Found:** Terra, Luna, Mars

**Habitat:** Any temperate climate

**Special Abilities:** None

Skills: None

**Description:** Bears are large, powerful animals with shaggy coats, short tails, long claws, and sharp teeth. They come in several varieties, including the brown bear, the black bear, and the grizzly bear. Polar bears, identified by their white fur, live in arctic regions. Bears normally walk on all fours, but they can stand and fight on their rear legs.

**Combat:** Bears wish to avoid conflict if possible, though mother bears react savagely to any threat to their cubs. Any mother bear defending her cubs automatically makes all her attacks at Vital areas, with no penalty. Wise characters give mother bears with cubs wide berths.

**Background:** When Luna and Venus were first terraformed into habitable worlds, scientists imported many species of animals from Earth to the newly-grown forests to keep the fragile ecosystems in balance. It quickly became evident that large predators were necessary to this balance, and bears of every variety were introduced. In the centuries since, the bear population has thrived and prospered, despite competition from various monsters.

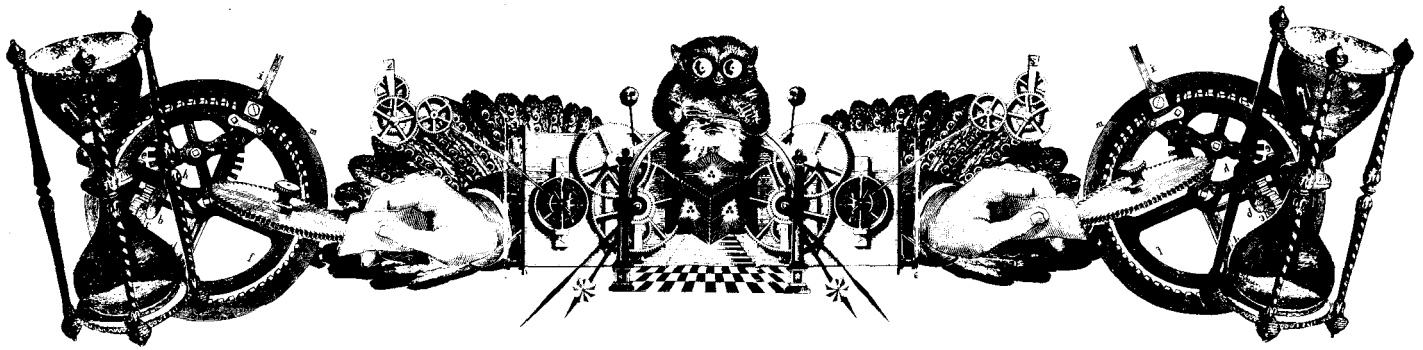
### Chimera

Phy.	Int.	Spr.	Inf.
S	A	M	M
			Po: N/A

**Size:** H

**Damage:** Fd8 (claws), Fd10 (lion bite), Fd12 (dragon bite), Fd8/5 (sting), Fd10/4 (flame)





**Planet(s) Found:** Titan, Iapetus

**Habitat:** Tropical

**Special Abilities:** A chimera's dragon head can spout flame to a distance of 10 meters, although its fire is less intense than that of a true dragon. With its wings, a chimera can fly at a speed of 20 meters per turn, but it can only maintain flight for 10 turns before it must land and rest.

**Skills:** None

**Description:** A chimera is a hideous creature whose body is an amalgamation of other species. It has the hindquarters of a goat, the foreparts of a lion, a huge scorpion's tail, large dragon-like wings, and three heads. From the chimera's left, it has a dragon's head, a lion's head, and a horned goat's head.

**Combat:** Chimerae are very moody creatures, making their tactics hard to predict. Except when particularly hungry, chimerae prefer to play with their prey, doing only enough damage to keep their victim on the defensive.

**Background:** An ambitious sorcerer named Malados created the chimerae, which only recently was added to the Solar System's bestiary. Malados managed to gain illegal access to the central mainframe, stealing a number of long-banned files on genetic recombination. Because of his inexperience at genetic science, Malados' creations all emerged as bizarre combinations of previously-existing creatures. The troubleshooter Joachim put a halt to Malados' experiments, but not before several of the chimerae had escaped into the jungles of Titan.

The chimerae have a rudimentary intelligence and can speak a primitive form of Terran. They have three separate digestive systems, and each has different dietary requirements: the dragon's head is omnivorous, the lion's head is carnivorous, and the goat's head is herbivorous.

## Dragon

**Phy. Int. Spr. Inf.**

S                      H                      H                      H

Size: H

**Damage:** Fd8 (claws), Fd10 (kick), Fd8/6 (bite), Fd10/8 (tail), Fd12/6 (flame)

**Planet(s) Found:** Any

**Habitat:** Any

**Special Abilities:** Dragons are able to spout flames from their mouths at a range of up to 35 meters once every 5 turns. They can fly at a top speed of 150 meters per turn for short bursts, with a cruising speed of 50 kilometers per hour. Dragons may translate themselves into and out of sidespace at will, and they can survive in sidespace without protection. Dragons' scales provide them with an armor-like protection that reduces the Lethality Rating of any weapon used to attack them by 2 points.

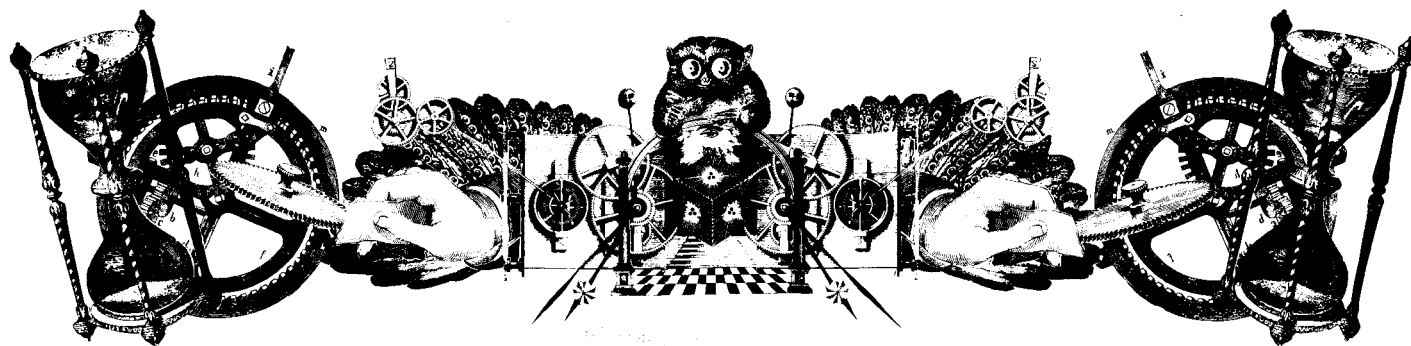
**Skills:** Behavior, Chivalry, History, Linguistics, Music, Philosophy, Psychology, Prophecy, Navigation (Planetary, Direct Space, Sidespace)

**Description:** Huge, winged, reptilian-seeming beasts, dragons are actually mammals. They range in size from 15 to 20 meters in length, with wing spans appropriate to their size. Nine dragons exist in the Solar System, each a different color: yellow, green, blue, red, copper, silver, brown, white, and black.

**Combat:** Dragons possess many devastating attacks, making them living arsenals. Their cunning intellect and sharp minds remain their most potent and deadly weapon, however. Superb tacticians, dragons have been known to use their ability to shift into sidespace to gain surprise on an opponent, by disappearing in one location and suddenly reappearing a moment later somewhere else.

**Background:** Ancient, apparently immortal creatures, dragons have roamed the solar system since before the dawn of humankind. What little humans do know about dragons has become clouded in mythology and superstition. In actuality, nine dragons exist (the tenth having died some time ago), each of whom protects a different planet and its satellites. Dragons are wise, benign creatures who consider themselves above the concerns of mere mortals. Those lucky enough to see a dragon consider it an omen of good fortune, and only a few humans have ever spoken with a dragon in the millennia of human civilization.





Dragon	Color	World
Hermerpoa	Yellow	Mercury
Apherodoa	Green	Venus
Terrestris	Blue	Terra
Aris	Red	Mars
Athenoa (deceased)	Violet	Minerva
Zius	Copper	Jupiter
Crounis	Silver	Saturn
Ouranoa	Brown	Uranus
Posidoa	White	Neptune
Hadis	Black	Pluto

Dragons know one another well, though they seldom meet face-to-face. Each dragon keeps a secret lair somewhere on their planet of protection, although no one has ever found such a lair. Some theorists have suggested that a dragon's home exists in direct space and sidespace simultaneously, and is therefore beyond the perception of mere humans. The last time all the dragons gathered in one place, they paid posthumous tribute to Athenoa, dragon of the planet Minerva.

The dragons all acknowledge Maias, the Pendragon, as their chieftain (see below).

## The Pendragon

Phy.	Int.	Spr.	Inf.
F:120	L:150	Ps:120	C:100
R:120	I:100	W:150	Po:110

**Stamina: 270** **Body: 240**

**Size: H**

**Damage:** 12d8 (claws), 12d10 (kick), 12d8/6 (bite), 12d10/8 (tail), 12d12/8 (flame)

**Planet(s) Found: Any**

**Habitat: Any**

**Special Abilities:** The Pendragon is able to spout flames from her mouth at a range of up to 50 meters once every other turn. She can fly at a top speed of 225 meters per turn for short bursts, with a cruising speed of 75 kilometers per hour. The Pendragon also has the ability to transfer herself into and out of sidespace at will and to survive in sidespace without

protection. The Pendragon's scales provide her with an armor-like protection that reduces the lethality rating of any weapon used to attack her by 3 points.

**Skills: Any**

**Description:** The Pendragon is huge, even by dragon standards, reaching nearly 30 meters in length. Her color is gold, and her scales shine with a radiant light like that of the sun.

**Combat:** The Pendragon is a creature of such puissance that attacking her is virtually inconceivable. In her countless millennia of existence, no foe has ever successfully challenged her.

**Background:** Maias, known as the Pendragon, is by far the oldest living creature in the Solar System. Some say that her origins link her to the creation of the Solar System itself, and that she will survive for billions more years, until the sun burns out and goes nova. Others say that she is the living symbol of the presence of the Higher Power, and the faith of the Theanthropy sustains her.

Maias is the mother and chieftain of all dragons. Humans sometimes see her from afar, as a gleam of golden light in the dawn, or as a shooting star crossing the night sky. Her very nature places her beyond the understanding of humankind.

Many theologians, theanthropists, and explorers have tried to determine the location of Maias' lair, but none have succeeded. Current theories suggest that it may lie at the heart of the sun itself, or somewhere deep in sidespace. After Sir Galahad completed the quest for the Holy Grail, many speculated that the Grail world might be Maias' home. However, Sir Bors de Ganis, the only knight to return from the quest, reported no signs of any dragons there, much less Maias herself.

## Dwarf

Phy.	Int.	Spr.	Inf.
A	M	A	M

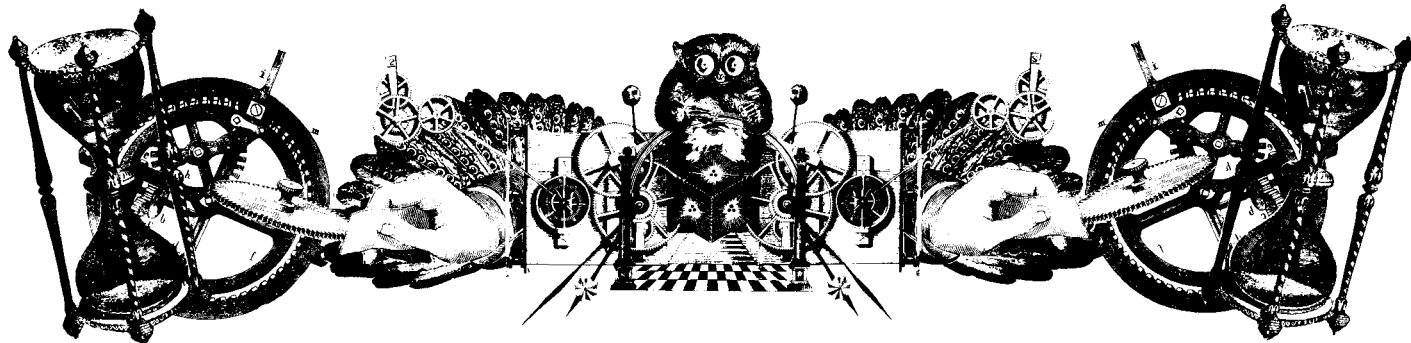
**Size: S**

**Damage:** Fd6/2 (fists) plus weapon dice

**Planet(s) Found:** Any, especially the Lonely Isles







**Habitat:** Underground

**Special Abilities:** Dwarves may navigate effortlessly underground. When finding their way underground, they receive a +10 bonus to any Intuition checks.

**Skills:** Climbing, Throwing, Lifting, Armed Combat (On Foot), Unarmed Combat, Mining

Some individual dwarves also have Vehicle Maintenance & Repair, Projectile Weapons, Navigation, and Piloting.

**Description:** Dwarves are humanoid in shape but are shorter and stockier than humans, usually no more than a meter tall. They have pale skin from living underground most of their lives, keen eyes, and long flowing beards. One can determine a dwarf's tribe by observing the pattern of his beard's braids.

**Combat:** Dwarves are hardy fighters, able to use any kind of weapon, though they favor nontechnical weapons. They generally attack in bands, using their superior numbers to best advantage. They use straightforward battle strategies with little or no subtlety. Dwarves are essentially a peace-loving race, but fight fiercely to protect their tribal homes and mines.

**Background:** Dwarves first came into existence in 3921, as the result of the Terran Federation's attempt to clone human beings. Scientists deemed dwarves only a partial success, and shipped them off to the asteroid belt to serve as mine workers. To the scientists surprise, the dwarves proved to be quite skilled at tunneling, and within a few generations they had replaced all human workers in the mines.

The social life of the dwarves remains a mystery, aside from the fact that they live in tribal groups, each with its own mines and territory. Dwarf reproduction remains especially mysterious, since records reveal no evidence of female dwarves and no Terran has ever seen one.

### Elf (Redcap)

Phy.	Int.	Spr.	Inf.
M	A	A	M
Size: S			

**Damage:** Fd4/1 (fists) plus weapon dice

**Planet(s) Found:** Venus, Terra, Luna, Io, Europa

**Habitat:** Deciduous forest

**Special Abilities:** None

**Skills:** Acrobatics, Climbing, Swimming, Jumping, Music

**Description:** Elves are tiny humanoids, standing only 30 centimeters high. They have pointed ears and yellow, catlike eyes. They are also distinguished by the red skullcaps they wear at all times, apparently from birth.

**Combat:** Because of their minute size, elves run away from danger rather than fight. If forced to fight, elves use their size to avoid attacks while seeking openings in their opponent's defenses. Elves do not normally bear weapons, but they have been known to wield daggers like swords.

**Background:** Like dwarves, elves are the result of 40th century cloning experiments. They get their nickname, redcaps, from the crimson headgear they constantly wear. An elf's mother sews these caps during her pregnancy and places the cap ceremonially on the infant elf's head immediately after birth. His cap is a sacred part of an elf's being, and he will do anything to preserve it, giving rise to the common proverb "sure as an elf's oath to his cap." While they are quite intelligent, elves hold little interest in civilization, living simple tribal lives deep in the forests. The largest known colony of elves resides in the forest of Caleterium on Terra, in the ruins of a 20th-century city.

### Fairy

Phy.	Int.	Spr.	Inf.
M	M	M	M

Size: S

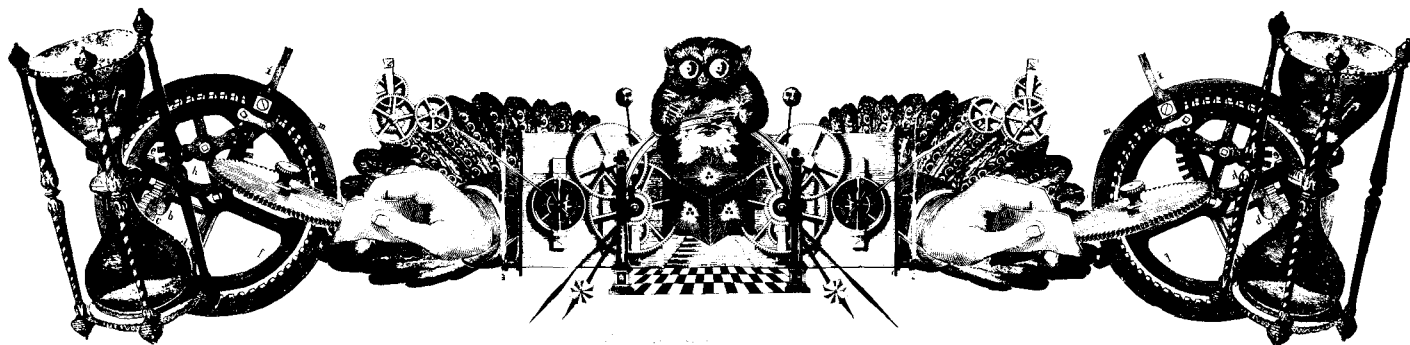
Damage: Fd2/1

**Planet(s) Found:** Io, Europa, Ganymede (pre 4487), Callisto (pre4487), Himalia

**Habitat:** Any

**Special Abilities:** Fairies have diaphanous wings that give them the power of flight. Their average cruising





speed is 30 kilometers per hour, with bursts of speed up to 60 meters per turn.

**Skills:** Acrobatics

**Description:** Fairies are humanoid in appearance, but their physiology is closer to that of an insect. Fairies are insect-sized (10 centimeters or less), and two pairs of dragonfly wings sprout from their backs. Their hairless skin tends to be very pale, almost pink, and they wear no clothing.

**Combat:** Fairies do not engage in any sort of combat, though they can annoy an opponent by scratching and biting. Their small size in turn makes them incredibly difficult to hit; any attack against a fairy is made at a -20 penalty.

**Background:** Jovian scientists created fairies as a prototype for a race of flying humans. While the scientists succeeded to a degree, they never solved the size problem, and eventually abandoned their research. Originally confined to Io, fairies managed to stow away on cargo ships and other transports, spreading to the other Jovian moons. The fairies have no society to speak of, mostly because their mental faculties tend to be like those of young children. They behave irresponsibly and mischievously, but because their diet consists largely of insects and other pests, humans on the Jovian moons grudgingly tolerate them.

## Giant

Phy.	Int.	Spr.	Inf.
H	M	M	M

**Size:** L

**Damage:** Fd8/4 plus weapon dice

**Planet(s) Found:** Any

**Habitat:** Any

**Special Abilities:** None

**Skills:** Lifting, Throwing, Armed Combat (On Foot), Unarmed Combat

**Description:** Giants are dull-witted humanoids nearly three meters in height. They have long arms, stooped shoulders, dusky skin (usually covered in filth), and sloped foreheads. They dress in disheveled rags,

although occasionally a giant will piece together a shirt of kevlar armor.

**Combat:** Giants prefer to use a club or mace, although they remain perfectly content to crush a foe with their bare hands. Giants take delight in making their opponents suffer, and they will always attempt attacks most likely to cause pain. Like all bullies, giants are cowards at heart, and will flee from any opponent who stands up to them.

**Background:** These hulking, brutish creatures were the last prototype created by the genetic engineers before the clone warriors who would later make up the knighthood. The clones have more in common with giants than they care to admit, which has led to a long-standing enmity between the two races. In fact, the only thing a giant dislikes more than a clone-knight is another giant, so giants do not frequently cooperate. Clones have several times attempted to destroy the giants as a race, but because the few giantesses hide in well-disguised, secluded lairs, the giants always manage to survive.

## Goblin

Phy.	Int.	Spr.	Inf.
A	M	M	A

**Size:** S

**Damage:** Fd6/3 plus weapon dice

**Planet(s) Found:** Any

**Habitat:** Underground

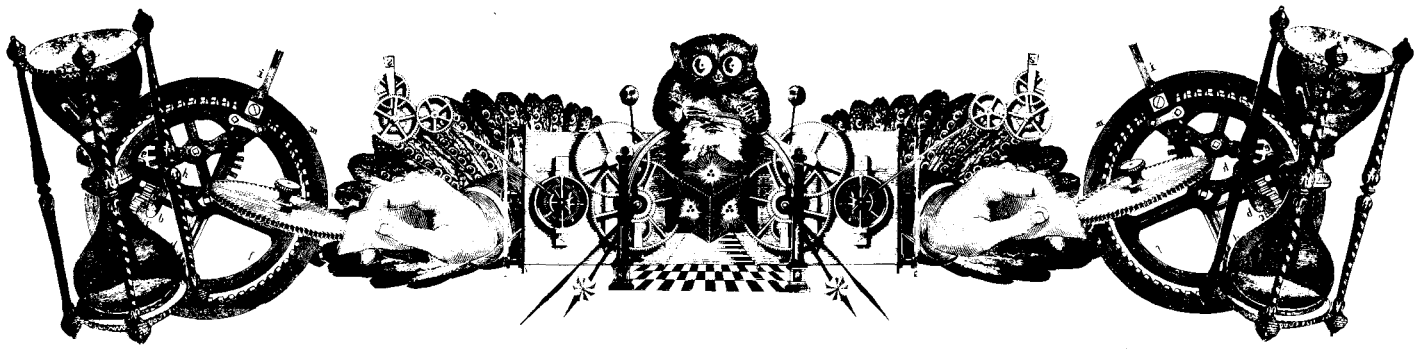
**Special Abilities:** None

**Skills:** Climbing, Armed Combat (On Foot)

**Description:** Goblins are green-skinned humanoids with monstrous faces, snout-like noses, canine ears, and bulging red eyes. They stand slightly shorter than dwarves, hunched over nearly double. They wear crude jerkins made of animal skins.

**Combat:** Goblins are completely disorganized fighters, but can be very fierce if cornered. They prefer to overwhelm a foe through sheer force of numbers. Lone goblins will always run away rather than stand and fight.





**Background:** The origin of the goblin race is shrouded in mystery, but legend has it that dwarves created them, using hijacked genetic engineering equipment. Whatever the truth may be, a legendary hatred exists between dwarves and goblins. Goblins live in large clans, led by hobgoblins (see below).

### Hobgoblin

Phy.	Int.	Spr.	Inf.
A	A	A	M

**Size:** M

**Damage:** Fd8/5 plus weapon dice

**Planet(s) Found:** Any

**Habitat:** Underground

**Special Abilities:** None

**Skills:** Climbing, Armed Combat (On Foot)

**Description:** Hobgoblins appear identical to goblins though they are larger and stronger.

**Combat:** Hobgoblins always own the best weapons and equipment in the goblin clan.

Hobgoblins seldom use these better weapons, though, since they send their followers into battle first, while they bring up the rear. This rearguard position affords the hobgoblins an excellent chance of escape should the tide of battle turn against them.

**Background:** Hobgoblins lead goblin clans of as many as 100 goblin members, not including slaves stolen from other clans. The hobgoblin holds absolute control, until another larger, stronger goblin kills him and takes over.

### Griffin

Phy.	Int.	Spr.	Inf.
S	H	A	A

**Size:** L

**Damage:** Fd8 (claws), Fd10 (beak)

**Planet(s) Found:** Tethys, Dione, Rhea

**Habitat:** Mountains

**Special Abilities:** Griffins have large eagle wings that allow them to fly. Their cruising speed is approximately 40 kilometers per hour, with bursts of speed up to 125 meters per turn possible.

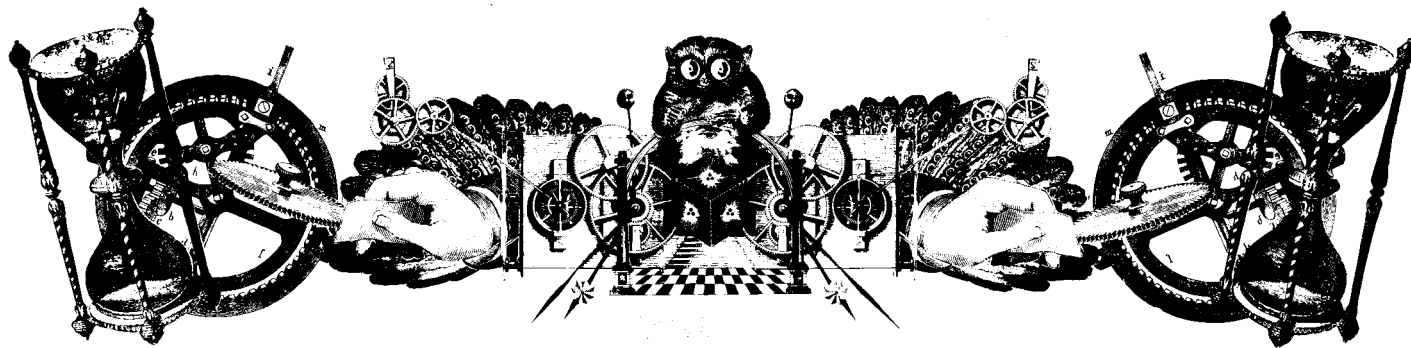
**Skills:** None

**Description:** Griffins are large predators, reaching nearly two and a half meters in length. They have the head, wings, upper torso, and forelegs of an eagle, plus the haunches, rear legs, and tail of a lion. The plumage of the griffin's eagle half varies, following the coloration of birds of prey. Tawny golden brown fur covers the lion half.

**Combat:** If in flight, a griffin will swoop down upon its quarry, ripping with its powerful claws. On the ground, the griffin will pounce upon its victim, attempting to rend with its beak and claws.

**Background:** In 3910 Harold Smith, a scientist at the Glastonbury research facility on Terra, made the first attempt to create an entirely new species from the genetic material of two different animals. Working in secret, he spliced together feline and avian genes, creating the first griffin. The Terran Federation, hoping to wreak havoc among their rebellious colonies, encouraged Smith to breed more of his creations, and secretly shipped the griffins to the moons of Saturn. Neither Smith nor his Federation superiors were prepared for the intelligence of the creatures, who learned to speak after only three generations. The griffins, fearing for their survival, made a deal with the Saturnians and turned against the Federation. This setback ultimately led to the ban on multi-species mutation research, although some unscrupulous technologists later made use of the research to create such species as the chimera and the pegasus.

Today, only a few flocks of griffins remain, living in isolated areas of Tethys, Dione, and Rhea. They enjoy a familial social structure, each family consisting of a male, a female, and up to three hatchlings. Knights respect griffins for their inherent nobility, and griffins frequently appear in heraldic designs.



## Lion

### Phy. Int. Spr. Inf.

H M H M  
L: N/A Po: N/A

**Size:** L

**Damage:** Fd8/4 (claws), Fd10 (bite)

**Planet(s) Found:** Venus, Terra, Luna, Mars, Io, Europa, Titan

**Habitat:** Temperate, tropical, desert

**Special Abilities:** None

**Skills:** None

**Description:** Lions are large, carnivorous felines, with a tawny golden coat and long, tufted tail. A dark brown mane distinguishes male lions from females.

**Combat:** Male lions will aggressively defend their territories against encroachers. They prefer to surprise their prey, pouncing before the victim has a chance to defend himself. Once on top of an opponent, a lion rakes his claws along his prey's body, attempting to

disembowel it. In this situation, increase the Lethality Rating of the lion's claws by 2 points.

**Background:** Lions have long been considered the "king of beasts," and the nobility accords them special respect. Lions live in prides consisting of one to three adult males, up to ten females, and a number of cubs. The females do all of the hunting, while the males take responsibility for defending the pride's hunting ground.

## Ogre (Marhault)

### Phy. Int. Spr. Inf.

S M A M Po.: N/A

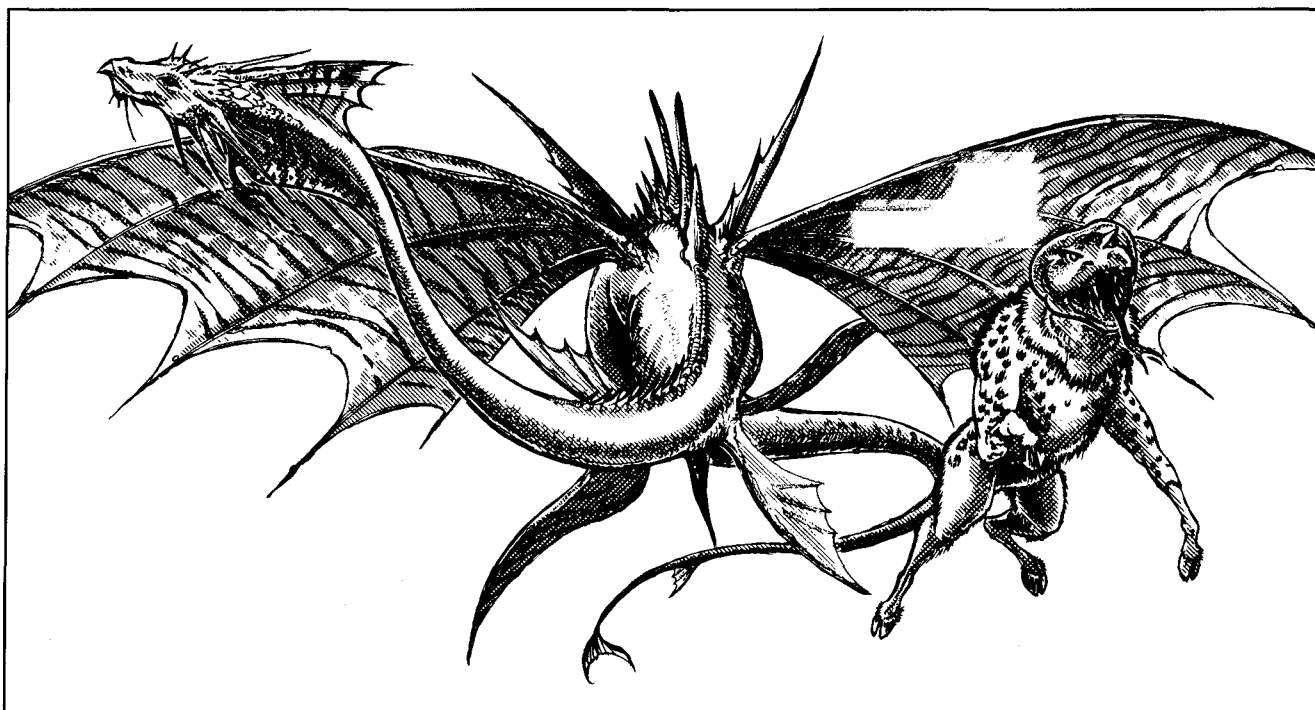
**Size:** H

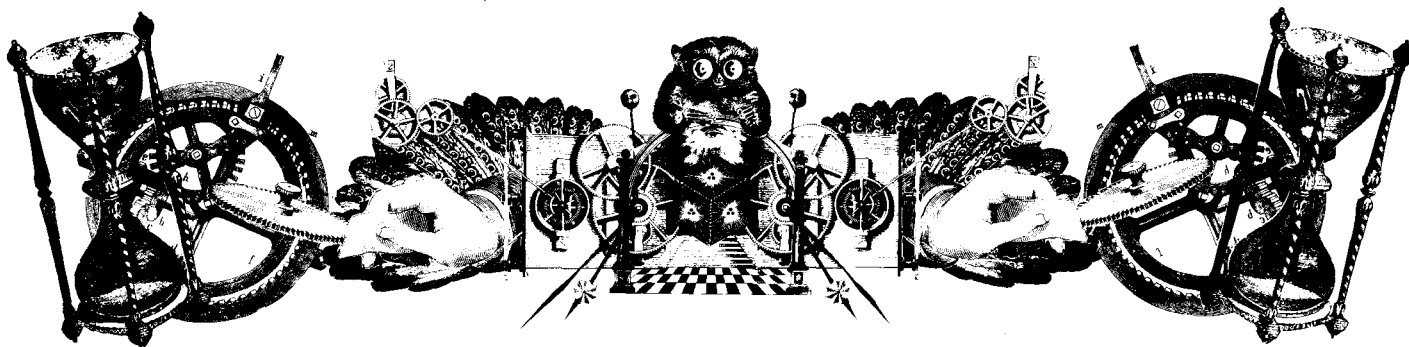
**Damage:** Fd12 plus weapon dice

**Planet(s) Found:** Terra, Mars

**Habitat:** Any

**Special Abilities:** None





**Skills:** None

**Description:** Ogres vaguely resemble giants, but are larger and more Neanderthal-looking. Their skin tends to be a sickly yellow or pale green in color, with unsightly splotches of brown or black on random parts of their body. Ogre eyes come in three colors: green, purple, and orange. Their hair is long, black, and stringy. Ogres wear animal skins or fur, and unlike their giant cousins, never wear any kind of armor.

**Combat:** Ogres use only one strategy in combat, which also happens to be their philosophy of life: kill, maim, destroy. They are remarkably single-minded in this pursuit, and will continue to fight with all of their strength, even on the verge of death.

**Background:** That ogres resemble giants is no coincidence, since the ogres were created by the technologists of an ambitious Irish king some years ago, using the genetic material of giants as their foundation. The ogres proved to be uncontrollable and uncontainable, breaking out of their incubators almost as soon as they reached maturity. No female ogres exist, but the expected lifespan of an ogre is nearly 500 years, so they will be plaguing humankind for some time to come.

## Pegasus

<b>Phy.</b>	<b>Int.</b>	<b>Spr.</b>	<b>Inf.</b>
H	M	H	H
			Po: N/A

**Size:** L

**Damage:** Fd8 (hooves), Fd6 (bite)

**Planet(s) Found:** Venus

**Habitat:** Plains

**Special Abilities:** Pegasi have wings allowing them to fly. Their average cruising speed is 50 kilometers per hour, with sprints of up to 175 meters per turn. The flying horses have very light, hollow bones, which makes them more frail than other animals their size. To reflect this, a pegasus' stamina is equal to  $(R+W) \times 0.75$ , and its body is  $F \times 1.5$ .

**Skills:** Acrobatics (Aerial), Navigation (Planetary)

**Description:** Pegasi are winged horses, although their equine bodies are somewhat smaller and more compact than those of regular horses. Their wingspan is proportional to their bodies, nearly 10 meters wide when fully extended. Pegasi come in a variety of colors, but black predominates.

**Combat:** In flight, a pegasus swoops down on a target, striking out with all four hooves. If its opponent is also in flight, the pegasus uses its superior aerial maneuverability to its advantage. On the ground, the pegasus rears, kicks, and bites like a horse.

**Background:** Only one herd of pegasi is known to exist. Consisting of three males and six females, this herd roams the plains of Venus under the protection of the Avatar. Occasionally, some evildoer tries to capture a pegasus, hoping to train it for riding. Noble knights have foiled all such attempts. Only once has a pegasus ever been known to bear a rider on its back. During the quest for the Holy Grail, Sir Percival became marooned on an island in the midst of Venus' Great Western Ocean. After a month of solitude, the Higher Power sent a pegasus to Sir Percival, to carry him to his fateful meeting with Sir Galahad.

## Phoenix

<b>Phy.</b>	<b>Int.</b>	<b>Spr.</b>	<b>Inf.</b>
<b>F:80</b>	<b>L:30</b>	<b>Ps:70</b>	<b>C:50</b>
<b>R:90</b>	<b>I:40</b>	<b>W:60</b>	<b>Po:20</b>
<b>Stamina: 150</b>	<b>Body: 160</b>		

**Size:** H

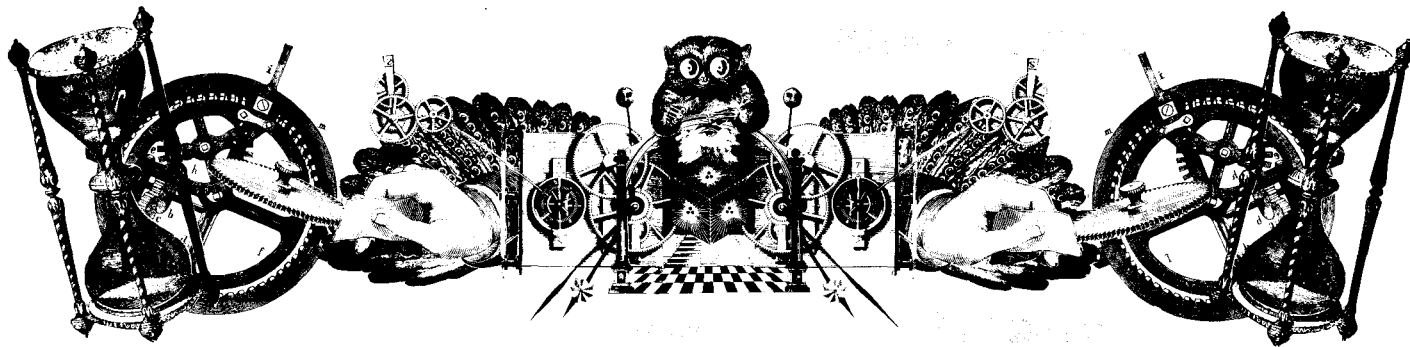
**Damage:** 8d10 (beak), 8d12 (claws), 8d8/5 (heat wave)

**Planet(s) Found:** Mercury

**Habitat:** Volcanic

**Special Abilities:** The phoenix is able to fly at a cruising speed of 100 kilometers per hour. It can push its speed up to 400 meters per turn for short periods of time. The skin temperature of the phoenix is close to 150°C, making it damaging to touch. The Phoenix reproduces hermaphroditically, leaving a single egg in its remains when its high body temperature finally





results in spontaneous combustion. This egg then hatches two Terran years later.

**Skills:** Navigation (Planetary)

**Description:** The phoenix takes the form of a huge golden bird of prey, with a wingspan of nearly 20 meters. Its internal body heat is so great that the phoenix glows with an inner fire, its metallic feathers seeming to flicker at their edges.

**Combat:** The phoenix uses its claws and beak to ward off attackers. It also can generate an intense wave of heat by beating its wings.

**Background:** The phoenix is the last surviving creature genetically designed to survive on the planet Mercury. It makes its home near the dayside/nightside border, atop tall mountains. A highly intelligent and secretive creature, the phoenix lives for nearly a hundred years, converting heat energy into the nutrients it needs to survive before it finally combusts, leaving a single egg that hatches a new phoenix. Many knights have incorporated the image of the phoenix into their coats of arms.

## The Questing Beast

### Phy. Int. Spr. Inf.

F/100      L-N/A      Ps: 100      C: 70  
R: 100      I: 100      W: 90      Po: N/A

**Stamina:** 190      **Body:** 200

**Size:** L

**Damage:** N/A

**Planet(s) Found:** Any moon

**Habitat:** Any

**Special Abilities:** Like a dragon, the Questing Beast can transfer itself between direct space and sidespace. Since it does not fly, no one knows how it travels between planets. The Questing Beast uses an empathic power that conveys a deeper knowledge of the Higher Power to anyone in its vicinity. This empathy also gives the Beast the ability to detect any hostile emotions directed toward it, allowing it to disappear before anyone can engage it in combat.

**Skills:** Philosophy, Theology, Navigation (Sidespace)

**Description:** The Questing Beast has the head of a serpent, the body of a leopard, the buttocks of a lion, and the feet of a hart. A mysterious noise, like the yapping of thirty dogs, constantly issues from its belly.

**Combat:** The Questing Beast never engages in combat, as its empathic sense always warns of any hostile emotions in its vicinity. When threatened, the Beast simply enters sidespace and escapes.

**Background:** Despite its resemblance to some genetically engineered species, the Questing Beast does not have an artificial origin. Many theories have been offered to explain its existence, none of which is completely satisfactory. One of these theories contends that the Beast was born from the body of Athenoa, the violet dragon, after her death in the destruction of planet Minerva. This idea tried to explain why the Questing Beast never appeared on planets, only on moons. Whatever its true origins, the Questing Beast appeared briefly in the kingdom of Gales in the year 4450. Only King Pellinore witnessed this manifestation, and he was so transfixed by the experience that he swore an oath to find the creature again. King Pellinore spent the next 45 years hunting the Questing Beast all across the solar system. He never brought the Beast to ground, and finally surrendered his quest to the android knight, Sir PL-105.

## Troll

### Phy. Int. Spr. Inf. H                      M      A      M

**Size:** L

**Damage:** Fd8/5 plus weapon dice

**Planet(s) Found:** Venus, Mars

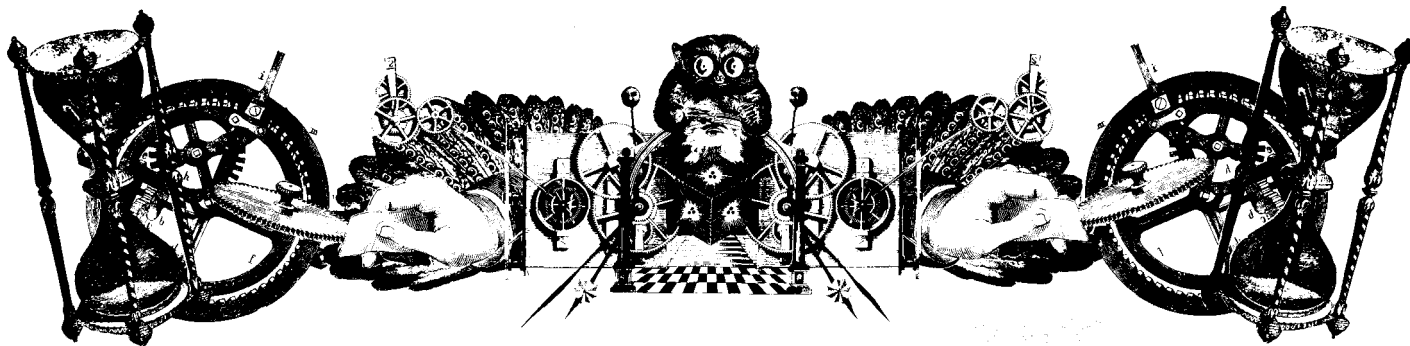
**Habitat:** Any, usually under bridges or other cover

**Special Abilities:** None

**Skills:** Throwing, Lifting, Jumping, Unarmed Combat

**Description:** Trolls are a cross between goblins and giants. They have the goblins' green skin, horrific appearance, and surly attitude, as well as the giants' size and strength. Trolls would stand nearly three





meters, but they usually hunch over, putting their faces at a height of only two meters.

**Combat:** Like giants and ogres, trolls rely on brute strength in a fight. Trolls know nothing of tactics and strategy, though they will sneak up behind an opponent if the opportunity presents itself. Trolls fight barehanded, but they will use a club if one is handy.

**Background:** No technologist has ever taken credit for these misshapen monstrosities, clearly the product of genetic engineering. They first appeared around the year 4200, and have remained a nuisance ever since. Trolls are known for their agoraphobia, or fear of open spaces. Many of these creatures lurk beneath bridges, arches, and other structures, emerging only long enough to accost a passerby. No evidence exists of a troll social structure.

## Unicorn

<b>Phy.</b>	<b>Int.</b>	<b>Spr.</b>	<b>Inf.</b>
<b>H</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>A</b>

**Size:** L

**Damage:** Fd6 (hooves), Fd6/5 (bite), Fd10/8 (horn)

**Planet(s) Found:** Luna

**Habitat:** Temperate

**Special Abilities:** The horn of a unicorn, called an alicorn, has healing properties. Treat it as having the Healing skill, using the Psyche of the unicorn as the base value. If the alicorn is removed from the unicorn the animal dies, but the horn retains its healing powers for 2d10 years.

**Skills:** None

**Description:** A unicorn stands about as tall as a Shetland pony, but with the body proportions of a horse. Its hide and mane are pure white. A single straight horn, half a meter long and composed of a substance similar to ivory, grows from the center of the unicorn's forehead. The eyes of a unicorn are violet.

**Combat:** Unicorns are extremely peaceful creatures, but will fight fiercely if endangered and unable to flee. Like horses, unicorns can buck, bite, and kick, though they do not hesitate to charge opponents, gor-

ing them with their horns.

**Background:** The first verified sighting of a unicorn occurred in the year 2506, shortly after the terraforming of Luna finished. A Terran legend spanning many millennia, the appearance of unicorns on Luna baffled scientists, who could not explain the animals' origins. Scientists attempted studies, but found inconclusive results, due to the unicorn's elusive natures. They appeared without warning, and disappeared just as quickly. Ancient legends said that only a virgin could capture a unicorn, but all attempts to bait one in such a fashion failed. In the year 3108, Avatar Howard II declared unicorns a sacred animal and discontinued all attempts to capture them.

## White Stag

<b>Phy.</b>	<b>Int.</b>	<b>Spr.</b>	<b>Inf.</b>
<b>F: 70</b>	<b>L: N/A</b>	<b>P: 80</b>	<b>C: 40</b>
<b>R: 80</b>	<b>I: 90</b>	<b>W: 60</b>	<b>Po: N/A</b>

**Stamina:** 140    **Body:** 140

**Size:** L

**Damage:** 7d4/3 (hooves), 7d6/5 (antlers)

**Planet(s) Found:** None

**Habitat:** Interplanetary Space

**Special Abilities:** The White Stag can survive in the vacuum of outer space, and can move through direct space at nearly light speed. It may also become invisible at will. It is not known whether or not the Stag can exist or travel in sidespace.

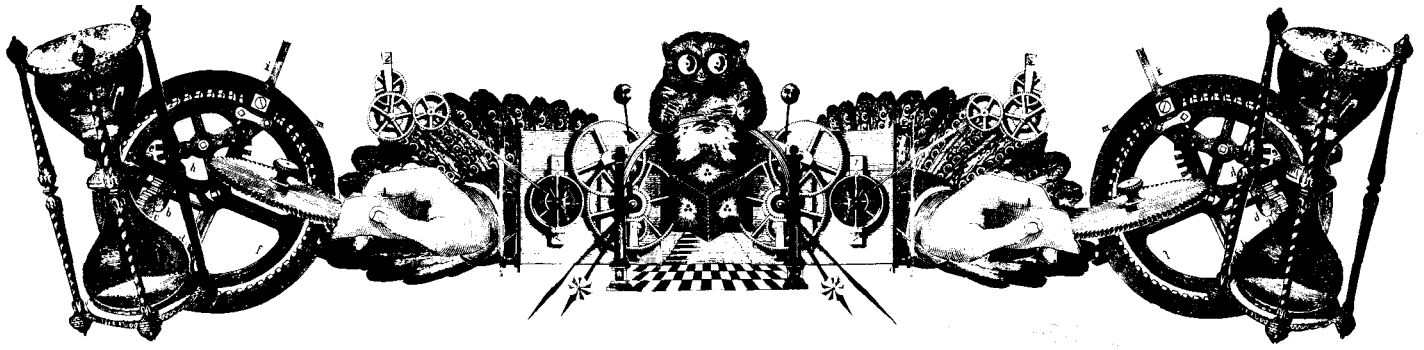
**Skills:** Navigation (Direct Space)

**Description:** The White Stag has the form of a particularly well-formed and beautiful male deer, with strong muscles and large antlers. Its entire body is milky white in color, even its eyes.

**Combat:** No one has ever moved close enough to the White Stag to engage it in combat. However, in the unlikely event that such an event were to take place, the Stag would defend itself using its hooves and horns.

**Background:** The exact nature of the White Stag is a mystery, since no other known animal can exist in the harsh vacuum of space. It may be that the Stag is not





an animal at all, but a construct of pure energy in the form of a stag. There is only one certainty concerning the White Stag: following it will inevitably lead to fantastic adventure. Among those knights who chased the Stag at one time or another are Sir Lancelot, Sir Tristan, Sir Galahad, and King Arthur himself.

### Will-O-the-Wisp

Phy.	Int.	Spr.	Inf.
N/A	N/A	S	N/A

**Size:** S

**Damage:** N/A

**Planet(s) Found:** Any

**Habitat:** Any

**Special Abilities:** Will-o-the-wisps are entities of pure energy, and thus are immune to all physical attacks.

**Skills:** None

**Description:** A will-o-the-wisp is a roughly spherical mass of yellowish light. It is virtually invisible during daylight hours.

**Combat:** N/A

**Background:** Early experiments in teleportation sometimes resulted in the death for both the volunteer test subjects and the technologists performing the research. In many cases, a subject's body was disincorporated but never successfully reincorporated. The spirits of these individuals did not die, however, but became quasi-electrical life forms. These new life forms became popularly known as will-o-the-wisps, after an ancient Terran legend. The will-o-the-wisps are noncorporeal and unintelligent, but they do sense violence and hatred and move toward these emanations, sometimes crossing millions of kilometers of interplanetary space. Knights in search of adventure sometimes follow will-o-the-wisps, in hopes of discovering wrongs to right.

### Wolf

Phy.	Int.	Spr.	Inf.
A	A	H	A
L: N/A			Po: N/A

**Size:** M

**Damage:** Fd6 (claws), Fd8 (bite)

**Planet(s) Found:** Venus, Terra, Luna, Mars, Callisto, Tethys, Titan, Iapetus

**Habitat:** Forest

**Special Abilities:** None

**Skills:** None

**Description:** Wolves are wild pack animals, with powerful jaws, sharp teeth, bushy tails, and intense eyes. Their fur color varies according to specific species and environment, from brown to gray to black. While they bear a superficial resemblance to domesticated dogs, they are much more fierce and dangerous.

**Combat:** Wolves always hunt and fight in packs. They prefer not to bother human beings, but they will attack domesticated animals if wild game is scarce. They surround a target, waiting for an opportune moment to launch a surprise attack.

**Background:** Like many other native Terran species, wolves were transplanted to the colonial worlds as part of the check and balance system of terraforming. Man fears wolves, often because of their eerie howl, which they use to define their pack's territory and to communicate. This fear is largely misplaced, however, since wolves only rarely attack humans. Wolves live and travel in packs of up to 25 animals. Males dominate the pack in a strict hierarchical social structure.







## **Chapter Eight: Campaigning in the Universe**

### **Feudal Society**

**W**hen the scientists of the Terran Federation and its rebel colonies created clone warriors to fight their wars for them, they programmed the minds of their creations with the ideals and attitudes of medieval chivalry. In this way, they hoped to keep the artificially-created humans under their control. The clones broke that control easily, and the knights took over the Solar System, instituting the political system known as feudalism.

### **The Monarch**

In a feudal system, a monarch (usually called a king or a queen) holds absolute authority over the entire nation and everyone who lives in it. A class of nobles, to whom the monarch has granted land holdings, or fiefdoms, supports and serves the monarch, swearing oaths of loyalty and assistance in time of war. For their part, the nobles may also employ knights sworn to serve them, leading to a many-tiered social structure.

In the *Once and Future King* campaign, the greatest and most powerful monarch is King Arthur Pendragon. In addition to ruling his hereditary kingdom of Logres on Earth, Arthur holds the titles of High King of the Solar System and Emperor of the Holy Terran Empire. He does not directly rule the entire Solar System, but most of the kingdoms not under his rule either ally themselves with him or remain non-belligerent toward the high king (for the moment).

The following example demonstrates the shifting nature of feudalism: early in his reign, Arthur waged a war against an alliance of eleven kings, eventually defeating them. King Arthur allowed the surviving defeated knights to retain their kingdoms, but forced them to swear oaths of vassalage to him. Some of these former enemies even went on to become Knights of the Round Table.

### **Social Classes**

Society in the 46th century is divided along four class lines: nobles, clergy, technologists, and commoners. Nobles constitute the highest-ranked class, including rulers, nobles, and knights.

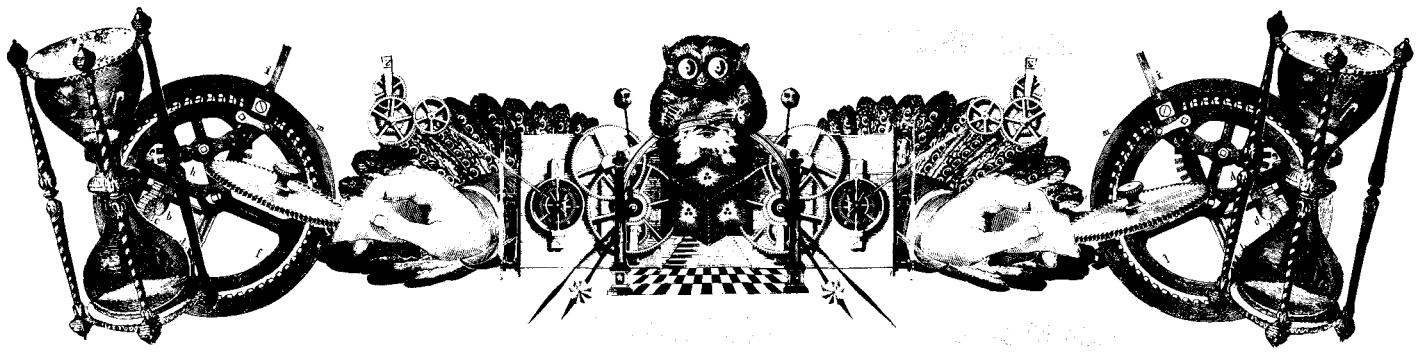
The clergy consists of all officials of the Theanthropy, from the lowest Initiate to the Avatar. Although technically below the ruling class, the clergy's authority for spiritual and religious matters gives them a certain power over even the most powerful of monarchs.

A technologist's social position depends largely upon her technological abilities. A highly skilled technologist gains wealth and respect, and may have great power and influence at a royal court. On the other hand, a technologist of only mediocre ability may find herself no better off than a commoner.

The common class, known as serfs, are ordinary people who work the land, grow food, produce raw materials, and manufacture goods. A great deal of stratification exists among the common class: a serf may be an indentured servant of a landowner, an independent merchant, a member of a guild of craftsmen, or a skilled artisan. Generally, only knighthood or ordination as an acolyte might improve a commoner's life. Some commoner children are also selected at birth to train at the School of Avalon (see Chapter One), an opportunity their parents almost never refuse. The bulk of the common class consists of pure blooded (nonclone) humans, although all classes have become more intermixed in the centuries since the clones were first created.

### **Pirates**

Not all of the clone warriors who rebelled against their human creators continued to follow the dictates of their artificially-imposed chivalric mentality. Some of them rejected all authority and became buccaneers, plundering the worlds of the solar system for their own profit. They usually locate their bases on uninhabited moons or asteroids, from which they



launch strikes against unprotected outposts or ships. Only pirates actively manufacture projectile weapons, and most such weapons in the solar system come from pirate bases. Many pirate groups employ unscrupulous technologists who design newer, more deadly firearms.

Unlike player characters, pirates do not use the Profession Groups listed in Chapter One of this book, and receive no extra benefits or skills. To calculate Stamina for an interbreed pirate NPC, add together his Reflexes and Willpower. For a clone pirate, use the formula  $(R+W) \times 1.5$  to determine stamina. An interbreed pirate's body equals twice his Fitness score, and a clone pirate's body equals  $F \times 2.5$ .

### Typical Pirate

**Profession Group:** N/A **Core Experience:** 0

**Player Core:**

<b>Phy.</b>	<b>Int.</b>	<b>Spr.</b>	<b>Inf.</b>
Rank: 1	Rank: 4	Rank: 2	Rank: 3
Dice: 7	Dice: 4	Dice: 5	Dice: 4
<b>F:30</b>	<b>L:16</b>	Ps: 18	C:22
R:36	I:22	W:26	Po:13

**Body Points:** 60

**Stamina Points:** 62

**Character Experience:** 100

**Profession:** Pirate

**Gender:** Any

**Species:** Interbreed

**Hand:** Any

**Skills:** Projectile Weapons, Navigation, Piloting

**Equipment:** miscellaneous weapons (usually at least one sword of any type and one solid projectile pistol of any type), miscellaneous equipment and vehicles

**Role-Playing Notes:** Pirates differ from normal opponents in the *Once and Future King* campaign in that they have no honor and hold no interest in the principals of chivalry. They will use whatever means are available to defeat their enemies, including sneak attacks, projectile weapons, and deception.

### Pirate Captain

**Profession Group:** N/A

**Core Experience:** 0

**Player Core:**

<b>Phy.</b>	<b>Int.</b>	<b>Spr.</b>	<b>Inf.</b>
Rank: 1	Rank: 2	Rank: 3	Rank: 4
Dice: 8	Dice: 5	Dice: 5	Dice: 5
<b>F:35</b>	<b>L:20</b>	<b>Ps:19</b>	<b>C:27</b>
R:41	I:30	W:30	Po:18

**Body Points:** 87

**Stamina Points:** 106

**Character Experience:** 200

**Profession:** Pirate Captain

**Gender:** Any

**Species:** Clone

**Hand:** Any

**Skills:** Armed Combat, Unarmed Combat, Projectile Weapons, Navigation, Piloting

**Equipment:** Miscellaneous weapons (usually at least one lasersword and one Type II laser pistol), miscellaneous equipment (usually at least one hitech device) and vehicles

**Role-Playing Notes:** Like their followers, pirate captains tend to be tough, ruthless, and without honor. They base their leadership on the amount of plunder they generate for their followers. Defeat means death for a pirate captain, if not at the hands of his enemies, then at the hands of his own followers.

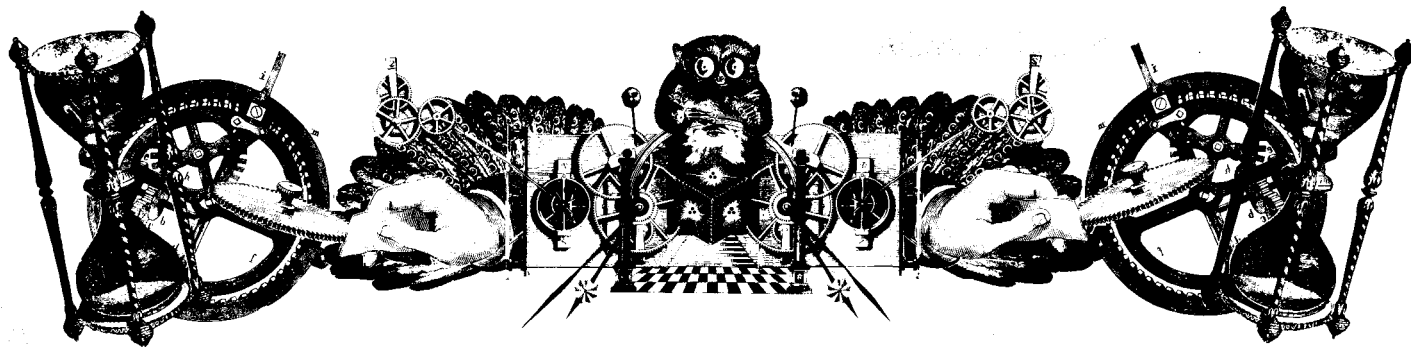
### Population

The population of the Solar System in the 46th century, including human, clone, interbreed, and android individuals stands at 10 billion, almost twice the population of the planet Terra in the late 20th century. However, because the population is spread out across the various terraformed worlds, population density and overcrowding have dramatically decreased.

Of the total populace, approximately 70% are purebred humans. With a few notable exceptions, most humans belong to the serf class, living in servitude to a feudal overlord. Despite their numerical superiority, the purebred humans remain the lowest class of the solar system.

Beings directly descended from the clones created





to fight the Colonial Wars comprise roughly 10% of the solar system population. Since the original clones were mostly male, relatively few beings can trace their ancestry exclusively to clones. The majority of the artificially-created humans mated with purebred humans in order to perpetuate their bloodlines, leading to the creation of a strain of interbred humanity that shares characteristics with both purebred humanity and clones. Approximately 20% of the people of the Solar System are interbreeds of varying ancestry. Most of these belong to the noble class.

The race of androids makes up the smallest minority in the solar system. Like the Terran Empire's clones, the androids rebelled against their creators and asserted their right to control their own destiny. Originally identical to one another, the androids performed extensive self-modifications to express their individuality. With only 10,000 androids left in existence, they are a slowly-vanishing people.

## Commerce

Economic matters rarely become an issue in a *Once and Future King* adventure, since PC professions place those PCs above the commoner class. Assume characters may obtain any goods or services they need (within reason).

The main unit of exchange is the bezant, which in ancient times was a type of golden coin. In the modern usage, however, it is simply a unit of credit logged, added, and subtracted in files on the central mainframe. People in the 46th century consider the notion of currency that actually changes hands outdated and inconvenient.

During game play, if the PCs find themselves in a situation where they must purchase something, they should make attribute checks using their Position scores. The GM should modify this roll based on the availability and cost of the items being purchased. PCs do not have to roll at all for common items, like provisions, supplies, and food rations, since such things are available to any member of the nobility. Items such as armor and weapons,

readily available but more expensive than common items, would require a Position check. Expensive items like sidespaceships, hoverships, or other vehicles would require a modification to the Position check.

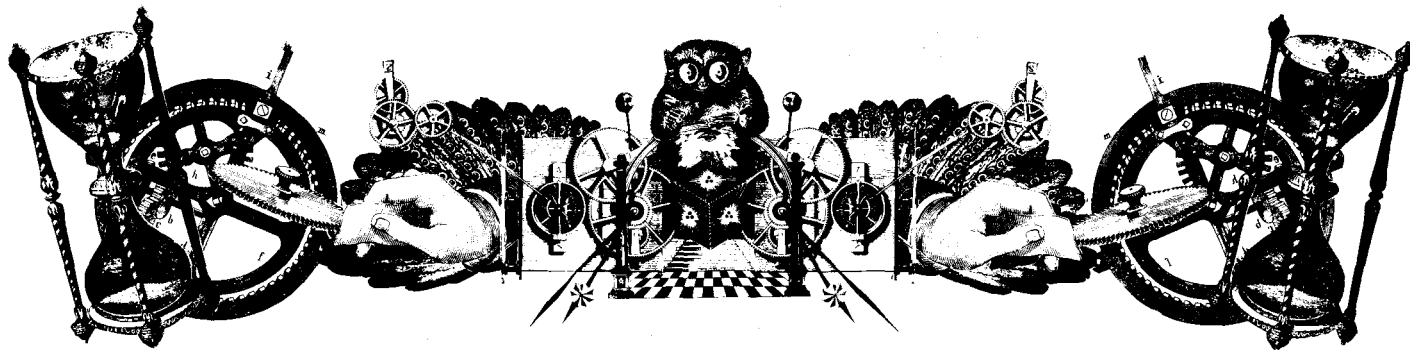
If the check succeeds, the character has purchased the item. If the check fails, then the character could not generate sufficient funds at the time, but may try again later. A character may make only one Position check per type of item per game day.

Of course, characters may pool their resources to buy items. If the players wish to do so, use the highest Position score in the group and add 5 for each additional contributing character. All characters who contribute are considered to have made their daily roll for that item type, even though only one die roll occurs.

## The Campaign Setting

When beginning a *Once and Future King* campaign, the GM must first decide on the location of the PCs' "home base." Many factors enter into this decision, the most important of which are the campaign goals. If *Once and Future King* is the only AMAZING ENGINE™ universe the players will use for an extended period of time, the GM may want them to begin in a remote kingdom, working their way toward Camelot. Perhaps one of them is a knight errant, hoping to become a Knight of the Round Table. If the PCs arise from a player core used in another campaign, they will likely possess higher starting attributes. In this case, the GM may decide to base her campaign in Camelot from the beginning, with one or more of the characters already Knights of the Round Table.

The GM must also decide if she has any long-term goals or themes she wishes to develop over the course of the campaign. Will the PCs become involved in the politics and intrigue of King Arthur's court? Will they embark upon quests in the name of the queen? Will they take part in the quest for the Holy Grail, or the civil wars between King Arthur and Sir Lancelot? It is up to the Gamemaster to determine the best starting point for her adventures.



## Using the Theanthropy

Religion, in the form of the Theanthropy, plays a major part in the adventures of King Arthur and his knights. The Theanthropy exists to provide a moral and spiritual background to inspire chivalry and great and noble deeds. The GM and the players will decide the Theanthropy's part in their own campaign.

### Miraculous Events

As mentioned in Chapter Two, no "magic" exists in the *Once and Future King* universe. There are, however, many unexplained phenomena attributed to a Higher Power that occur during adventures. This Higher Power is the foundation of the Theanthropy.

Miracles come in all sizes and varieties, and can be subtle or obvious. Sometimes characters will not realize a miracle has occurred until much later. A miracle might be in the form of a dream giving special insight into a quest, or the appearance of a strange animal leading a knight in a certain direction. Commonly, though, miracles serve to guide and direct characters, not to take actions for them. A miracle might give a knight the insight he needs to defeat an enemy, but the enemy will never simply vanish by virtue of a miracle.

The job of interpreting miracles belongs to acolytes of the Theanthropy. Some individuals, notably hermits, may even have miraculous abilities granted to them by the Higher Power. These individuals never use their abilities for aggression or self-gratification, however. As with other kinds of miracles, hermits use their gifts only to heal and to guide individuals to the correct path.

### Holidays

Like any other religion, the Theanthropy recognizes the need to have certain days set aside for special recognition. Each year holds seven "days of meditation," one for each of the seven deadly enemies of man. A "day of celebration," one for each of the

seven essential virtues, follows each meditation day. The schedule of these holidays follows:

Date	Holiday
January 1	New Year's Day
March 20	Meditation of Pride
March 21	Celebration of Truth
April 31	Meditation of Envy
May 1	Celebration of Wisdom
June 20	Meditation of Sloth
June 21	Celebration of Strength
July 31	Meditation of Greed
August 1	Celebration of Hope
September 20	Meditation of Egotism
September 21	Celebration of Humility
October 31	Meditation of Hatred
November 1	Celebration of Faith
December 20	Meditation of Injustice
December 21	Celebration of Courage
December 31	Year's End Day

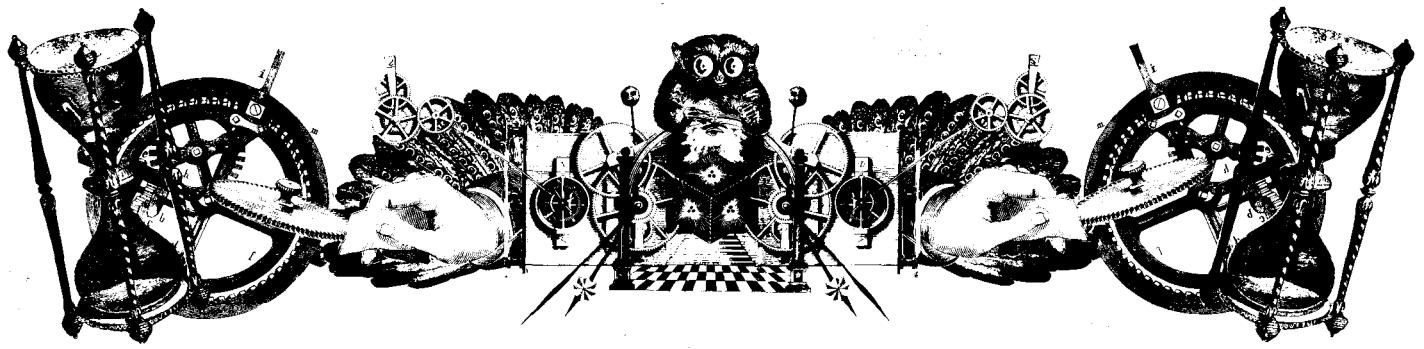
On Meditation days, most people travel to the nearest Theanthropy shrine to participate in devotion, penance, and prayer. The faithful search their own psyches to identify the presence of the deadly enemy within themselves so they may deal with it. By contrast, people spend Celebration days feasting, reveling, and enjoying the gifts of life that come from the essential virtues.

Every year since the founding of the Round Table, King Arthur has commanded his knights to return for a great feast at Camelot on the Celebration of Strength. During the feast, each of his knights relates his adventures of the past year. Strange and miraculous events often occur during these feasts, leading to more quests and greater adventures. In December, King Arthur hosts a smaller gathering on the Celebration of Courage for his closest friends and family.

### The Holy Grail

During the gathering on the Celebration of Strength in 4524, many strange events took place at Camelot,





beginning with the arrival of Sir Galahad and culminating in the appearance of the Holy Grail. Almost all of the Knights of the Round Table immediately embarked upon a quest to find the Grail, which Sir Galahad, Sir Percival, and Sir Bors de Ganis eventually found (see Chapter Four for details).

In the *Once and Future King* setting, the Holy Grail is a mysterious chalice of great antiquity, last seen in the hands of the legendary First Avatar back in the 21st century. Whispers and rumors state that the Grail has the power to raise humankind to a new, higher plane of existence, though only the most pure of heart can hope to locate the Grail.

If the GM chooses to send the PCs off in search of the Holy Grail, she must make several decisions. First, will the PCs actually succeed in the quest, or will they merely aid Sir Galahad? Second, what sort of obstacles should the PCs face? Unlike in ordinary quests and adventures, encounters that occur during the quest for the Grail always include a spiritual metaphor underlying the events. And finally, the GM must consider what changes in the overall campaign the PCs quest will bring about. In the "official" version of the Grail story, the Grail transformed Sir Galahad into a new life form, and caused a tip in the balance of power at Camelot, in favor of Sir Mordred and his wicked henchmen. The GM may choose this type of result, or something of her own creation.

During the quest for the Holy Grail, an optional rule can apply to combat. Since only pure-hearted knights can hope to succeed in the search for the Grail, the Higher Power plays a greater part in all jousts. To reflect this, use the questing knights' Psyche scores as the base value when calculating the MAS and MDS of each pass, rather than Reflexes (see p. 60 for rules on jousting).

## Heraldry

Heraldry is a complex system of colors and images knights use as a form of identification. The most commonly-recognized portion of heraldry is the coat-of-

arms. A coat-of-arms is a design that a knight bears on his shield as well as on the centerpiece of his family crest. More than simply a way of telling knights apart in a tournament, a coat-of-arms is a badge of honor describing the knight's family, deeds, and social standing.

A simplified examination of heraldry follows, for use in the *Once and Future King* campaign. If you would like a more detailed history of heraldry and the significance of different coats-of-arms, consult your local library.

### The Shield

The surface of the shield divides into nine areas describing the location of objects. These locations take their names according to the edges of the shield: the top edge, or *chief*; the curved bottom edge, or *base*; the right side, or *dexter*; and the left side, or *sinister*. *Note:* The edges are described from the knight's point of view, thus the diagram shows the dexter edge on the left and the sinister edge on the right.

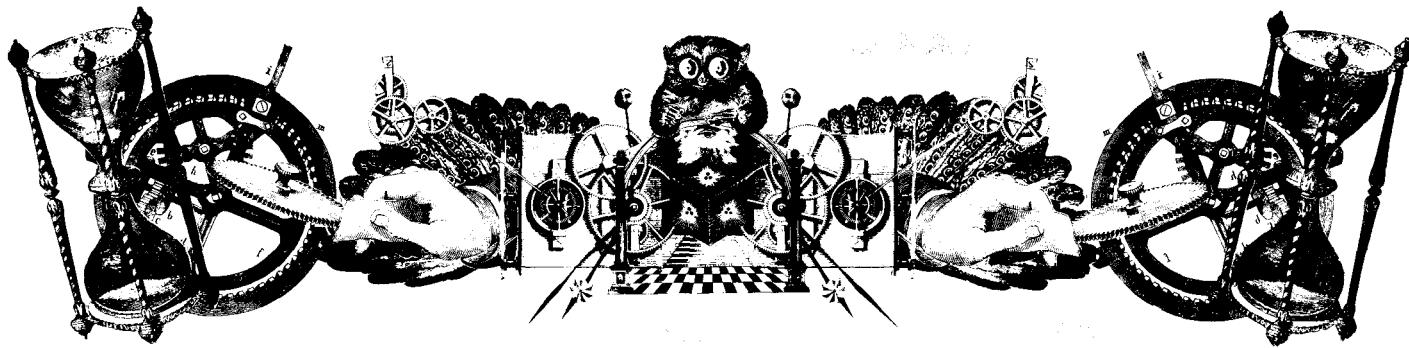
Items on the shield are further identified by three points: the *fess* point, in the exact center of the shield; the *honor* point, halfway between the fess point and the top of the shield, and the *nombri* point, halfway between the fess point and the bottom of the shield.

### Color

Originally, only seven official colors appeared in heraldry. However, as the number of knights grew, color restrictions lessened, and coats-of-arms now appear in all varieties of colors and shades. However, monarchs reserve exclusive use of the color purple.

In addition to flat colors, a number of patterns, or furs, appear in coats-of-arms. The three most common of these are *vair*, which consists of angular bell-like shapes alternating between silver and gold; *potent*, which has short, thick, T-shapes on silver; and *ermine*, which resembles black arrow-





heads on a snow-white background. A knight may include ermine on his shield only with the direct permission of a monarch.

## Charges

The objects depicted on a coat-of-arms are known as charges. Charges come in four varieties: ordinaries, subordinaries, animate, and inanimate.

*Ordinary* charges are lines of color crossing the surface of the shield. These lines can be horizontal, diagonal, vertical, or even V-shaped or zig-zag.

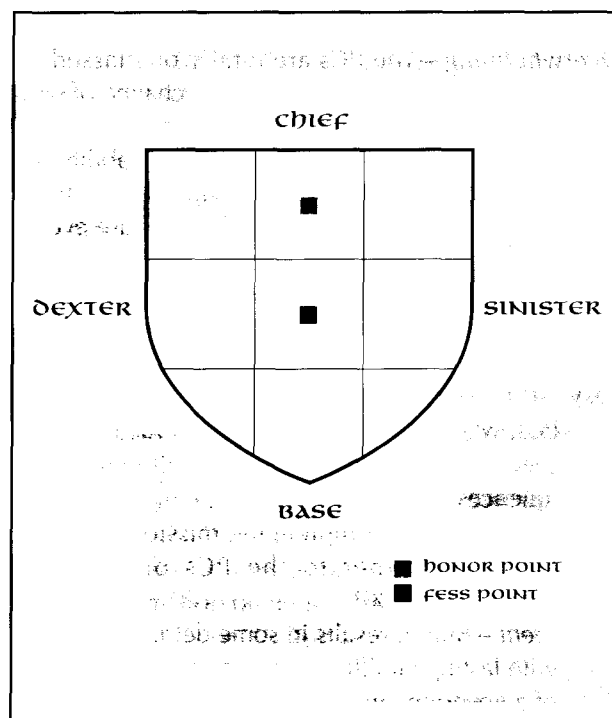
*Subordinaries* are smaller, often much more complex shapes. These include simple geometric figures such as a circle, square, or triangle, as well as more intricate figures such as a flanch, a crescent, or a roundel.

In addition to simple designs, many knights place images of living creatures on their coat-of-arms. These *animate charges* can include birds, mammals, fish, reptiles, and genetically constructed species. Usually, the animal selected will either represent the knight's home kingdom, or some deed the knight accomplished. For example, King Arthur's shield depicts a golden dragon on its sinister chief, representing his surname, Pendragon.

The final type of charge is the *inanimate*, which consists of all images of non-mobile objects. These objects include trees, flowers, and plants of all kinds; spears, swords, and other weapons; castles; bridges; books; sidespaceships; computers; and so on. Like animate charges, inanimate charges usually carry some personal meaning to the knight who bears them. King Arthur's seneschal Sir Kay has a coat of arms bearing three keys in a diagonal pattern from the dexter chief to the fess point. As well as being a pun on his name, the keys represent the duties of his office as seneschal.

## Experience

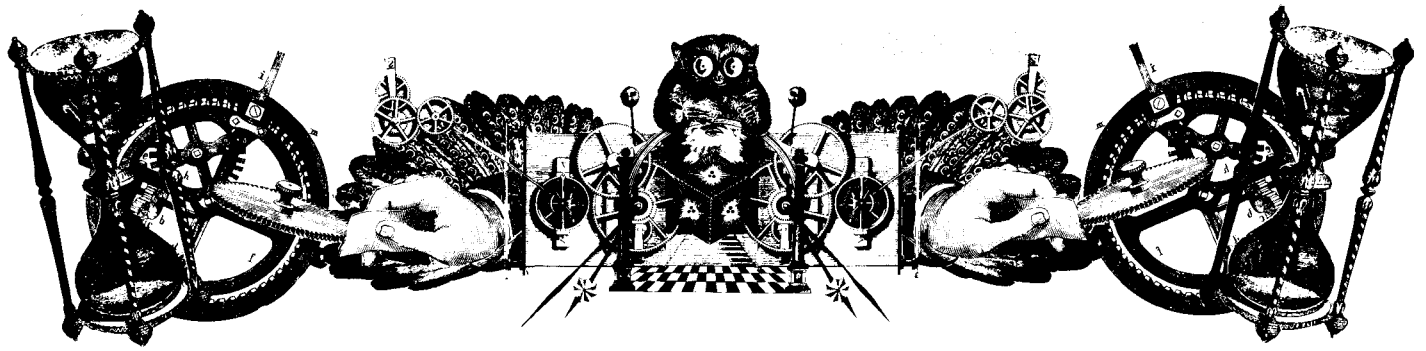
As stated in the AMAZING ENGINE™ System Guide portion of this book, there can be no single method



of determining experience that is perfect for every adventure. A party of PCs may not be extremely challenged in a given adventure, but may role-play well; in the next adventure, they may triumph over extreme odds, but only go through the motions of role-playing their characters. The following guidelines should help the GM to be consistent in awarding experience to players at the conclusion of *Once and Future King* adventures.

At the end of each adventure, the GM should compare the scenario to the following tables, assigning experience points as described. After determining the points for each situation, arrive at a total and award the points to the players. "Competition" indicates how the PCs' opposition compared to them in ability. "Consequences" measures the possible results, had the PCs failed in their mission. "Scope" describes the reach of the adventure, and the extent of the affected areas.





### Competition

*Overwhelming*—The PCs are totally outclassed by their opponents, with little or no chance of winning: 50 XP.

*Superior*—The enemy has greater skill and ability but isn't unbeatable: 35 XP.

*Even Odds*—The PCs and their opponents are evenly matched: 25 XP.

*Inferior*—The PCs are likely to win against their opponents, but there is a chance they might lose: 10 XP.

*Easy*—The opponents are totally outclassed by the PCs, who are able to win easily: 5 XP.

### Consequences

*Deadly*—Failure to complete the mission results in fatalities, either to the PCs or innocent bystanders: 30 XP.

*Permanent*—Failure results in some detrimental effect with lasting ramifications, such as the overthrow of a government: 20 XP.

*Nonpermanent*—Failure results in some setback that will eventually set itself right without further intervention, such as a flood: 10 XP.

*Inconsequential*—Failure has no significant detrimental effects: 5 XP.

### Scope

*System-wide*—The entire Solar System is affected by events of the adventure: 50 XP.

*Planet-wide*—An entire planet is affected by events of the adventure: 35 XP.

*Kingdom-wide*—A kingdom is affected by events of the adventure: 25 XP.

*Local*—Only a localized area is affected by events of the adventure: 10 XP.

*Personal*—The only ones affected by the adventure are the PCs: 5 XP.

- Note that if the world in question consists of only one kingdom, award "Kingdom-wide" points.

In addition to these categories, the GM may add

from 5 to 50 XPs to the total points awarded to any given player, based on that individual's play during the adventure. The GM may wish to reward a player who came up with a clever solution to a problem, or one who simply role-played her character extremely well. It is especially important in a *Once and Future King* adventure to consider whether or not the PCs lived up to the ideals and code of knighthood. Displaying the traits of fair play, honesty, and courtesy is certainly worth additional XPs.

By the same token, the GM also has the option of subtracting 5 to 50 XPs from a player's total as a penalty for poor play. If the PCs only finished the adventure because the GM relented and told them how to escape a trap, for instance, they should not receive full experience. The GM should invoke an XP penalty if a player was rude, argumentative, or disruptive to others.

## Adventure Ideas

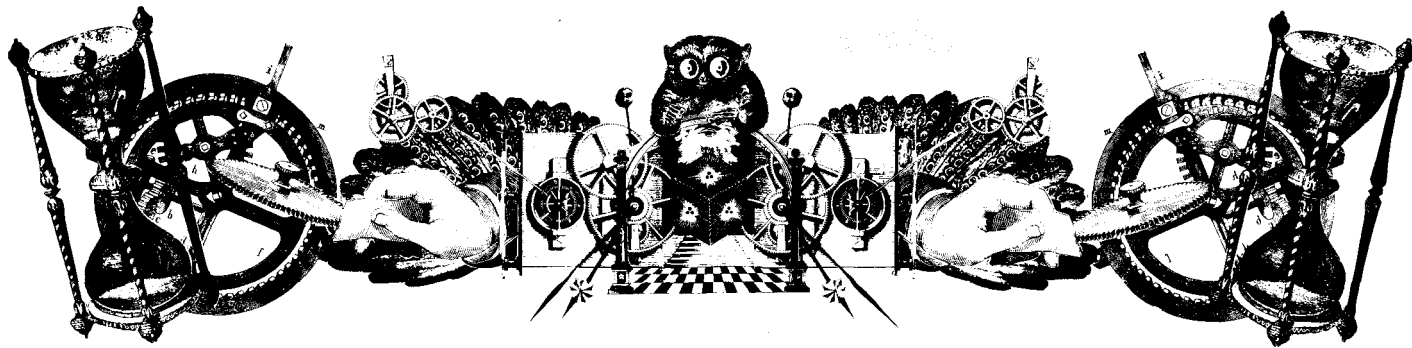
The GM could expand the following ideas for adventures in the *Once and Future King* universe. While not complete as provided, these ideas could easily become full-fledged scenarios with a little work. A complete adventure, "Quest of the Golden Tower," follows this chapter.

### The Mad Knight

While resting in a castle, the PCs learn that a local hero, Sir Gunnar, has disappeared. It is feared that he might have taken his own life when his paramour married another. Later, a group of villagers asks the PCs to hunt down a strange wild man who has been raiding their farms and homes. The wild man proves to be Sir Gunnar, who has apparently gone insane over the events in his personal life.

Further investigation, however, reveals that Sir Gunnar has been the victim of foul play. The PCs learn that an evil technician, Leontius, created a ray that randomizes the higher functions of a human





brain, resulting in bestial thought patterns. Having successfully tested his device on Sir Gunnar, Leontius is now attempting to fit the ray into a satellite that will expose whole worlds to its power. The PCs must find Leontius' secret hideout and put an end to his scheme.

### **The Assassination Game**

During a stopover at Deothmer Castle on Mars, the lord of the castle, Sir Bevis, invites the PCs to take part in a new virtual-reality game his technologists have created. In the game, the characters find themselves in Victorian England, helping Sherlock Holmes solve a murder that may be linked to the otherworldly realm of Faerie.+

When the PCs return from the game, everything seems normal. Once they continue on their way, however, strange events begin taking place. They encounter beasts not indigenous to Mars, no matter how straight a course they plot away from any point they always seem to return to the same spot, none of them can seem to remember where they are going or why, and so on.

Actually, the PCs are still connected into the virtual reality environment. While they think they are on Mars, they are really en route to Terra, where Sir Bevis intends to use their bodies as living weapons to assassinate King Arthur and Queen Guinevere. The PCs must free themselves from the illusory world in time to save the monarchs. If they succeed, they will discover that Sir Bevis himself is also trapped in virtual reality and that Morgan Le Fay, Arthur's evil half-sister, manipulates him.

+If the CM feels ambitious, he may wish to construct an entire "imaginary" adventure for the players, using the *For Faerie, Queen, and Country* universe book.

### **Seven Noble Battles**

The PCs have come to Camelot to ask a boon of King Arthur. He agrees, but requires that they complete a quest before he grants any favors. The knights in the party must fight and win seven battles against the forces of darkness.

### **The Pursuit**

Certain creatures bring fame and nobility to the knights who hunt them, whether or not the knights finally catch the object of their pursuit. The most notable of these is the Questing Beast, a remarkable composite animal of unknown origin. Other creatures worthy of a hunt are dragons, griffins, unicorns, and the legendary White Stag. See Chapter Seven for more information on these remarkable creatures.

### **Tournament Treachery**

Sir Galihaut the Haut Prince has announced that he will hold a great tournament on the Celebration of Hope, only a week away. The featured attraction will be a combat between 50 Knights of the Round Table, led by Sir Lancelot du Lac, and fifty knights of Cornwall, led by Sir Tristan of Lyonesse.

As the PCs travel to the tournament, they learn of a plot by King Mark of Cornwall to have Sir Tristan "accidentally" killed during the tournament. The only detail the PCs can uncover is that someone on Sir Lancelot's side is the unwitting pawn of a spy, who will be among the spectators. Stopping or postponing the tournament is impossible, since doing so would brand all knights involved as cowards. The PCs must locate the spy, unveil the identity of his unsuspecting ally (could it be Sir Lancelot himself?), determine the means of assassination, and prevent the vile deed.







## ***Adventure: Quest for the Golden Tower***

**T**his adventure serves as an introduction to the *Once and Future King* universe for both the GM and the players. Players may generate their own characters, or they may begin play using the pre-created characters listed at the end of the adventure.

In the descriptions that follow, the GM should read boxed text directly to the players.

### **Setup**

This adventure works best with 4-6 characters, at least one of whom must be a knight. The scenario begins at Camelot, during King Arthur's annual feast on the Celebration of Strength. The PCs are attending either because they are Knights of the Round Table, household knights in King Arthur's service (perhaps awaiting an opportunity to prove themselves worthy of joining the Round Table), or knights errant enjoying the hospitality of the court. Read the following to the players, but read the last sentence only if one or more of the PCs are Knights of the Round Table:

Once again, the knights of King Arthur have come together in their annual celebration of chivalry. As always, the grand hall of Camelot presents an awe-inspiring sight. Sunlight illuminates the entire hall, and radiant reflections from the huge crystal chandelier hanging above the Round Table lend the scene an ethereal, other-worldly appearance. Of the Round Table's 150 seats, over 120 are filled today. Each knight in turn relates his adventures of the past year, punctuated with occasional outbursts of astonishment or approval from the court. At the moment, Sir Dinadan is finishing up an amusing tale of how he tricked an ogre into believing that night was day. As the laughter dies down, King Arthur addresses (*PC knight*) and declares that it is now his (*her*) turn to tell of his (*her*) deeds.

Allow the players to role-play the situation, telling a story of their past adventures, if they have any. King Arthur and his courtiers listen attentively, and occasion-

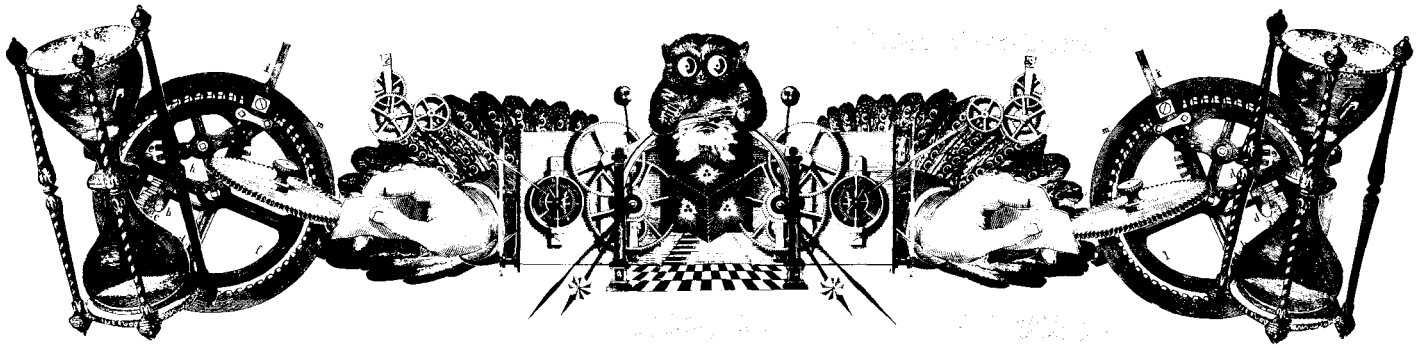
ally comment on some point of interest. King Arthur or one of his close knights (i.e., Sir Lancelot, Sir Gawaine, or Sir Kay) detects any attempt to embellish the story, and they good-naturedly chastise the PC knight for his dishonesty. At an appropriate moment, interrupt the players and read the following. If none of the PCs is a Knight of the Round Table, the interruption takes place just as Sir Dinadan finishes his anecdote.

Suddenly, a black cloud passes before the sun, plunging the grand hall into a brooding darkness. The glowing figure of a maiden, no more than seventeen years of age, suddenly appears in the midst of the Round Table. She has long raven-black hair, pale gray eyes, and wears a crimson gown with gold designs sewn in its sleeves and hem. She seems to flicker in and out of existence, then suddenly becomes sharply in focus. The damsel faces King Arthur and speaks in a tone of controlled desperation.

"Hail great King Arthur, most worthy of monarchs and noblest of rulers. My name is Princess Helena, and I come to thee in my direst hour of need, to beseech thy aid. I have been kidnapped from my home by a most unworthy and knavish knight, known as Sir DZ-313; a most notorious android. I believe that he intends to use me as a means of winning the kingdom of Strangore from my father.

"Thy court is known throughout the Solar System for its great knights. I beg thee to send a worthy knight to my rescue, before Sir DZ-313 can usurp my father's throne." Princess Helena suddenly looks behind her, as though she has just heard some sudden threat, then turns back to the king. "Help me, oh king. I have no hope but thee."

As suddenly as the image appeared, it vanishes, and the darkness passes from the hall. For a moment, the room falls silent, then a sudden outburst of consternation arises from the assembled court. King Arthur rises from his seat and calls for silence, then addresses all present.



"My lords and ladies, truly this is a manifestation most strange and unprecedented. Still, despite the unusual manner of her appearance, it is sooth that the damsel requires urgent aid. Who of my knights will embark upon this quest?"

If the PC knights do not immediately volunteer, King Arthur calls on them specifically, asking that they embark upon the quest. If the PCs are not Knights of the Round Table, the king may mention that completion of such an unusual adventure might help a knight to win a chair at the Table. If the PCs are Knights of the Round Table and are still reluctant to accept the task, King Arthur will command them to accept the mission.

Before proceeding, have all PCs present in the hall roll attribute checks against their Intuition, with a -10 penalty. If this check succeeds, the character noticed that the gold embroidery of Princess Helena's gown included an unusual pattern. The gold threads seemed to weave a repeating pattern: a cone with a wide disk intersecting it about three-fourths of the way up from the bottom.

If the PCs noticed the pattern on Helena's gown, they may wish to research it before they leave. Use of the Computer Systems (Central Mainframe) skill with a margin rating of S6 reveals the following information (PCs may use any public terminal in Camelot): If the success is not critical, the PCs learn only the formula for devising the area and volume of a cone, and some trivial information about the ancient Greek mathematician who first derived the formulae. A critical success reveals that the image in question bears a 92.5% resemblance to a mythic structure known as the Golden Tower. A precise critical success (the 1s digit is a 6) provides the additional information that the Tower is reputed to be the resting place for the Eye of AA-001. The mainframe holds no further information about the Golden Tower or the Eye.

If the PCs do not have their own means of transportation, King Arthur provides them with whatever they need, within reason. A transport sidespaceship capable of carrying up to eight people and a capable pilot stand ready for the PCs to use. The king does not provide any weapons or specialized equipment.

## Getting Underway

Any technologist witnessing Princess Helena's appearance may make an Intuition check with a +10 bonus. Any technologist who has Helena's appearance described to her may make an Intuition check with a +5 bonus. Success means that the technologist has recognized the image as a holographic projection of some kind, probably transmitted through sidespace. A check with the castle's sensor array verifies that an unidentified sidespace signal appeared in the grand hall at the time of the princess's plea. Triangulation places the signal's approximate origin point at the direct space coordinates 239x67x15. A quick check of navigational charts shows that the asteroid known as Apollo currently occupies coordinates 242x68x15. Go to the section **Apollo Rising** below if the PCs decide to visit or to obtain more information about the asteroid.

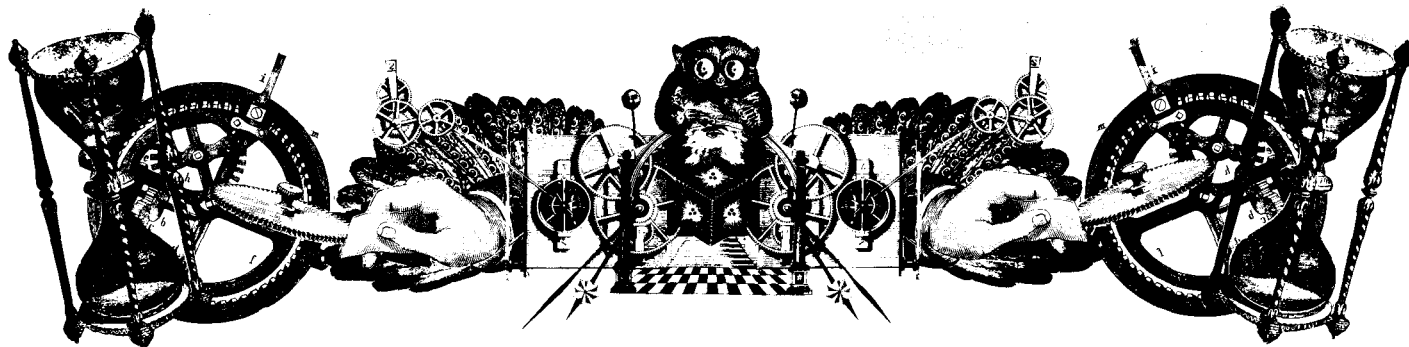
The PCs may simply set out with no specific destination, waiting for the adventure to come to them. In this case, use the **Errantry** section.

A great deal of information on the kingdom of Strangore (Helena's kingdom) is available in the computer mainframe, on any successful Computer Systems check. The kingdom occupies one hemisphere of Titan, the largest moon of Saturn, and King Brandegoris rules there. King Brandegoris has a long-standing policy of neutrality in Solar System politics, but does have a nonaggression agreement with King Arthur. The computer can also provide the names of King Brandegoris' chief knights, Strangore's population and geography, and so on. The GM should consult the section on Titan in Chapter Five, making up those details the PCs feel they need. The computer has absolutely no files concerning Sir DZ-313. If the PCs decide to begin their investigation in Princess Helena's home kingdom of Strangore, use the section labeled **Scene of the Crime**.

## Errantry

If the PCs simply leave Camelot and go off looking for Helena, they encounter nothing unusual for two days,





no matter where they begin. On the night of the third day, a PC knight (chosen at random if more than one knight is present) has the following dream.

You are on your mount, riding full-tilt with couched spear toward an oncoming knight who wears black polyaluminum armor. His shield is black, with a red cross that divides it both horizontally and vertically. In the dexter chief corner, the shield shows a red eye surrounded by a white circle, and in the sinister base section, there is what appears to be a silver robot. His helmet masks the knight's face from view.

Just as your lance is about to make contact with the knight's shield, he fades from view, and you find yourself, still mounted and still galloping forward, in outer space. Where the knight was moments before, your lance now points directly at the sun, which looms larger and larger before you. It seems to blind you as you approach, and withers you with its heat, but you cannot turn aside. Just as you think you can stand no more, you see a tall, muscular man with a laurel wreath in his hair driving a horse-drawn chariot out of the heart of the sun. The horses seem to be made of living flame, and the driver is oblivious to the fact that you are straight in his path.

Moments before the hooves of the sun horses pound you into nothingness, you awake with a start.

Any individual familiar with Greek or Roman mythology will recognize the description of the charioteer as Apollo, the ancient god of the sun. Any successful computer inquiries into Apollo reveal that Apollo is also the name of a kilometer-long asteroid located in the belt between Mars and Jupiter. No records appear in the central mainframe regarding the coat-of-arms the knight in the dream bore.

Any successful attempt to use the Psychology (Dream Interpretation) skill also reveals that the charioteer was the Greco-Roman god, Apollo. A critical success against a margin rating of S3 on the same Dream Interpretation roll indicates that the knight in

the dream represents some threat that the dreamer must overcome. Furthermore, the dream shows that mere force of arms can defeat this enemy.

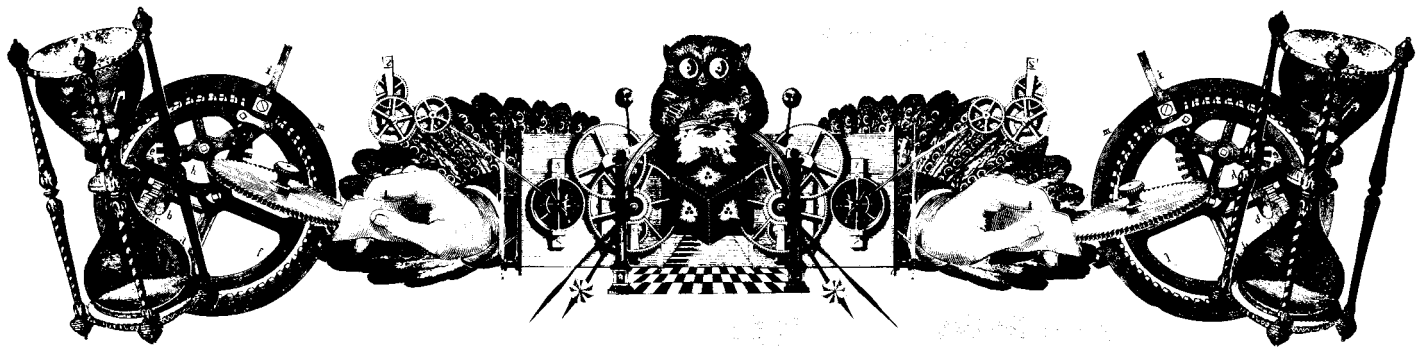
The references to Apollo and the information about the asteroid should be enough to spur the PCs in the proper direction. When they finally decide to visit the asteroid, use the section **Apollo Rising**, below.

## Scene of the Crime

When you arrive on Titan, King Brandegoris himself personally greets and welcomes you. The king is a kindly interbreed man roughly 130 years old. His queen, Ursula, a human woman who appears to be in her mid-forties, accompanies him. Both of them are polite, but obviously concerned for the safety of their daughter.

If questioned, the king and queen answer any inquiry as best they can. However, they have no information about Sir DZ-313 or why he kidnapped Princess Helena. The only help they can provide is an account of how the kidnapping took place:

"Our kingdom receives regular shipments of grains and fruit from Venus. The last direct space cargo ship arrived on schedule two days past, and was cleared through the ecosphere without incident. That night, nearly 100 goblins emerged from the cargo holds of the ship and made their way to the royal castle. In some manner we have not yet determined, they passed through the force field and entered the castle. No one even realized anything was amiss until the goblins entered the princess's bedchamber and set off a motion detector. The castle guard waylaid the goblins while they made their getaway, but we were forced to let them go, lest they bring harm to the princess.



"We had thought that they would give up when they realized that they could not escape from the ecosphere. Much to our surprise, the direct space ship translated into sidespace just after takeoff, leaving with the princess."

King Brandegoris and Queen Ursula have no other information about the kidnapping, nor have they received any kind of ransom demand. If pressed, the king mentions that he has never heard of goblins (who are usually cowardly creatures utterly lacking in subtlety) making this sort of raid before. The king gives the PCs the run of the castle while they conduct their investigation, but begs them to hurry, for his daughter's sake.

Neither the princess's bedchamber, the castle force field generator, nor the space port yield any clue to the princess's whereabouts. A search of the goblin's escape route, however, uncovers a strange device, apparently dropped by the raiders. The device resembles a baton, 20 centimeters long, with a handle that rotates. The baton has a Complexity rating of 10. A successful Technology (Device Deciphering) roll reveals that this rod generates a dome-shaped bubble of energy, negating any force field it contacts. The rotating handle activates the rod, and it controls the size and diameter of the energy dome. A device of this complexity is definitely beyond the capacity of goblins to design and build.

A search of computer records reveal that technologists invented a much larger version 20 years ago to help in the containment and transfer of dangerous materials. Deemed too bulky to be practical, the project was abandoned. Technologists located the last known prototype on the asteroid Apollo, where the tribe of dwarves living there put it to some unknown use.

This device is the only lead the PCs find in Strangore. When they leave Titan, go to the section **Apollo Rising**. King Brandegoris is reluctant to let the PCs take the baton device with them when they go. PCs must make a Charm check with a margin rating of F8 in order to persuade the monarch.

## Apollo Rising

### Approach

As your craft reenters direct space from the shadowy formlessness of sidespace, the asteroid Apollo appears on your viewscreen. Only its communications dish, bubble-like observation window, and spacecraft docking hatch mark it as different from the other huge, gray rocks floating in space.

Four ways into the asteroid exist: the large spacecraft port located on its top, and three airlocks at various locations on the sides (see map). The spacecraft port opens only from the inside, under direction from a controller in the Operations Center. PCs can open the airlocks from outside, but only if they wear spacesuits. The PCs' sidespacecraft includes eight transuits, a kind of skin-tight spacesuit with a 2-hour air supply, among its survival gear.

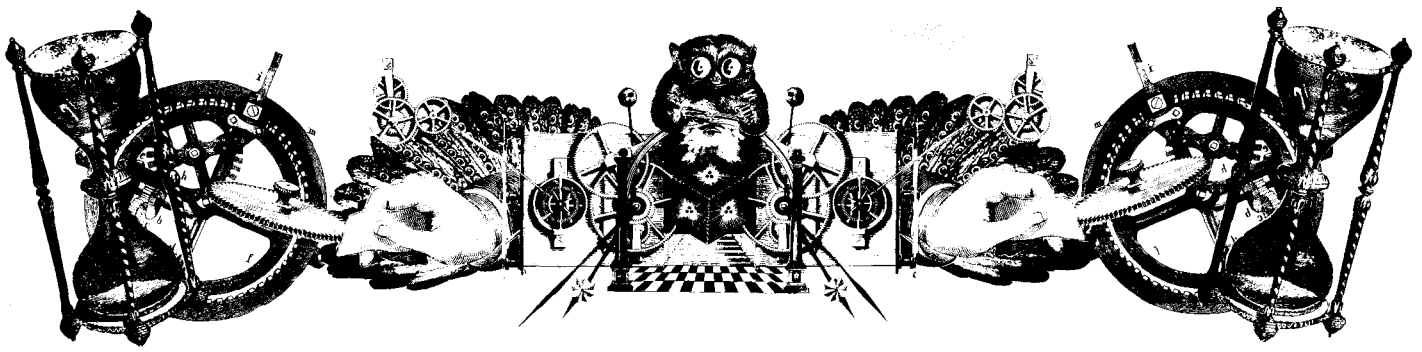
Unless the PCs conceal their approach, or somehow deceive the goblins, the goblins know of their presence by the time the PCs enter the asteroid. Under no circumstances will the goblins respond to any attempts at communication.

If a player specifically states that his character tries to catch a glimpse of something through the asteroid's observation port, have the character make an Intuition check with a -5 penalty. If the check succeeds, the PC can make out the distinct figures of goblins inside Apollo, but cannot determine the number of goblins present.

### The Goblins

During humankind's first great push into outer space, humans mined many of the asteroids between Mars and Jupiter for their raw minerals. Apollo was deemed too small to make a worthwhile mine, but it did become a housing and recreation area for miners. Later, when dwarves gained control of the mining industry, Apollo became the home of the Pre'lad





tribe. A little over two months ago, goblins invaded and conquered Apollo. The hobgoblin chieftain is named Haak, and she allied herself with Sir DZ-313.

## Haak

### Player Core:

<b>Phy.</b>	<b>Int.</b>	<b>Spr.</b>	<b>Inf.</b>
<b>F:40</b>	<b>L:20</b>	<b>Ps:10</b>	<b>C:15</b>
<b>I:10</b>	<b>W:30</b>	<b>Po:10</b>	<b>R:40</b>
<b>Body Points: 80</b>		<b>Stamina Points: 70</b>	
<b>Character Experience: 100</b>		<b>Gender: Female</b>	
<b>Species: Hobgoblin</b>		<b>Hand: Right</b>	
<b>Hgt.:198cm</b>		<b>Wgt.: 143 kg</b>	
<b>Eyes: Black</b>		<b>Hair: None</b>	

**Damage Dice:** 4d8/5 plus weapon

**Skills:** Climbing, Armed Combat (On Foot/Club)

**Equipment:** Plastihelmet, Club (1d6/3), Pistol (2d6/4)

**Background:** Haak was the chieftain of a tribe consisting of a mere twenty goblins, living in an asteroid only 125 meters in diameter. Her life changed when a mysterious android knight named Sir DZ-313 arrived on her asteroid and offered her the chance to become a mighty chieftain over many tribes. Haak agreed to the android's bargain. By taking his orders and following his strategies, Haak conquered 10 other goblin tribes in quick succession, until she had gained nearly 250 followers. With this force and some technological assistance from Sir DZ-313, Haak conquered the Pre'lad tribe of dwarves and occupied Apollo.

**Role-Playing Notes:** Haak believes that she is a mighty hobgoblin warlord, but in fact, she owes all of her success to Sir DZ-313. When the PCs arrive at Apollo, Haak will be in the Operations Center (#2).

## Apollo Goblins

### Player Core:

<b>Phy.</b>	<b>Int.</b>	<b>Spr.</b>	<b>Inf.</b>
<b>F:20</b>	<b>L:5</b>	<b>Ps: 5</b>	<b>C: 20</b>
<b>R: 10</b>	<b>I: 10</b>	<b>W: 5</b>	<b>Po: 10</b>
<b>Body Points: 40</b>		<b>Stamina Points: 15</b>	

**Character Experience:** 20

**Species:** Goblin

**Hgt.:** 127cm

**Eyes:** Black

**Damage Dice:** 2d6/3 plus weapon

**Skills:** Climbing, Armed Combat (On Foot)

**Equipment:** Club (1d6/3)

**Background:** The goblins now inhabiting Apollo originally belonged to a number of tribes, though they now unite under the leadership of Haak the hobgoblin.

**Role-Playing Notes:** With the exception of those goblins that made up her original tribe, most of the Apollo goblins owe Haak loyalty only in her presence. The goblins let her lead as long as she gives them victories, but if she loses or circumstances turn against her, they disintegrate into their original groups and fend for themselves. Goblins are scattered throughout the asteroid when the PCs arrive.

## The Dwarves

### Pre'lad Dwarves

#### Player Core:

<b>Phy.</b>	<b>Int.</b>	<b>Spr.</b>	<b>Inf.</b>
<b>F:-20</b>	<b>L:15</b>	<b>Ps: 20</b>	<b>C: 30</b>
<b>R:30</b>	<b>I:5</b>	<b>W:20</b>	<b>Po:15</b>
<b>Body Points: 40</b>		<b>Stamina Points: 50</b>	
<b>Character Experience: 50</b>		<b>Gender: Various</b>	
<b>Species: Dwarf</b>		<b>Hand: Various</b>	
<b>Hgt.:</b> 106 cm		<b>Wgt.:</b> 84 kg	
<b>Eyes:</b> Brown		<b>Hair:</b> Brown	

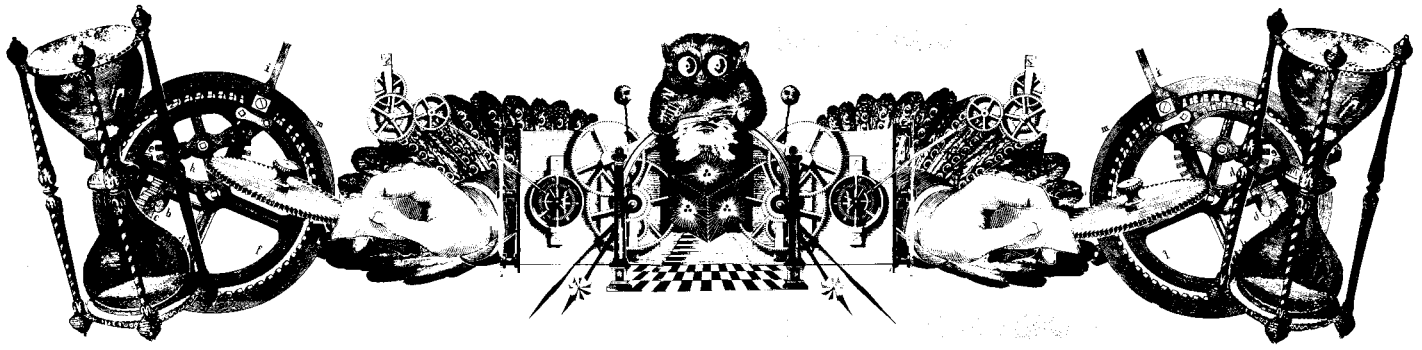
**Damage Dice:** Fd6/2 plus weapon

**Skills:** Climbing, Throwing, Lifting, Armed Combat (On Foot), Unarmed Combat, Mining

**Equipment:** None

**Special Abilities:** Dwarves have the ability to navigate effortlessly underground. They receive a +10 bonus to any Intuition checks made while traveling Apollo's corridors.

**Background:** Of the 500 dwarves who originally inhabited Apollo, all but a handful died defending the asteroid from the goblins' attack, while others were tortured



and put to death by their sadistic conquerors.

**Role-Playing Notes:** The goblins keep the living dwarves in the two holding cell areas (#7 and #8) when the PCs arrive. If freed, they will do whatever they can to assist the PCs. Unless the goblins are completely defeated, the dwarves will ask the PCs to take them along when they leave.

## Inside the Asteroid

The map on page 128 is a two-dimensional approximation of the asteroid's three-dimensional interior. In addition to the rooms and corridors shown, a vast number of side tunnels, recessed chambers, and hidden alcoves wind through the rock. The GM may devise these as she needs.

The entire interior is well-lit. The walls and floors are composed of polyaluminum, except where noted below. The individual areas of the asteroid follow.

## Hoverlifts

Apollo has three hoverlift shafts. The main shaft runs almost the entire length of the asteroid, from the space dock level to the communications level. The hoverlift car can travel the entire length of the shaft in one minute, thirty seconds, and it can carry up to 100,000 kilograms.

The secondary hoverlift shaft connects the computer core to the communications room. The third hoverlift shaft is used solely for the transport of prisoners. It runs from a platform just below the dining level to both holding areas. The hoverlift cars in the secondary and prison shafts have the same specifications as the main lift.

## 1. Space Dock

This huge hangar area can store three sidespace or direct space ships. The exterior port is made of reinforced polyaluminum, and irises open and closed. The space dock uses three tractor/pressor beams, which guide ships in and out. At the moment, one ship sits in dock. At first glance, the vessel appears to be a standard

direct space cargo vessel. The goblins used this ship, however, when they kidnapped Princess Helena, and it is equipped with a sidespace displacement field generator. If the PCs examine the dock area carefully, they notice an LCD screen that records arrivals and departures. The screen indicates that a personal sidespace-ship departed just under an hour before the PCs' arrival. Its destination is not logged.

When the PCs arrive at Apollo, 35 goblins occupy the space dock; ten are on board the cargo ship, and the other 25 are performing maintenance and guard duties.

## 2. Operations Center

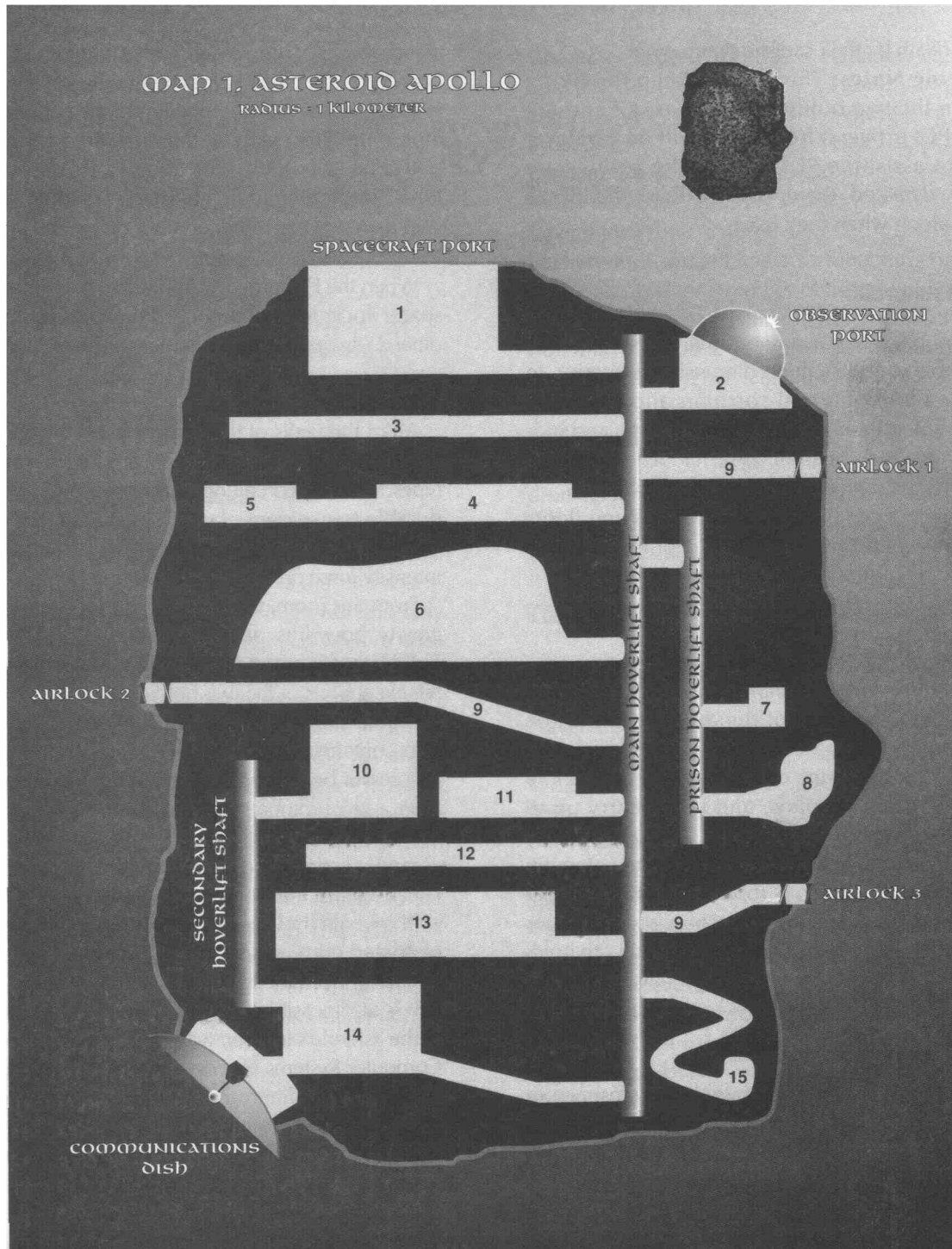
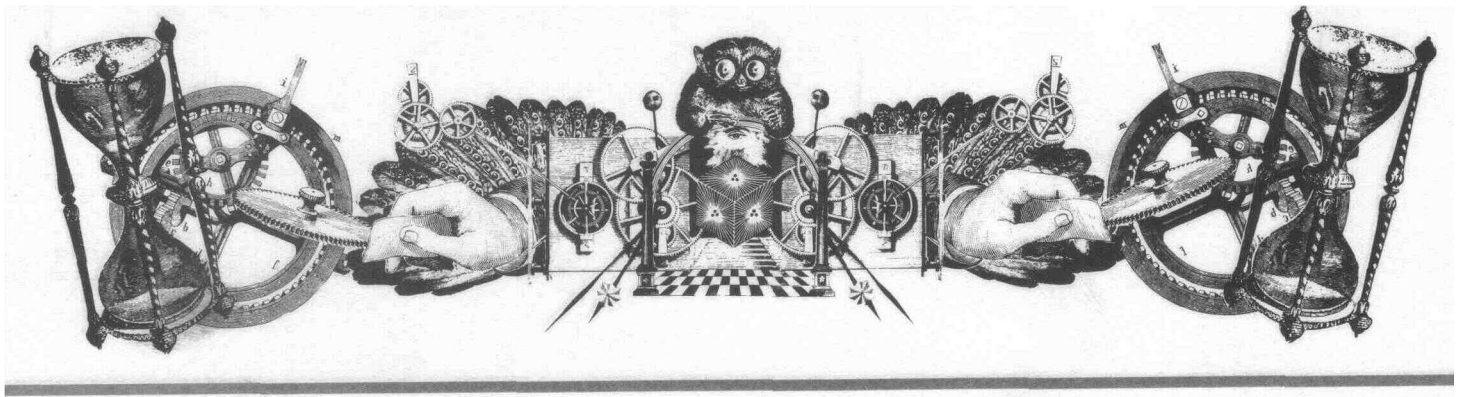
All of the walls of this room are covered with monitors, control mechanisms, and computer terminals of all types. The sloped ceiling includes a spherical dome of durable transparent plastic. Any technologist present making a successful Learning check notices that a low-intensity force field reinforces the plastic dome.

From this room, the PCs can control lighting, heating, gravity, hoverlifts, and life support for the entire asteroid. Cameras monitor every area of the asteroid, with the exceptions of the two holding areas (#7 and #8), the computer core (#10), and the oubliette (#15). This room also contains controls for the spacecraft port and tractor/pressor beams, as well as internal communications. After a few moments' investigation, however, the characters will discover that access to the asteroid's external communications and computer core has been cut off. A check against the Computer Systems (Access Terminals) skill reveals that these systems have been placed on restricted entry status, and PCs can access those systems only from their specific control rooms.

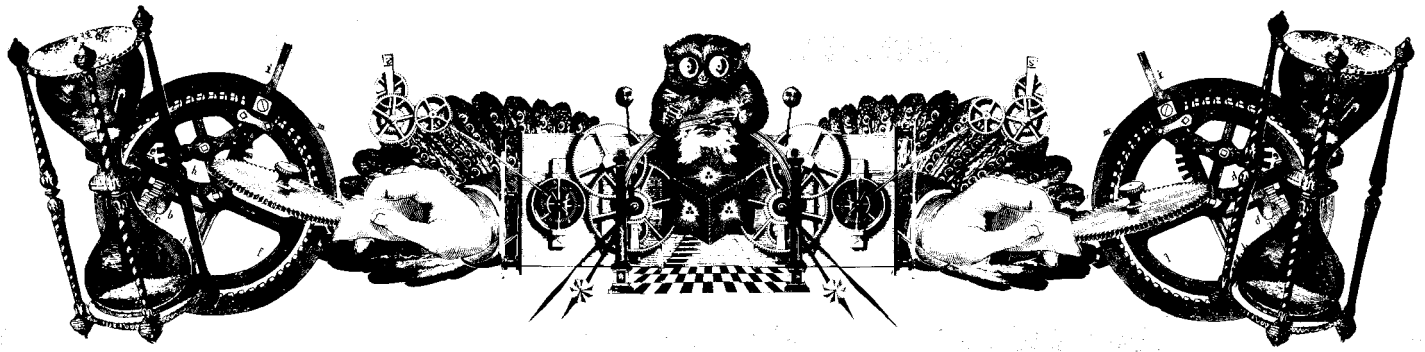
It is also possible for the PCs to discover a schematic of the asteroid's interior, with a successful roll against the Computer Systems (Access Terminals) skill, modified by -5. Only this diagram indicates the presence of the oubliette (#15); nothing else in the asteroid reveals its presence. The schematic also indicates the code to make the hoverlift car stop at the oubliette's platform.

Haak was in this room before the PCs attempted to enter the asteroid.









### 3. Access Corridor A

This corridor has stepladders built into its walls, spaced 15 meters apart. These ladders lead to hatches in the ceiling, which in turn lead to maintenance tunnels for the space dock's heavy equipment, such as the tractor/pressor beams. This corridor is deserted when the PCs arrive at the station.

### 4. Dining Hall

This large area contains four long plastic tables surrounded by an assortment of benches and chairs. The whole place is a terrible mess, with shattered dishes, rotting food, broken glass, and puddles of unidentifiable liquid everywhere. There are 35 goblins here when the PCs arrive at Apollo, but they are thrown into confusion when news of the PCs reaches them. Any attack aimed at the characters here is utterly unorganized and unplanned.

### 5. Kitchens

The kitchen area is only slightly less untidy than the dining hall (#4). An assortment of food-preparation equipment sits here, including protein synthesizers, food replicators, and autocooks, but no one seems to have used any of it in quite some time. Instead, a makeshift fire pit smolders in the center of the room, over which a number of spits hang, still holding hunks of charred flesh.

There are three goblin overseers here when the PCs arrive, as well as five dwarf women, whom the goblins are forcing to cook for them. When word of the PCs' invasion reaches the kitchens, the overseers attempt to take the dwarves to Holding Area A (#7).

### 6. Central Chamber

This huge, rock-lined chamber serves as the main living quarters of the goblins. Refuse of all sorts, as well as broken bits of furniture, beds, and bric-a-brac (all apparently plundered from the dwarves) fills the room. There are 90 goblins here when the PCs arrive, waiting for orders from Haak before doing anything.

### 7. Holding Area A

A series of 10-meter by 10-meter cells breaks this area into small pieces. Each cell is bare, except for a one-meter-long metal cot and small commode. The lighting here is very dim. Ten goblins serve on guard duty here when the PCs arrive. Five of the cells contain prisoners, each one a leader of the Pre'lard dwarf tribe. If given enough time, the goblin overseers from the kitchen (ft5) will bring the dwarf cooks here.

### 8. Holding Area B

No light shines in this area roughly carved from the asteroid's stone. Bars of polyaluminum separate the prison cavern from the access hallway. A gate in the center of the bars provides the only way in or out. When the PCs arrive, eight goblins keep guard outside the gate. The holding area contains 32 Pre'lard dwarves, mostly women, children, and elderly.

### 9. Service Corridors

These three corridors connect the exterior airlocks with the main hoverlift shaft. The walls in these corridors are bare, with no doors or side passageways. In emergency situations, someone in the Operations Center (#2) can erect force fields to impede or to trap invaders. The goblins know nothing about these force fields.

Unless the PCs have somehow gained entrance to Apollo by stealth, Haak and ten other goblins meet them in whichever of the three corridors they enter.

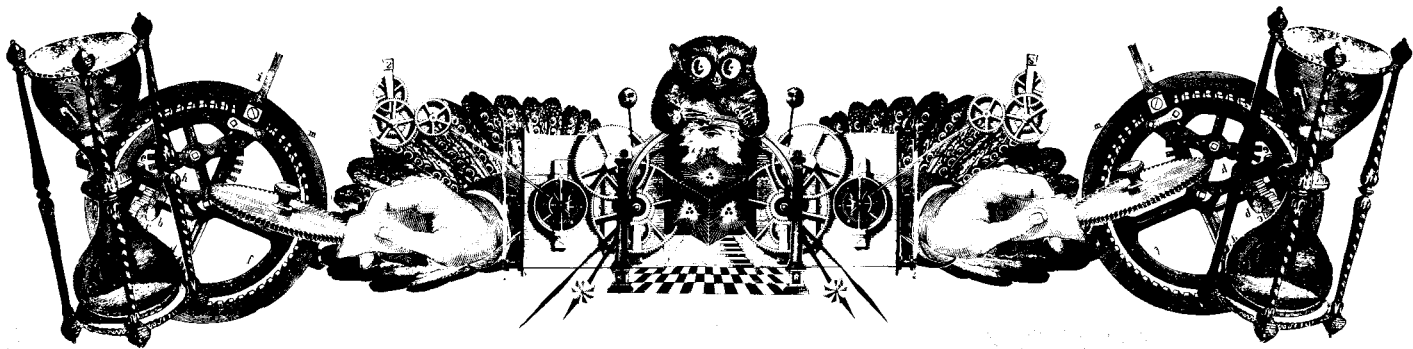
### 10. Computer Core

Only the hoverlift located on the upper level of the Communications Room (#14) provides access to this area. This large chamber houses the asteroid's computer. Unlike similar computers, this computer does not connect to the Solar System mainframe. With a successful use of the Computer Systems (Access Terminals) skill, a technologist can learn that the ship that left prior to the PCs' arrival on Apollo belonged to Sir Barrius. Further inquiry reveals that Sir Barrius has a castle on Luna, located deep within the Forest Savage.

The PCs find no goblins here when they arrive.







### 11. Life Support

Machinery used to maintain life support in the entire asteroid fills this entire area. PCs find gravity generators, air filters, heating units, and an independently-operating fusion generator. The generator automatically engages if the equipment's power links to the main reactor (#13) fail. There are no goblins here when the PCs arrive, but some may flee here, hoping to hide in the asteroid's air ducts.

### 12. Access Corridor B

This hallway has stepladders built into its walls, spaced roughly 10 meters apart. These ladders lead to hatches in the ceiling, which then open into maintenance tunnels for the life support and computer equipment.

This corridor is deserted when the PCs arrive at the station.

### 13. Reactor Room

This room is second in size only to the great central chamber (#6). It holds the asteroid's main fusion reactor and two smaller backup reactors. Each of the reactors includes triply-redundant safety features that make tampering virtually impossible.

### 14. Communications Room

This room holds a wide variety of sidespace and direct space communications equipment. On the north end of the room sits a small cylinder, roughly 30 centimeters tall and one meter in diameter. Above the cylinder hangs a double-jointed mechanical arm, attached to what appears to be a bluish glass mirror. A panel on the side of the cylinder stands open, and wires run from the interior to a panel on the far wall.

A successful Skill Check against Technology (Deciphering Devices) reveals that the cylinder and mirror are a holographic-projection input module, which has been jerry-built to transmit across the reaches of sidespace. Further examination shows a communications log which indicates the equipment was last used at the very moment that Princess Helena's image appeared in Camelot.

PCs can use the Computer Programming (Module

Programming) skill here to find data on the communications entering and leaving the asteroid since the goblin takeover. On a successful check, the data show that over 80% of the messages sent and received originated at a point within the Forest Savage on Luna.

Twenty goblins are stationed here when the PCs arrive at the asteroid.

### 15. Oubliette

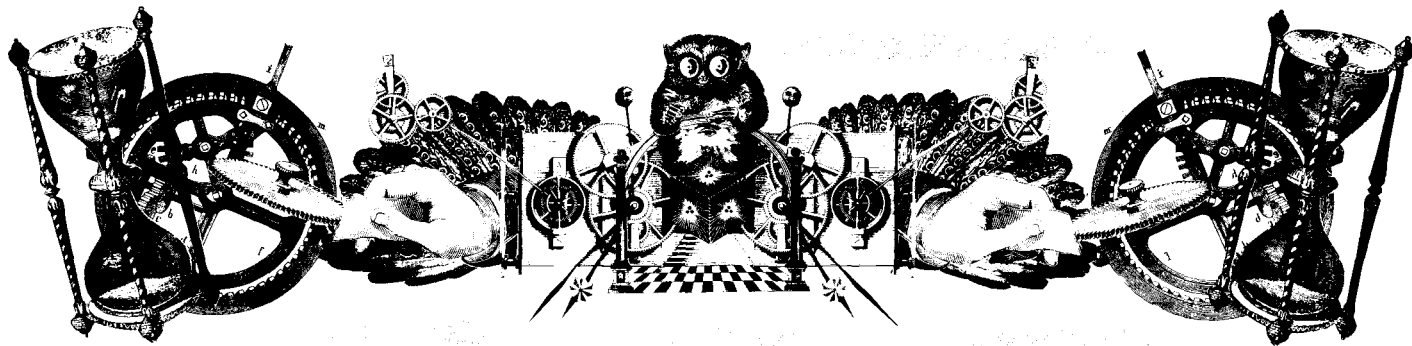
This small, lightless, damp room is little better than a hole in the asteroid. It holds a prisoner that even Haak does not know about: a technologist named Randew. He is pale, emaciated, in obvious poor health, and dressed in stained rags. When the PCs find Randew, his Stamina is down to 3, and his Body is at only 1 point. He is dying, and nothing the players can do can prevent his death. Randew knows nothing about Princess Helena, Sir Barrius, or Strangore. However, if the PCs ask him about Sir DZ-313, he gasps out the following confession before he dies:

"Sir DZ-313? <cough> My greatest achievement and the instrument of my destruction . . . <cough> Two years past . . . found reference to <cough> device called . . . Eye of AA-001 . Knew it had to have something to do with <cough> androids. I asked Sir DZ-313 to find it for me. He . . . <cough> thirteen months, but found it. Hidden in the Golden <cough> Tower.

"Unbelievably sophisticated . . . was actually capable of deactivating androids <cough> reset their baseline programming . . . Sir DZ-313 . . . volunteered <cough> stripped his mind . . . tried to repair, but he <cough> deranged, twisted. Forced me to help him <cough> goblins take over. Threw me down here . . . alone . . .

"He <cough> must be . . . stopped. Only the Eye can . . . <cough> only the Eye. . . ."

This is all that is revealed before he passes away. Any acolytes present should be able to administer last rites.



## Aftermath

If captured, none of the goblins know anything about Sir DZ-313. Sir Barrius held a human prisoner on the asteroid for a short period of time. The prisoner escaped, but was found almost immediately in the communications room. Sir Barrius then took the prisoner and left in his private sidespace ship. None of the goblins can identify whether or not the prisoner was Princess Helena (all humans look alike to them).

If Haak is among those captured, PCs can coerce her into admitting that the prisoner was a human female in a red gown. She also knows that Sir Barrius (whom she refers to as "the Bush-Man") was in league with Sir DZ-313 (whom she calls "the Robot-Man"), and that Sir Barrius returned to his castle, somewhere in the "Very Bad Woods."

When the PCs leave the asteroid to proceed to Sir Barrius' domain, continue with the section entitled **A Dream of Green**, below.

If the characters lose the battle in the asteroid, they are not killed (except by chance in combat). The goblins strip all of their armor and weapons, and Haak throws them in Holding Area B with the Pre'lard dwarfs. After 24 hours, Sir DZ-313 arrives and takes the PCs to his stronghold as prisoners. See the section labeled **Confrontation** to continue the adventure in this case.

## A Dream of Green

While en route to the castle of Sir Barrius, one of the PC knights has the following dream. If there is more than one PC knight, and one of them has already had the dream described under Errantry, above, a different knight should have this dream.

You are standing alone under a blue sky, surrounded on three sides by walls of green brick that seem as high as the sky itself. The only path seems to be straight ahead. You try to take a step forward, but some force prevents you from proceeding, no matter how hard you strain. Finally, you give up and fall to

your knees. Suddenly, you look up and see that the space you were trying to pass has been covered by another green brick wall. From behind, you hear a voice, muffled by a helmet.

"If thine eyes deceive thee, thou must trust them not. Only the heart sees truly."

Whirling about, you see that the three walls that had surrounded you have disappeared. A knight in polyaluminum armor stands some ten meters before you. He bears a black shield, with a red cross, and charges of a single red eye and a silver robot. He raises his sword to you in salute, then vanishes. Before you can react, you are surrounded on all four sides by green stone walls, on which you pound futilely until you awaken.

Use of the Psychology (Dream Interpretation) reveals little about the nature of this dream. A successful roll discloses that the knight who had the dream will soon face a peril that is more than it seems. He must be on his guard about the reality of his surroundings, trusting to his faith rather than his intellect. Once again, the knight with the black shield represents some unknown future enemy.

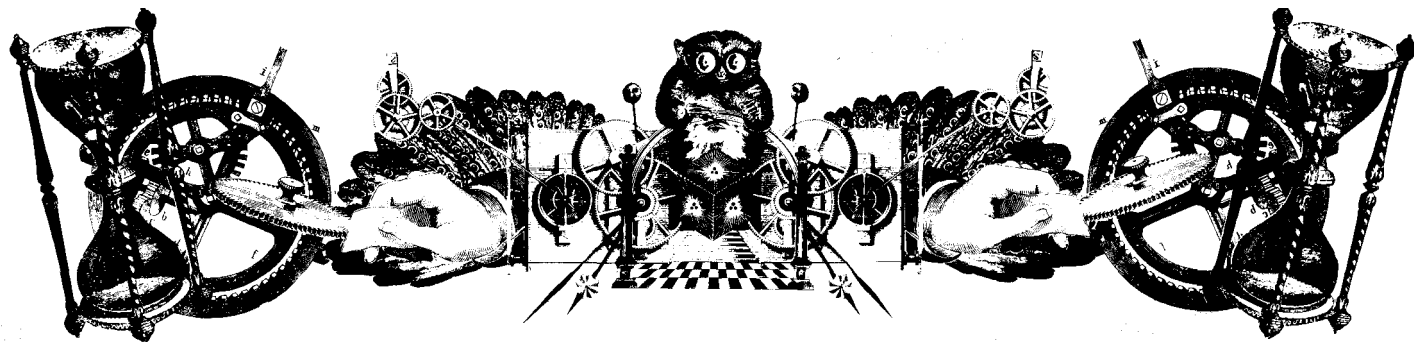
After the players have discussed the dream and its portents, proceed to **The Knight of the Hedge**.

## The Knight of the Hedge

Your craft glides above the surface of Luna's infamous Forest Savage as you approach the coordinates you found on Apollo. Soon, you spy a large clearing in the forest, in the center of which stands a large castle, its walls are composed of black metal, and a shimmering force field protects them. Before the gates of the castle, you see a small but serviceable landing pad, next to which sits a personal sidespaceship. Suddenly, a voice comes over the sidespace transceiver speaker.

"Attention, unidentified craft approaching the castle of the Knight of the Hedge. Halt and state thy business."





Before any player answers, those characters with the Behavior skill should make a Skill Check with a +10 bonus. If no PC has this skill, the character with the highest Position score should make an Attribute Check with no modifier. If either of these checks is successful, the GM should inform the players that the proper procedure here is to answer truthfully.

If the players answer with the truth, the voice welcomes them and invites them to land. If the characters lie, or give an openly hostile response, a turret on one of the castle's towers slide open, revealing a Type VI laser cannon. The voice gives the ship ten seconds to vacate the area before it opens fire. (A Type VI laser cannon has more than enough accuracy and firepower to blow the PCs' ship out of the sky.) The PCs should either hastily apologize, or leave immediately.

Should the PCs retreat, three kilometers away they find a clearing large enough to land their ship. To reach the castle on the ground, they must pass through some of the most feral areas of the Forest Savage. The GM should improvise at least two encounters with nasty monsters from Chapter Seven.

When the players finally arrive at the castle, a tall man with long, brown hair and a neatly-trimmed, brown beard greets them. A coat-of-arms with three bands trisecting it horizontally blazons his tunic. The top and bottom bands are navy blue, and the center band is light blue, with four green trees running across the width of the shield. The man greets the PCs pleasantly, in the name of the Knight of the Hedge, and offers them the hospitality of the castle.

The PCs receive the utmost courtesy while they are at the castle, but no one will answer any questions about their quest. After visiting their guest quarters, the characters enjoy a feast held in their honor. If the characters show any hesitation to attend the feast, a Behavior skill check reveals that they should attend in order to insure that the hospitality of the castle continues.

At the feast, the man who greeted them reveals himself as the Knight of the Hedge. He does not answer if the PCs ask him if he is also called Sir Barrius, nor does he answer any questions about Sir

DZ-313, Princess Helena, Apollo, the Golden Tower, or the Eye of AA-001. He does, however, offer to joust with one or all of the PC knights the following morning. If the PCs defeat him, he will answer all their inquiries. If he defeats them, however, they must agree to become his prisoners.

Further questioning of the Knight of the Hedge at this time proves fruitless. If the PCs attempt to force the knight to talk, he revokes his hospitality, and 25 knights immediately confront the party. Should the players insist on fighting, they inevitably lose and the Knight of the Hedge casts them into the castle's dungeon. After 24 hours, Sir DZ-313 arrives and transports them to his stronghold. Use the section labeled **Confrontation** to conclude the adventure.

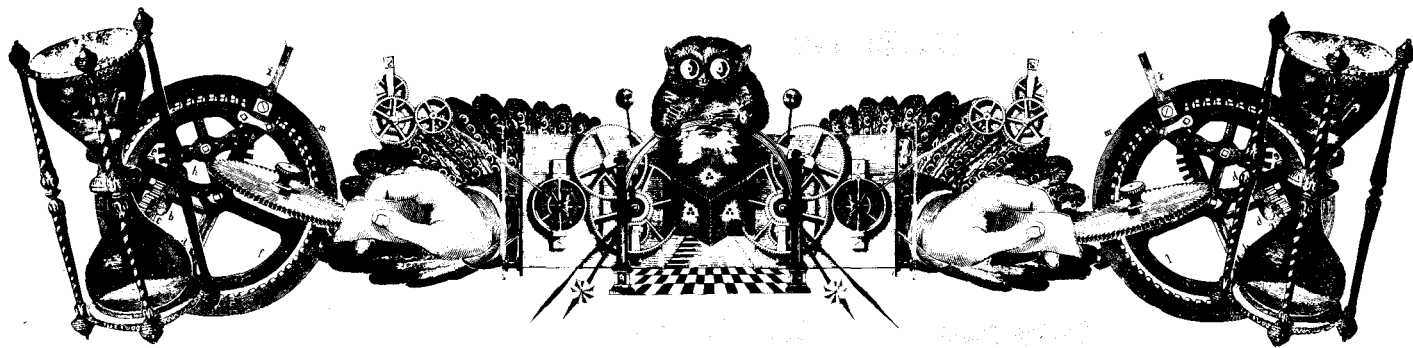
## The Hedge

The following morning, attendants wake the PCs, telling them to prepare for the joust. There is a small chapel in the castle where the PC knight or knights may hear Devotion. If a member of the group is an acolyte with the Devotion skill, he may perform the devotion himself. Roll a Skill Check for each of the jousting knights. If the check succeeds, the knight may add +5 to his MAS and MDS on the first pass of the joust.

When the PCs leave the castle to start the joust, read them the following:

Armed and ready for battle, you leave the castle to proceed to the lists. To your surprise, it seems that a huge, three-meter-tall collection of hedges covers the entire area behind the castle. Only one opening appears in the hedge, and the Knight of the Hedge, in cybernetic tilting armor on a polished black hoversteed, sits before it.

"Good morrow to thee, worthy adversary!" he shouts. "I hope that thou art well rested and prepared for the battle ahead. Before I test the strength of thy limbs, however, here is a test for thine intellect! After all, I must be sure that thou art no witless buffoon. The custom of the castle requires all



challengers to first pass through this hedge and find the lists before any joust takes place. I shall await thee at the lists within!"

Without another word, the Knight of the Hedge rides through the gap in the shrubbery, disappearing from view.

Give the players the copy of Map 2 marked "Players' Map." They must negotiate through the maze of shrubberies and find the lists where the Knight of the Hedge waits for them. However, the maze is more complex than it first appears. Many of the hedges are actually holographic projections, and impenetrable force fields block many of the openings. The copy of Map 2 marked "GM's Map" shows the locations of the force fields and the holograms. As the players try to solve the maze, the GM should watch their progress carefully and inform them when they come to a force field.

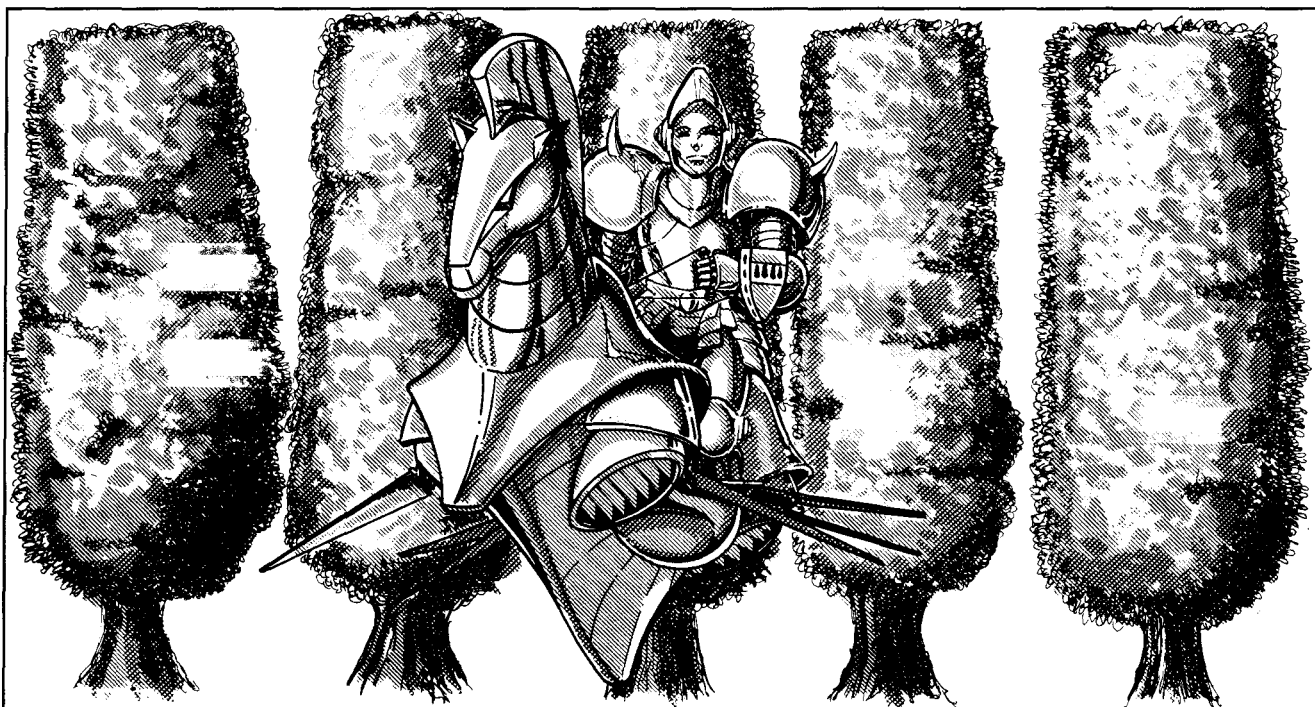
Once the characters have bumped their heads against a few force fields, they should recognize the

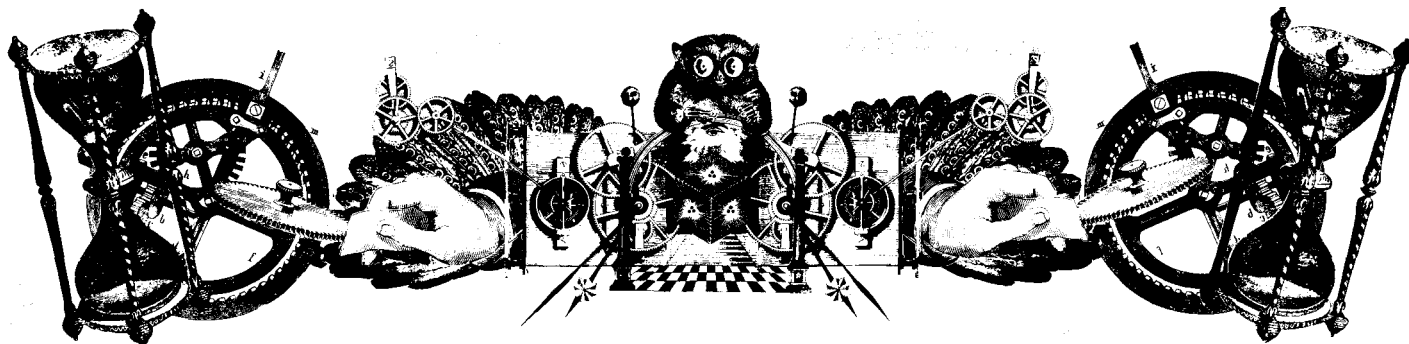
similarity of the maze to the dream described earlier. This realization should, hopefully, lead them to conclude that some of the hedges are holograms. If the players recall the words of the dream, "only the heart sees truly," they may check against their Psyche scores to tell which hedges are real and which are holograms. If the players do not recall the dream, or fail their Psyche checks, they can still find their way by trial and error.

Any attempts to cut or blast a way through the hedge fail. If the PCs manage to make an opening, a force field automatically rises in the opening, preventing the PCs from getting through.

### The Joust

Eventually, the PCs should find their way to the lists. There, they find the Knight of the Hedge, ready to begin the joust. If more than one of the PCs is a knight, they should decide who will joust with the knight first.





### Sir Barrius (The Knight of the Hedge)

**Profession Group:** Knight      **Core Experience:** N/A  
**Player Core:**

Phys.	Int.	Spr.	Inf.
Rank: 1	Rank: 4	Rank: 2	Rank: 3
Dice: 7	Dice: 4	Dice: 5	Dice: 4

**F:32 L:21 Ps:21 C:18**

**R:40 I:10 W20 Po:15**

**Body Points:** 64      **Stamina Points:** 52

**Character Experience:** 125

**Profession:** Banner Knight      **Gender:** Male

**Species:** Interbreed      **Hand:** Left

**Hgt.:** 188 cm      **Wgt.:** 95 kg

**Eyes:** Brown      **Hair:** Brown

**Skills:** Armed Combat (From Horseback/Lance/Sword, On Foot/Sword), Hoversteed (Riding, Tilting), Chivalry, Behavior

**Equipment:** Lasersword, Energylance (x2), Cybernetic Tilting Armor, Cybernetic Helmet, Forceshield

**Background:** Sir Barrius is known as the Knight of the Hedge because of the maze-like shrubberies behind his castle, and his custom of requiring knights who come to challenge him to solve the maze before he jousts with them. He boasts an impressive number of victories, and all of his defeats have been honorable, save one. The android Sir DZ-313 bested him, and bound him to an oath of servitude. Since then the mad android has forced Sir Barrius to help in a number of schemes, including the takeover of Apollo and the kidnapping of Princess Helena.

**Role-Playing Notes:** Sir Barrius is a noble knight driven to wicked deeds by an oath sworn to Sir DZ-313. The Knight of the Hedge has maintained his honor only by refusing to take a personal role in these crimes, but he still feels a strong sense of responsibility. In the joust, he will follow all of the rules of chivalry to the letter, and will answer any treachery with swift vengeance.

If Sir Barrius defeats the PC knights, he expects them to honor the terms of their agreement and willingly become his prisoners. If they renege, he does

not hesitate to slay them. After he has held the PCs in his dungeon for 24 hours, Sir Barrius surrenders them to Sir DZ-313. The adventure then concludes with the section entitled **Confrontation**.

Should the PC knights defeat Sir Barrius, he yields honorably and tells them everything they want to know. He does not, however, agree to join them on their quest, since it would violate his prior oath to Sir DZ-313. No amount of coercion, even threats of death, can persuade him to change his mind on this point.

#### Sir Barrius's Information

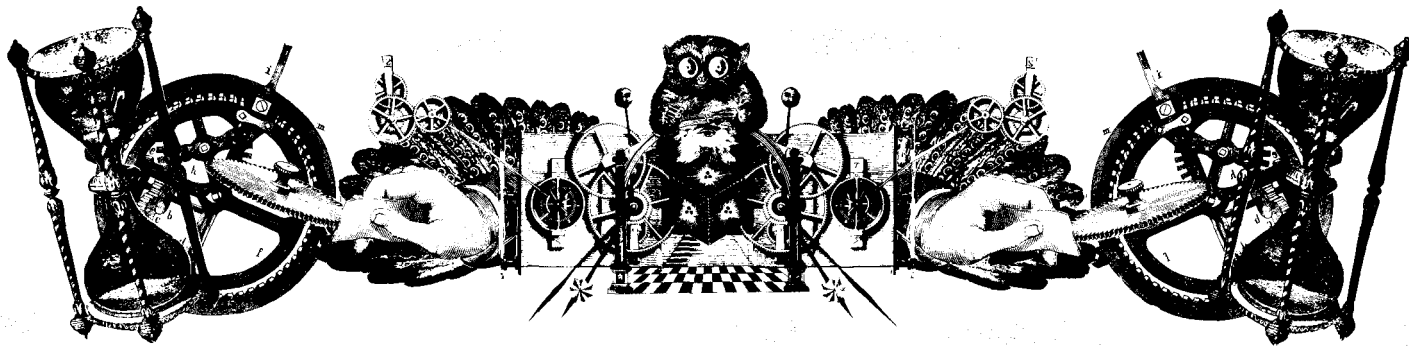
1. His true name is Sir Barrius.
2. He is currently bound to Sir DZ-313's service, due to a defeat at the android's hands.
3. He provided Sir DZ-313 with equipment used in the invasion of Apollo and the abduction of the princess, but he himself did not participate in either of those activities.
4. Sir DZ-313 ordered Sir Barrius to guard the princess on Apollo, but she temporarily escaped and transmitted a message for help. After her recapture, Sir Barrius brought her to Luna, where he turned her over to Sir DZ-313's henchmen.
5. Sir DZ-313 keeps a stronghold in a remote area of Rhea, the moon of Saturn where the androids were first created.
6. Sir DZ-313 has a mortal fear of something called the Eye of AA-001, which he found in a Golden Tower on Venus.
7. As far as Sir Barrius knows, the Eye was returned to its resting place in the Golden Tower. The Tower is said to be full of traps, puzzles, and hidden dangers.

#### Aftermath

Win or lose, Sir Barrius continues his courteous behavior toward the party, even offering them the services of his bank of medical tubes. Unless he must imprison them, he also allows the PCs to stay at his castle until they wish to depart.

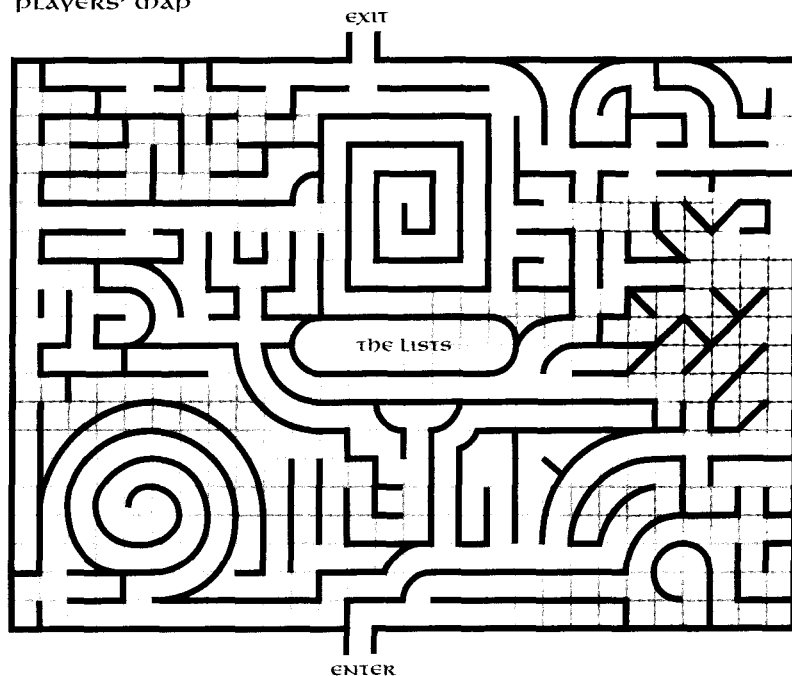
At this point, the PCs can choose between two destina-



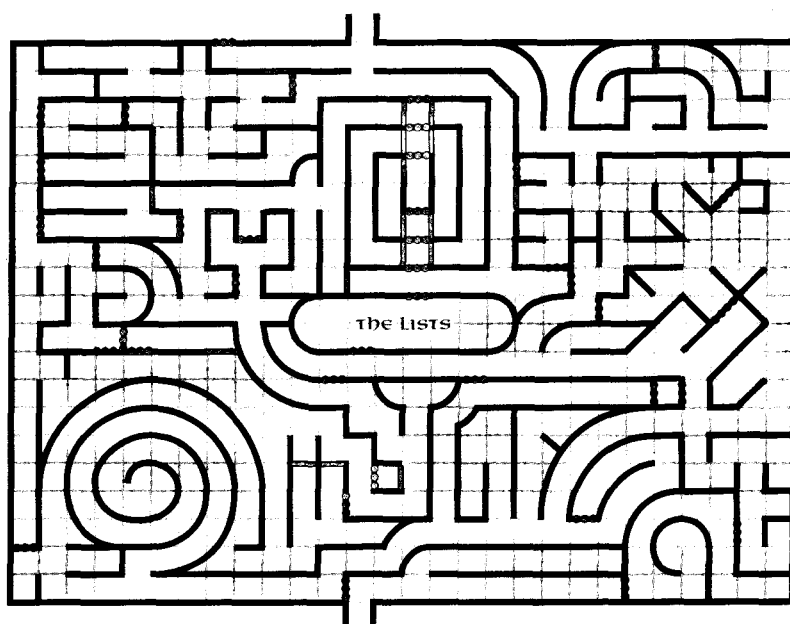


## map 2. the knight of the hedge

players' map

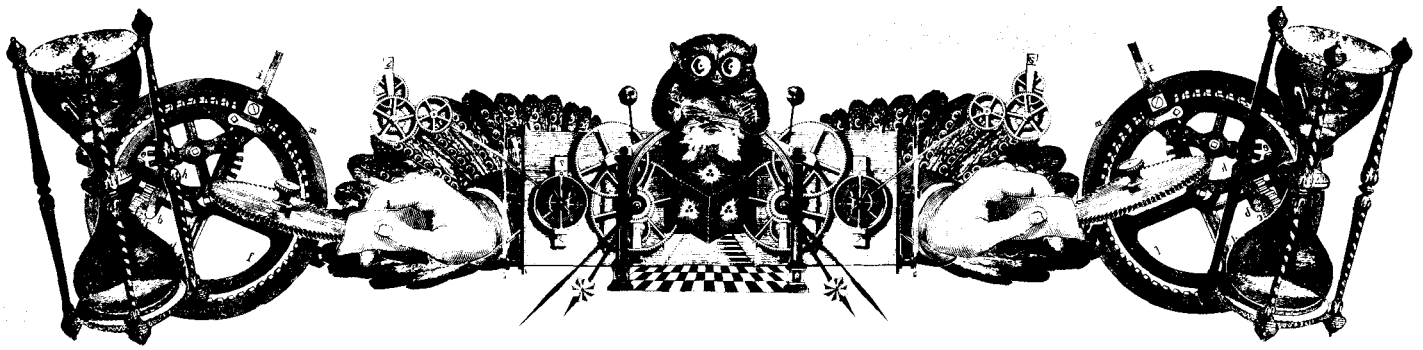


GM'S map



- key
- 1 SQUARE = 10 METERS
- hedge
  - hologram
  - - - force field





tions. They could travel to Venus to locate the Golden Tower, in hopes of using the Eye of AA-001 against Sir DZ-313, or they could travel to Rhea to challenge the mad android. If the PCs travel to Venus, proceed with the section labeled **Inner Vision**. If the PCs travel immediately to Rhea, refer to the section **Confrontation**.

## Inner Vision

While en route to Venus to search for the Golden Tower, a knight in the party has the following dream. Again, the GM should try to give the dream to a knight who has not had one before.

You are walking through a dense jungle, searching for something, although you cannot remember what. Walking through a clearing, you see a knight battling against four beasts: a tiger, a basilisk, a lioness, and a griffin. The knight wears black polyaluminum armor, and bears a shield with a strange coat of arms. The shield has a black background, with a red cross centered on the fess point. Above and to the left of the cross a white circle surrounds a red eye. Below and to the right of the cross is a silver robot.

As you watch, the knight slays the basilisk, tiger, and griffin. Then he turns upon the lioness and impales her upon his sword. No blood comes forth, however. Where the sword has pierced the lioness' body, a substance like molten gold gushes forth, covering the knight from head to toe. The lioness, apparently unhurt by the blow, turns and begins to walk out of the clearing. Just before she disappears, she turns towards you and you see that she has only one eye. You look at the knight and see that he has been transformed into a solid gold statue. Then you wake up.

This dream should help the PCs to narrow the area of their search for the Golden Tower. A successful Psychology (Dream Interpretation) check reveals that the Tower must be somewhere within the realm of Lyoness on Venus. If the PC rolls a critical success

against a margin rating of S3, she realizes that the Tower they seek sits at the very heart of Lyoness, which in this case means its geographic center. A quick consultation with a map of Venus shows that in the geographic center of Lyoness stands a rain forest. If the players make this interpretation on their own, with no help from the GM or Dream Interpretation, award the party an extra 20 XPs. Once again, the only significance attached to the black knight is that he is some future foe.

If the players cannot crack the meaning of the dream, then they may have a long search in front of them. Since they are near the city of New Rome, the home of the Avatar and center of the Theanthropy, it may occur to them to allow a more skilled acolyte to interpret the dream. Doing so automatically yields the information in the previous paragraph.

One the PCs have deciphered the dream, continue with the section labeled **The Tower of Gold**.

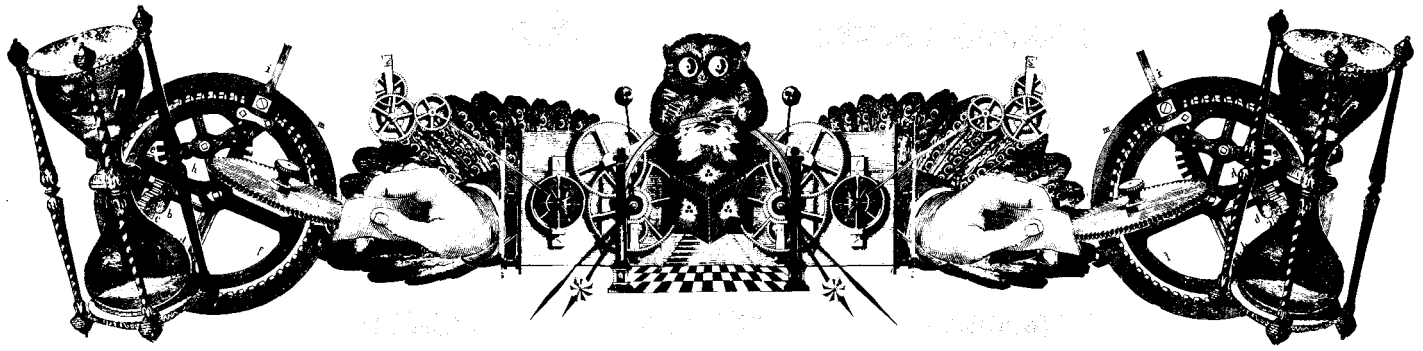
## The Tower of Gold

In the heart of the Venusian jungle, you have found the fabled Golden Tower. It stands five stories tall, almost perfectly conical in shape, except for a story-high disc intersecting the cone four stories above the ground. The diameter of the tower's base, and of the disk above, seems to be about 100 meters. The entire surface of the tower glitters in the sunlight like the golden scales of the Pen-dragon herself. The only opening in the tower is a door-shaped opening on the south side. Despite the brightness of the daylight and of the tower itself, no light penetrates the doorway.

### Ground Level

#### Room 1A: Night

As the PCs enter the tower, any light source they are using immediately goes out. No matter what the PCs try, they cannot shed any illumination on the scene, nor can they see using infrared or ultraviolet



devices. After 3 turns of wandering around in the dark, the PCs suddenly become aware that something else lurks in the room and stalks them. Each player must make an Intuition roll at a -5 penalty. If the roll succeeds, the character has stumbled upon the door to Room 1B and escaped. On each subsequent turn, a creature with 2d8/4 damage dice attacks any characters remaining in Room 1A. The creature's attacks automatically hit, and any attempts by the PCs to fight back automatically miss. The creature will not follow anyone into Room 1B.

#### Room 1B: Dawn

The southeastern wall of this room shines with a bright, golden light. The room stands empty, except for a small dais, upon which sits a simple wooden altar carved with symbols representing the seven essential virtues. An opening in the northern wall is clearly visible. Any character who pauses at the altar and says a brief prayer to the Higher Power receives a +10 bonus to any dice rolls made on the ground floor of the Tower. Those who do not pray incur a -5 penalty on all subsequent dice rolls in the same area.

#### Room 1C: Day

The light in this room is bright and golden, as in Room 1B, but now it emanates from the ceiling overhead. When the PCs enter the room, they must roll a Fitness check. Those who succeed suffer no ill effects, but those who fail immediately lose 10% of their current stamina points (round fractions down). An exit to this room lies on the far north end of the west wall.

#### Room 1D: Dusk

The curved northwestern wall of this room glows with a soft, pale pinkish light. Upon entering, the PCs are overwhelmed by a sense of weariness and a desire to sleep. All PCs must make an Attribute Check against their Psyche scores. If the check fails, the character falls asleep and cannot be awakened until taken from the room. Any character whose roll succeeds fends off the sleepy sensation, and does not

have to make subsequent rolls. The PCs will, however, need to find some way to get their slumbering comrades out of the room. In the southeast corner of the room, an opening leads to a spiral staircase winding up to Level 2.

### Level 2

#### Room 2A: Matter

A craggy, gray-brown stone makes up all the surfaces of this room. Stalactites of various sizes hang from the ceiling, and one lone stalagmite rises from the center of the room's floor. A large, flawlessly cut diamond rests on top of the stalagmite.

This room is home to a particularly large, ugly, and mean ogre, which spends most of its time in a suspended animation tube camouflaged in the southwest corner of the room. The ogre does not emerge from suspended animation until the players have entered the room, at which time it awakens and attacks them.

#### Ogre

##### Phy. Int. Spr. Inf.

F: 100                      L: 5                      Ps: 20                      C: 5

R: 50                      I: 10                      W: 10                      Po: 5

**Body Points: 200**

**Stamina Points: 60**

**Gender: Male**

**Species: Ogre**

**Hand: Right**

**Hgt.: 282 cm**

**Wgt.: 273 kg**

**Eyes: Purple**

**Hair: Black**

**Damage Dice: 10d12/7**

**Skills: None**

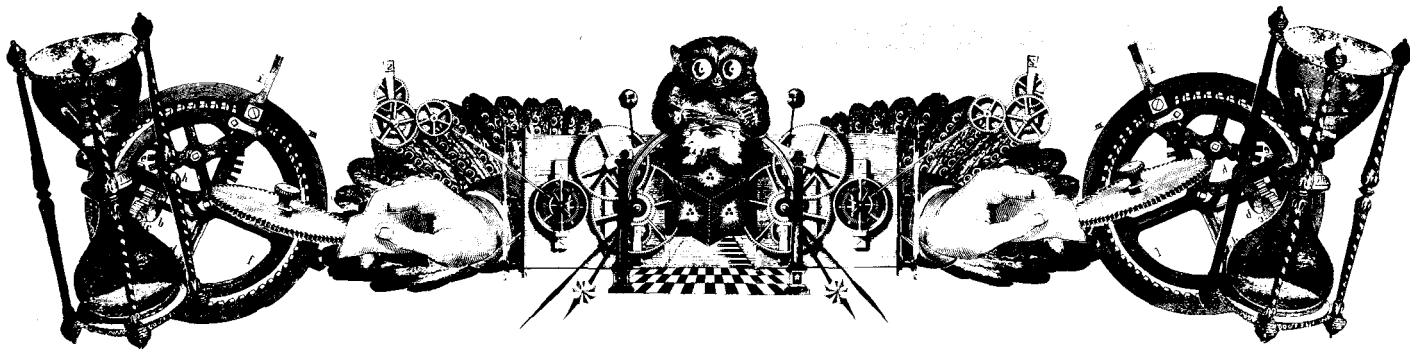
**Equipment: None**

#### Room 2B: Vapor

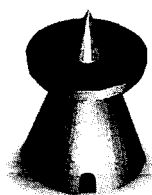
As the characters work their way around the perimeter of the tower to reach this room, they notice that their footsteps become lighter and lighter, as though gravity were decreasing. By the time the PCs reach the entrance to Room 2B, no gravity exists in the room. A milky-white substance resembling porcelain or ivory makes up the walls. An amethyst the same size and shape as the dia-



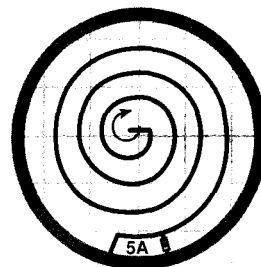




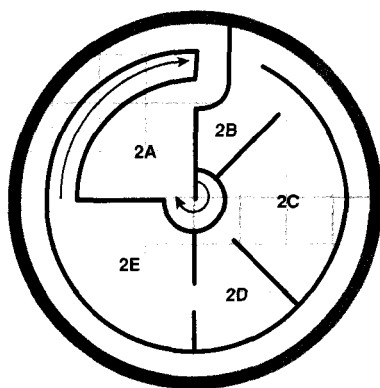
# map 3. the golden tower



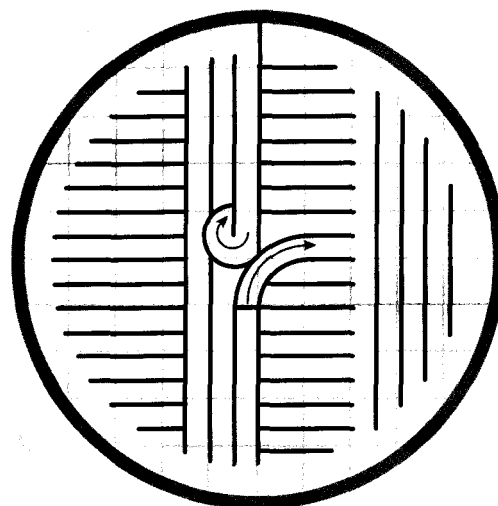
- key**
- 1 SQUARE = 10 METERS
- EXTERIOR WALL
  - INTERIOR WALL
  - CLOSED DOOR
  - ↻ STAIRCASE (ARROW = UP)



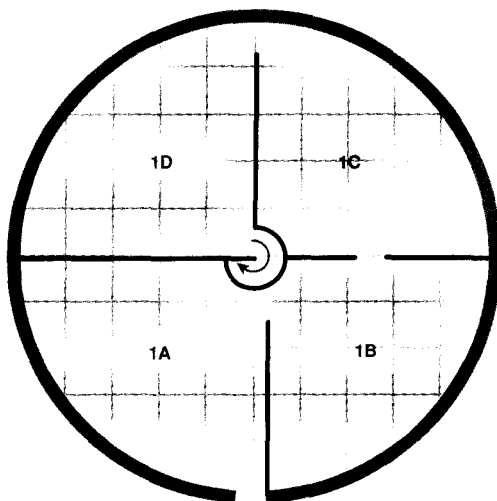
Level 5



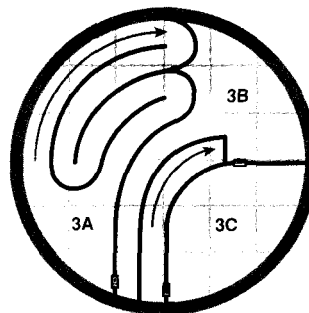
Level 2



Level 4

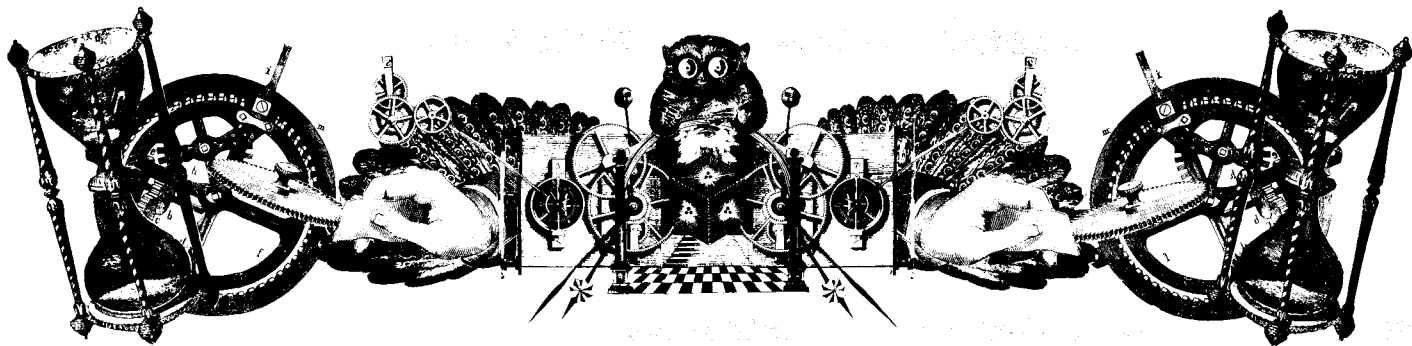


GROUND LEVEL



Level 3





mond found in Room 2A sits in a small glass case affixed to the ceiling. Weightlessness is not the only hazard in this room. Great gusts of wind burst through the room every 1d4 turns, sending all in the room tumbling about. Anyone in the chamber when one of these gales occurs must make a Reflexes Check. If the check succeeds, the character has managed to keep out of harm's way. If not, the character suffers 2d6 points of stamina damage from colliding with the walls and other characters. The exit to this room is a small hole near the ceiling, roughly four meters above the floor.

#### Room 2C: Liquid

Unless the PCs specify that they examine the contents of this room before they enter, they will tumble headlong into it as gravity reasserts its force. Salt water fills the whole of 2C. In the center of the room, a wooden bowl floats on the surface of the water. The bowl holds a dazzling aquamarine, the same size and shape as the stones found in the previous two rooms. A doorway four meters above the floor provides an exit, though careful PCs can spot an odd flickering coming from room 2D. A careful examination of the wall to the west shows that it is made of relatively flimsy shale, which would take only 10 points of damage before cracking and collapsing.

Underwater, a hungry tiger shark swims back and forth.

#### Tiger Shark

<b>Phy.</b>	<b>Int.</b>	<b>Spr.</b>	<b>Inf.</b>
<b>F:50</b>	<b>L: N/A</b>	<b>Ps: 40</b>	<b>C: 15</b>
<b>R:70</b>	<b>I:30</b>	<b>W:30</b>	<b>Po: N/A</b>
<b>Body Points: 100</b>		<b>Stamina Points: 100</b>	
<b>Gender:</b> Female			
<b>Species:</b> Shark			
<b>Length.:</b> 254 cm		<b>Wgt:</b> 227 kg	
<b>Eyes:</b> Black		<b>Hair:</b> N/A	
<b>Damage Dice:</b> 4d10/7			
<b>Skills:</b> None			
<b>Equipment:</b> None			

#### Room 2D: Energy

The entire volume of this room is an inferno of raging fire. Blazing coals burning with white-hot intensity make up the floor. Any character who enters this room while the flame rages suffers 3d10 points of body damage per turn.

The PCs should realize that they can demolish the wall separating the water in room 2C from the fire in this room. The rock sounds hollow and flimsy three feet above the floor, and will withstand only 10 points of damage before collapsing. A strong PC should be able to break the wall in 3 turns or less. Striking from either the water side or flame side will make a hole.

If the PCs cannot knock a hole in the wall separating this chamber from Room 2C, the flame goes out in a puff of smoke 4 turns after the PCs enter. It takes 10 minutes for the fire to go out completely, but the room is safe to enter in 5 minutes.

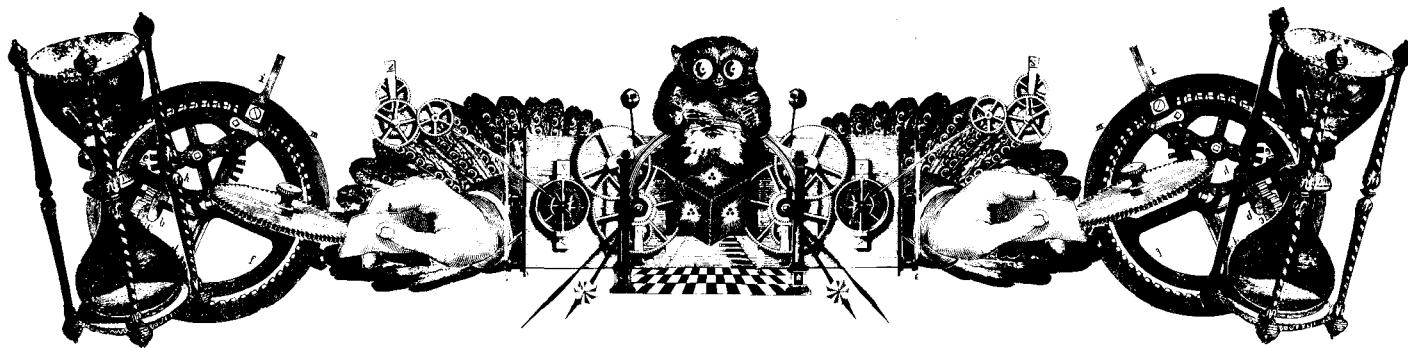
In the middle of the room is a small box made of flame-retardant materials. The PCs notice the box only if they put the fire out. Inside the box is a ruby, cut to the same size and shape as the stones in the previous three rooms.

#### Room 2E: Entropy

At first the PCs may be relieved to find an empty room. Very likely, they may decide to rest for a brief time. However, crossing the threshold from Room 2D initiates an entropy field. Within 6 turns powered equipment drains half its remaining charges. Android PCs begin to notice ill effects after two and a half minutes (15 turns, at which time all powered equipment has been fully drained); human, clone, and interbreed PCs feel exhausted after five minutes (30 turns). Also at the five-minute mark, androids' functions are reduced to basic AI support (they are unable to move), and both androids and inanimate equipment begin to visibly decay. The PCs should realize that they need to leave this area, before entropy takes over completely.

As each character crosses the room, have the players roll an Intuition check. The first successful check indicates that the character has noticed a





small, five-centimeter panel on the floor in the center of the room. Opening the panel reveals a small recess, in which lies a black opal the same size and shape as the other stones. The time and effort needed to stop, open the panel, and retrieve the stone will have serious repercussions on the PC who does so: For every minute after the first five, the effects of aging occur at a rate of five years per minute (-5 from every attribute score). The effect on androids at this time is a reduction in both stamina and body points: -10 from each total per minute until one total is reduced to 0, at which time the android's body is irreparably damaged.

### Level 3

The walls, floors, and ceilings of all the rooms on this level are made of ornately-carved and highly-polished redwood. Tacked to the exit door of each room is a small piece of parchment, on which is written a riddle. If the players stand before the door and announce the answer to the riddle, the door slides open to admit them. The riddles on the doors are as follows:

**Room 3A:** I am the Earth, the Moon, and the Sun. I am a child's ball. I am a man's helm. I am a drop of water floating in the air. What am I?

*Answer:* "Round."

**Room 3B:** I am that which drives men to far-off lands in search of adventure. I am that which inspires scientists to probe the mysteries of the universe. I am that which brings questions to the mouths of babes. I am that which is ever sought, but never found. What am I?

*Answer:* "The unknown."

**Room 3C:** I am that which all human hearts seek, but I am seldom found within them. I am what men return to, having left me behind as boys. I am that for which the highest price must oft be paid.

*Answer:* "Peace."

### Level 4

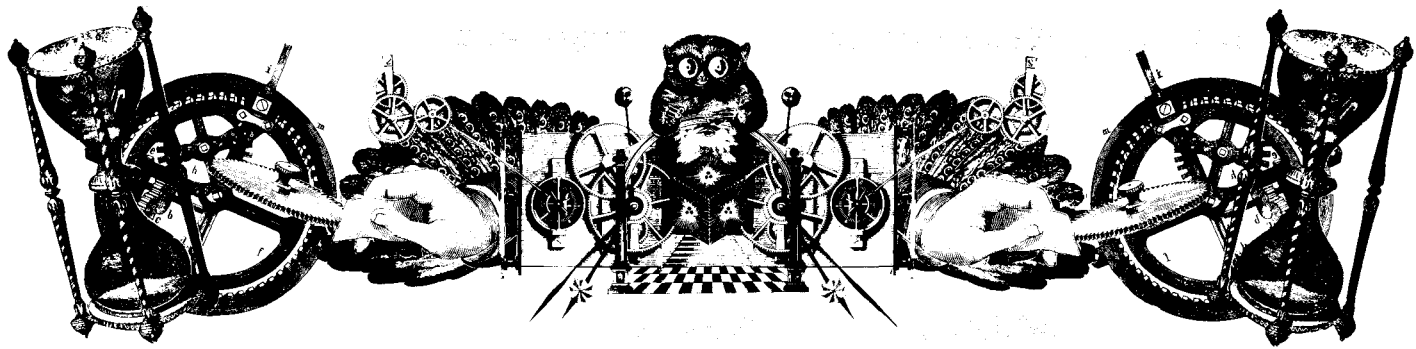
The walls of this entire level of the tower are made of a very solid but completely transparent material. No matter where the PCs stand, the spiral staircase leading to the next level remains clearly visible. However, it will take the PCs quite a lot of feeling around by touch to figure out how to reach it, as the walls are effectively invisible.

### Level 5

The ceiling of this level soars high over the PCs' heads, and is clearly the inside of the pointed top of the tower. As the passageway winds its way around, however, the ceiling swoops gradually lower. On the final turn around the tower, the outside wall also angles in very sharply, so that the PCs are soon struggling through a narrow, triangular passage. Eventually, the way comes to what seems to be a dead end. On the wall facing them sit five diamond-shaped indentations, surrounding a relief carving of the Theanthropy symbol. If the PCs try to fit the stones from Level 2 into the indentations, each snaps into place with a click. When the PCs insert the last stone, read the following to the players:

As the last stone is fitted into place, the cramped passage grows dim, and the Theanthropy symbol on the wall begins to glow with a white light. In your minds, you hear a sublime voice asking: "What is blacker than night, brighter than day, more joyous than the dawn, and more sublime than dusk? What is constructed of matter, liquid, vapor, energy, and entropy, but bound by none of them? What is the greatest of riddles and the greatest of answers? What turns clarity into confusion? What turns outward only by turning inward?"

The correct answer is "Man." One of the PCs must place his hand on the Theanthropy symbol and give



the group's answer to the riddle. The group has only one chance to answer. If they are correct, the symbol flares brightly for a split second, and when the party has regained its eyesight, the wall with the stones has vanished, revealing a small chamber. The chamber is empty except for a small stand, which holds a red crystalline sphere. This sphere is the fabled Eye of AA-001. If the PCs do not answer correctly, they are immediately transported to the exterior of the Tower, empty-handed. If they try to reenter, they find that the single opening has disappeared: the Golden Tower seems to have always been made of one unbroken piece.

### The Eye of AA-001

<b>Type:</b> H	<b>Complexity:</b> 50
<b>Body:</b> 1	<b>Weight:</b> 0.5 kg
<b>Cost:</b> priceless	<b>XP Cost:</b> priceless

The Eye of AA-001 was created centuries ago, shortly after the very first android, AA-001. The Eye consists of a red, opalescent crystal sphere, inside of which is an extremely complex pattern of circuitry. On the underside of the sphere is a tiny I/O port. The Eye possesses two abilities: The first deactivates an android and erases all of its personality programming in an instant. The second ability resets the android's program to a baseline template (the level of an infant human).

The deactivation feature has an effective range of 10 meters. Any android in the Eye's radius when it is activated must immediately make an Attribute Check against its Willpower. If the check succeeds, the android remains active for 1 turn. If still within the Eye's range at the start of the next turn, the android must make another Willpower Check, this time with a -5 penalty. This pattern continues (incurring a cumulative -5 penalty each turn) until the Eye is shut off, the android succumbs to it, or the android moves out of range.

The personality wipe feature is much more complex. A technologist must plug an android's neurotronic processor into the Eye, which then erases the android's personality and replaces it with the baseline template.

In game terms, the android's Psyche and Willpower both become 10. There is also a chance that the baseline program cannot cope with the vast memories stored in the android brain, causing abnormal variations. Add the android's pre-shutdown Psyche and Willpower, then roll percentile dice. If the result of the dice roll exceeds the sum of the Psyche and Willpower, the android's brain overloads, essentially rendering it insane. This unfortunate circumstance occurred when Randew used the eye on Sir DZ-313.

### Aftermath

Once the players have completed their exploration of the Tower, whether successfully or unsuccessfully, they should now proceed to Rhea (**Confrontation**) to challenge Sir DZ-313 and rescue Princess Helena.

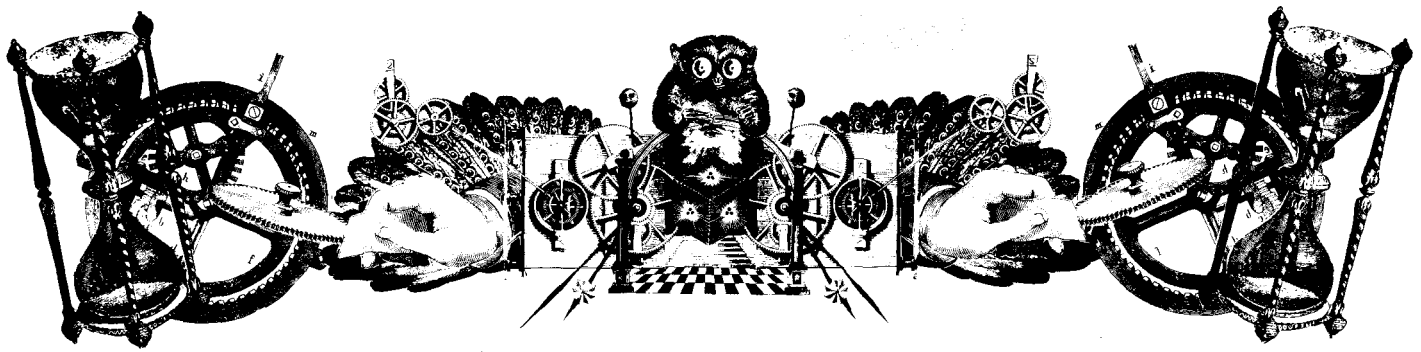
### Confrontation

If the PCs have already been captured, either by Haak and her goblins or by Sir Barrius, see the section below labeled **Defeated!** Otherwise, read the following:

The information you received from Sir Barrius indicated that Sir DZ-313 keeps a secret stronghold here on Rhea. He did not know the exact location, but believed it was somewhere in the most remote area of Nentres. The plains below seemed devoid of life ... except for a moderate-sized pavilion two kilometers to the southeast!

The pavilion is a standard-issue model, one story in height, with a mere five rooms. Outside the entrance, a spear juts from the ground, with a shield hanging from it. The coat-of-arms is the now-familiar black, red, white, and silver design that has appeared in the PCs' dreams. If the party makes any kind of announcement, Sir DZ-313 will appear from within the pavilion:





The door to the pavilion swings open, and an android dressed in full polyaluminum plate armor steps out. The visor of his helmet is up, revealing a stern countenance with eyes that glimmer with flashes of madness.

"So, ye have come at last, foolish humans. Now I can put an end to your meddling interference and continue my destiny! Think not that your puny efforts will suffice to save the damsel, for none of you have the wit, strength, or courage to match me!"

If the players have planned to use the Eye of AA-001 against Sir DZ-313, they may do so any time after he appears. A technoluger must make a successful Technology (Deciphering Devices) skill check in order to set the Eye to functioning. If Sir DZ-313 sees the Eye before the party can activate it, he will do everything he can to stay out of its range, kill its operator, or destroy it.

If the party did not retrieve the Eye, Sir DZ-313 will go through the motions of challenging any PC knights

to a joust. If the joust turns against him, however, he will pull his laser pistol from a hiding place under his cloak and open fire on his opponent. This switches the battle from jousting to general combat, as per the rules in Chapter Three. If he seems certain to be defeated, Sir DZ-313 will flee rather than submit to the mercy of the PC knights.

### Sir DZ-313

**Profession Group:** Knight

**Core Experience:** N/A

**Player Core:**

**Phy. Int. Spr. Inf.**

*Rank:* 1      *Rank:* 3      *Rank:* 4      *Rank:* 2

*Dice:* 7      *Dice:* 5      *Dice:* 4      *Dice:* 5

**F:-69    L:27    Ps: 10    C:21**

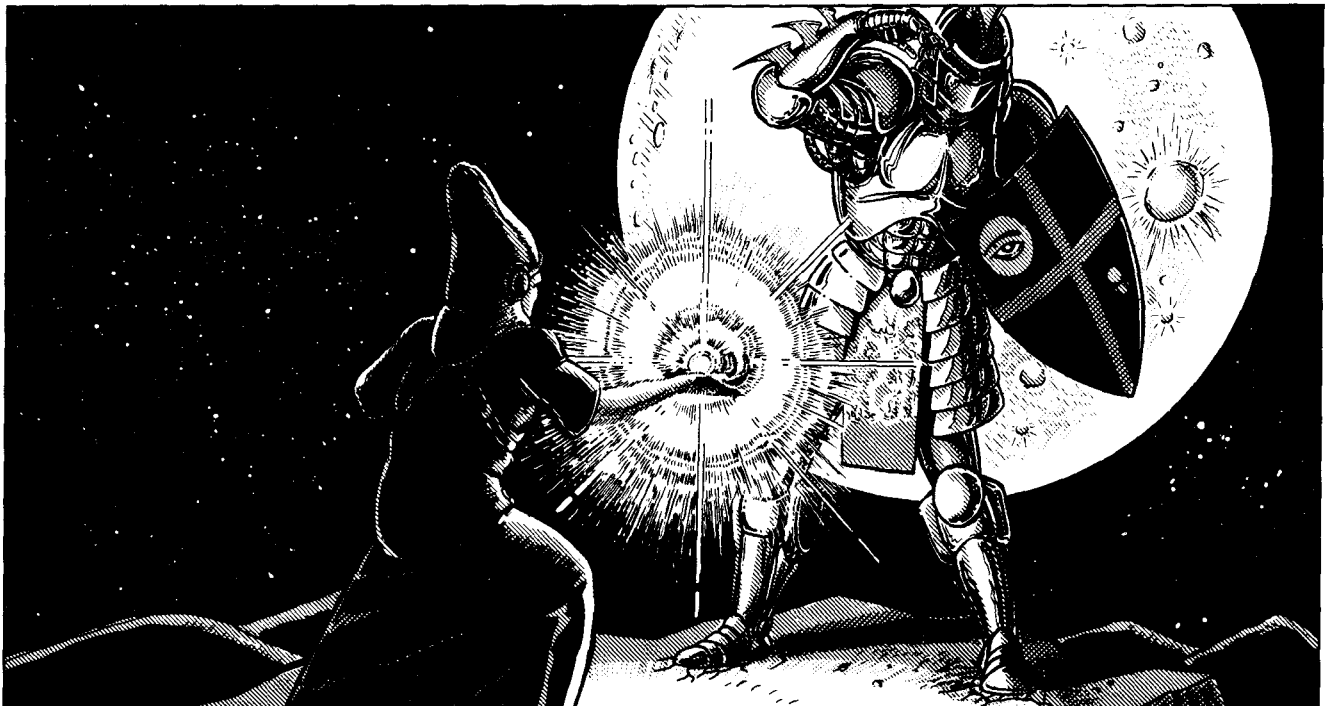
**R:43      I:18      W:23      Po:24**

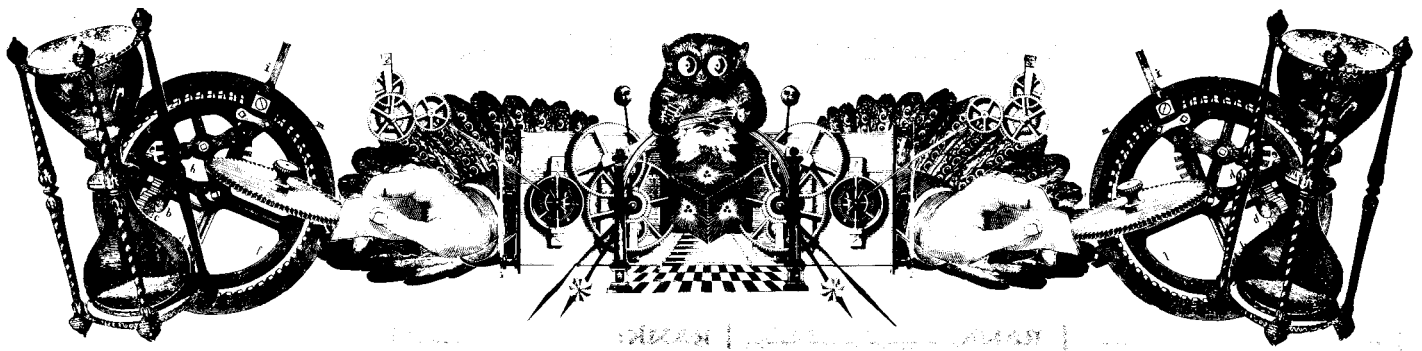
**Body Points:** 138

**Stamina Points:** 33

**Character Experience:** 200

**Profession:** Renegade Knight    **Gender:** Male





**Species:** Android

**Hgt.:** 180cm

**Eyes:** Blue

**Skills:** Armed Combat (From Horseback/Lance/Sword, On Foot/Sword), Projectile Weapons (Energy Weapons), Android Maintenance & Repair, Chivalry, Linguistics, Technology (Device Deciphering, Creation)

**Equipment:** Lasersword, Energylance, Polyaluminum Plate Armor, Polyaluminum Helmet, Polyaluminum Shield, Hoversteed, Type II Laser Pistol

**Background:** For many years, Sir DZ-313 was a true and noble knight, until he embarked upon a quest for the Eye of AA-001. He found the Eye in the legendary Golden Tower and returned it to the technologist who had originally asked him to find it. The android knight subsequently volunteered to be the technologist's test subject. Sir DZ-313's personality disappeared, replaced with a simple baseline program that could not compute all the variables of the knight's vast memory banks. Sir DZ-313 became twisted and evil, and in his paranoia, decided he was destined to rule the universe. His actions since then have all worked toward this impossible goal.

**Role-Playing Notes:** Sir DZ-313 retains all of his memories from before his personality erasure, and so he can put on the facade of a good knight. In reality, however, he has lost all sense of the values that knighthood represents. He is deceitful, dishonest, and sociopathic.

### Victorious!

If the PCs deactivate Sir DZ-313 with the Eye of AA-001, defeat him in combat, or Sir DZ-313 flees leaving the princess behind, the PCs have succeeded in their quest. They will find Princess Helena in Sir DZ-313's pavilion, bound and gagged, but otherwise unharmed. Her first priority will be to contact her parents to inform them of her rescue, but she will be amenable to any suggestions the PCs make, such as returning with them to Camelot.

### Defeated!

If the PCs are beaten by Sir DZ-313 (or they are turned over to him by Haak or Sir Barrius), he imprisons them in a small cavern in the hills near his pavilion. Every day he removes one of the characters to try to recruit her or him to his side. Should the PC refuse to join him, Sir DZ-313 returns that character to the cavern, and tries a different character the next time.

The PCs must devise a plan of escape to free both themselves and the princess. If they cannot think up a plan within a week, Sir DZ-313 succeeds in his ransom demands on Strangore and becomes Strangore's king, with Princess Helena as his reluctant queen.

### Finale

The adventure concludes when the PCs defeat Sir DZ-313 and rescue Princess Helena. The PCs may go on in search of new adventures, or they may decide to return to Camelot to report the successful conclusion of their quest to King Arthur. Depending upon the PC knights' actions in certain situations during the quest, the king may or may not decide to make them Knights of the Round Table.

In any case, King Arthur asks the knights to surrender the Eye of AA-001, which is clearly a danger to all android citizens of the solar system. At the GM's discretion, Arthur might return the Eye to the Golden Tower, he might place it in his royal vault in Camelot, or he might send it to some unknown location for safekeeping.



PROFESSION CLASS: ☐ KNIGHT ☐ TECHNOLOGER ☐ ACOLYTE ☐ COURTIER

**PLAYER CORE:**

CORE EXPERIENCE: \_\_\_\_\_

physique	intellect	spirit	influence
RANK: _____	RANK: _____	RANK: _____	RANK: _____
DICE: _____	DICE: _____	DICE: _____	DICE: _____

**ATTRIBUTES:**

CHARACTER EXPERIENCE: \_\_\_\_\_

fitness: _____	learning: _____	psyche: _____	charm: _____
reflexes: _____	intuition: _____	willpower: _____	position: _____

BODY POINTS: \_\_\_\_\_ (    )

STAMINA POINTS: \_\_\_\_\_ (    )

PROFESSION: \_\_\_\_\_

GENDER: ☐ male  
☐ female

SPECIES: ☐ CLONE ☐ INTERBREED  
☐ HUMAN ☐ ANDROID

HAND: ☐ LEFT  
☐ RIGHT

VITAL STATISTICS: height: \_\_\_\_\_ weight: \_\_\_\_\_ eyes: \_\_\_\_\_ hair: \_\_\_\_\_

DESCRIPTION: \_\_\_\_\_

SKILLS: \_\_\_\_\_

EQUIPMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

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NOTES: \_\_\_\_\_

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# AMAZING

ENGINE™  
SYSTEM



## Once & Future King

GAME

by Jack Barker

...Then a knight traveled to the kingdom of Surluise on the planet Mars. He chanced upon a fair castle, where there was a wide courtyard. The knight dismounted from his hoversteed and armed himself, for he saw that this was a place for fighting.

There came upon the knight two giants, each armed with a great club. With one stroke of his lasersword he smote the head from one of the giants. When the second saw that, that giant ran away as fast as he could. The knight quickly pursued the villain, striking it with all his might, and rent the giant's body from shoulder to navel.

—excerpted from *The Whole Book of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table*  
published A.D. 4825



The year is A.D. 4485. Technology has advanced to the point that the entire solar system is populated, a central mainframe computer links every household, and normal humans are no longer genetically capable of violence. Life, however, is far from dull. The Knights of

Arthur's Round Table live again, and they have molded civilization to their own liking. Masking technology's function within the trappings of medieval form, these nobles travel upon robotic horses, bearing electronic swords and armor. Meanwhile, the wonders of the royal court come to life again as Morgan Le Fay and others weave their spells of intrigue and deceit in hopes of bringing ruin to the king of Camelot.

*Once & Future King* is the fifth release for the AMAZING ENGINE™ game system. This book contains the core rules for the AMAZING ENGINE™ system as well as all of the supplemental rules for role-playing characters in a world of high technology and chivalric knights all rolled together. The universe section includes a detailed system of character generation, rules for chivalric combat, a list of equipment including armor and weapons, fantastic beasts, famous and infamous nonplayer characters, an introductory adventure, and more.

The road to Camelot begins with the very first step!

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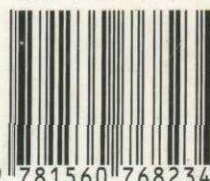


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The Inn