

BRIMSTONE AND THE BORDERHOUNDS ROLE PLAYING GAME

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A COLD DAY IN HELL



MH 2012

BRIMSTONE AND THE BORDERHOUNDS ROLE PLAYING GAME

A COLD DAY IN HELL

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THE BRIMSTONE AND THE BORDERHOUNDS UNIVERSE



Feeling a little confused? Wondering where you are and how the Hell you got here? Well, you got the Hell part right. As for the rest, you're not alone. We get that a lot from the recently deceased. That's right. You died. Shuffled off your mortal coil. You're taking a dirt nap. Sleeping the big sleep. Call it what you want—you're not in Kansas anymore, Dorothy, and you sure as balls ain't in Oz.

You're in Hell, Weeper, and there's no going back.

What's that? Right, I gotcha. You were a good person. This must be some sort of mistake. Let me tell you a little something about mistakes. The biggest mistake everyone makes is thinking when you die if you're good you go to Heaven and if you're bad, you go to Hell. Ain't nothing further from the truth. The truth is that Heaven and Hell are not that far apart; both are super corporations that traffick in the same commodity: human souls to be used as slave labor to keep the corporations running. Sure, Heaven might look prettier on the outset, but the end result is still an eternity in chains.

Whenever a body dies, the corporations (and it ain't just Heaven and Hell--Valhalla, Olympus, Nirvana, the Happy Hunting Grounds--if you've heard of an afterlife, there's probably a corresponding corporation) race to grab up the soul. You might have been the greatest person the world ever saw, but still wind up in the Pit. Tough luck, sucker. Don't think anywhere else is any better, either. Like I said, Heaven might look prettier and might not be quite as hot, but you're just as bottom-of-the-food-chain there as you are here, so don't have any hopes of working your way up or out of this place, and if some spy from one of the other places tries to smuggle you out, you can bet they've got a reason that won't be in your best interest.

In Hell, we call human slave labor "Weepers." I'll just leave it to you to take a wild guess why—you're doing it now. What they do here is, well, whatever is needed. From computer programming to data entry to roadwork and heavy lifting. Whatever your talents

are, that's likely what you'll be put to work doing. Assuming we need those talents, that is. Otherwise, well, there's always cleaning and grunt work. Or pleasure stock. Come to think of it, you're a bit of a looker, ain't you? Well, let's not talk about that right now. It's best if you keep your sanity awhile.

I know what you're thinking. Don't even try to run. Look over there in the distance. See that big, beefy dude with the blonde hair, and the other two apes with him? That's Brimstone and his team. They call themselves XiBalba and they're borderhounds—bounty hunters who track down runaway Weepers. And take it from me, kid, they're the best there is.

Good eye. Yeah, they look human. Brim's not. Or at least, he's only half. His dad is a full-on demon; it's rumored, in fact, that his dear old dad may be the top dog in these parts, and it's a fact that his brother runs the Corporation. That means you don't want to be on his bad side, even if he doesn't get along with the family real well. The other two, Dawg and Luscious, they're humans, like you. They get a pass on the Weeper gig because they're friends of Brim. Yeah, it's possible to get out from under the leash if you work hard and manage to get noticed by someone with clout. We call that being "Burned in." But even then it's likely you'll be a pet or a peasant, second-class at best. Slave labor or third-class burned-in: take your pick as to what's worse.

A history lesson? Hah! Lemme guess; you were a teacher or something on Earth, yeah? Well, would it surprise you to know that the whole mess started when a janitor spilled some cleaning fluid in a dimensional portal? I ain't kidding, either. You're in this mess because of an industrial accident. I ain't here to give you any more details. The simple fact of the matter is, you died, we got you, and you're here to work. You want to try to escape? Good luck. If XiBalba or one of the other borderhound teams don't track you down, there are plenty of creatures in the Wastelands just waiting to gobble you up.

The Wastelands? That's the open ground between the cities run by Hell's Corporations. Thousands of miles of dry, cracked ground

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littered with tentacled horrors and a serious lack of sustenance. You get out there you best hope a borderhound team finds you before the monsters do. And if you think your first job is bad? See what happens if you run and get dragged back. There are *always* worse jobs than the one you're in.

You might hear rumors about pockets of human resistance living out there. Don't you believe 'em. That's just a lie put out to drum up business for the 'hounds. You head out into the Wastelands and you're asking for madness, brutality and death, and that's if you have a good day.

Accept your fate, Weeper. You'll be better off for it.

THE STATE OF THE MULTIVERSE

The multiverse consists of an infinite number of alternate dimensions, where every single choice anyone has ever made comes true. Every time you come to a crossroads in your life and have to make a decision, whether it's buying a lottery ticket or having Chinese or Mexican for lunch, that choice spins you off into a new alternate dimension, while the other choice also exists in its own. And if that doesn't make your head spin consider that every single afterlife that has ever been dreamed up by mankind exists out there as well. Heaven. Hell. Olympus. Valhalla. Nirvana. The Happy Hunting Grounds. Wherever those people that believe in the Flying Spaghetti Monster go. They're all out there, and each one comprises one or more corporations that engage in industrial espionage and sabotage against one another in vicious competition. But here's the real kicker: the center of it all—the place around which the entire multiverse revolves—is this little blue planet we're clinging to.

Earth is the most important world in the cosmos, and it is full of the most important commodity out there. That commodity is the human soul, which is used as slave labor and has been cultivated throughout the centuries by competing corporations from various afterlives, to build us into the best stock available. Competition between these corporations has become a shadow war and the biggest game in the many realities of the cosmos.

In the early days, the warfare between the realities was open, and it spawned many of our myths and legends of gods, demi-gods and heroes. These wars nearly destroyed the entire world (all the way across the various timelines) and so a truce was called. Now the warfare is secret, shadowy and insidious. People are cultured and corrupted, guided down certain paths, and agents of the corporations work to nab souls for their labor force the minute a body dies.

Human souls who end up in Hell are called Weepers, for reasons that should be pretty obvious.

So here we are, living out our meager lives on Earth, going about our daily affairs, and completely unaware that any of this is going on underneath our noses. Sometimes, energies from the corporations spill over into our world and give rise to legends of aliens and otherworldly phenomena like ghosts, vampires, zombies and werewolves. Only a handful of humans on Earth are aware of the true nature of the cosmos. Some of

these manage through accident or force of will to tap into these energies, thus becoming psychics or sorcerers. For most of us, though, the first time we get a taste of the real nature of things is when we die and wake up in Hell.

HELL AND THE DOR

Brimstone and the Borderhounds focuses on the corporation that is popularly known as Hell. Ruled by the Architect, Hell is potentially the largest of all the corporations. It is a dimension of vast, endless desert under a blood-red sky. Its largest city spans 1,000 miles in every direction from its central point, the Corporate HQ. This building is a skyscraper 100 miles high. The metropolis and other small cities like it are the closest thing you get to civilization in Hell, but they're the very definition of corrupt and cutthroat. Survival means looking out for number one and maybe the only two or three friends you can trust, but even they might turn on you if the price is right. In Hell there are three classes of people: Haves, Have-Nots, and slaves. Humans, at best, can hope to be a pet of one of the Haves, and live a decent afterlife, so long as they do their unpaid work well.

Hell's industrial espionage division is known as the Department of Retrieval, or DOR. This department exists to protect the interests of Hell from all other organizations. Its jobs are multifarious and varied—it collects souls when they die. It makes sure that souls, once collected, do not escape. It ensures that no other corporations get in to cause damage or smuggle valuable souls out.

The task of the DOR is huge and as such its efficacy varies, but generally it does its job well. To maintain operations, the department employs teams of freelance bounty hunters known as Borderhounds to serve its interests. The Borderhounds comprise a sort of fringe subculture in the seedy underbelly of Hell, on the fringes of Corporate society. Their entire existence hinges on cut-throat competition and only those at the top of the leader board get the best jobs. Often, teams of Borderhounds will attempt to undercut one another and steal jobs, and many of these teams hate each other on a deep and personal level. Murdering a rival team is nothing out in the Wasteland.

THE WASTELAND

Talking of the Wasteland, it's the badlands of Hell, the area between corporate cities. There are pockets of survivors there, but it's a tough place to eke out an existence. In fact, if you don't have a vehicle and a lot of weaponry, you likely shouldn't even try. You see, the Wasteland is not protected by the civilized aspects (corrupt as they are) of city life. It is a vast desert crawling (literally in some cases) with horrific monstrosities that seek only to eat unwary souls. Outside the metropolis and between the cities are tiny pockets of civilization and shanty towns known as "Ghets," where exiles and discarded souls eke out a base living...if one can make it there.

Sometimes extradimensional barriers break down and deposit objects from earth in the Wastelands, making them a sort of great cosmic dumping ground. You know how your pens, spoons and socks always seem to go missing? They're probably laying

in a pile in Hell. You know all those planes and boats that vanish in the Bermuda Triangle? Yup, you guessed it: Hell. Even entire towns that go missing can end up in the Wastelands—Roanoke is probably there somewhere. And to be honest, an entire town that drops there is probably lucky, because they've got the community resources to survive. Lone Weepers dropped in the middle of the Wastelands almost always just wind up dead.

Now you're wondering—if you're already dead and in Hell, what happens if you get eaten or otherwise killed? There are places worse than Hell, bucko, and the last thing you want is to end up in Purgatory, where your best hope is winding up an insane, ravening monster.

All of this is not to say that there's nothing at all in the Wastelands. In fact, there are demon- and weeper-owned businesses out there. Bars, ranches, even some private homes. Brimstone himself has a little slice of Hell in the Wasteland where he lives with his human wife and children, and hangs out with his partners, Luscious and Dawg.

If you've got a vehicle and you know how to navigate the Wastelands, it can be done. For those Weepers who run to try and escape Hell, however, it's pretty much a death sentence. There are rumors that among the Ghets and hiding in caves, pockets of Weeper resistance funded by rogue demons called Kittens are eking out a survival in the canyons and caves of the Wastelands and plotting the downfall of Hell. Recent terrorist attacks on the Corporation may bear this out to be true, but as yet, these rebel cells are unverified, and any Weeper who tries to get to one on their own will be lucky to make it 500 yards beyond the city limits.

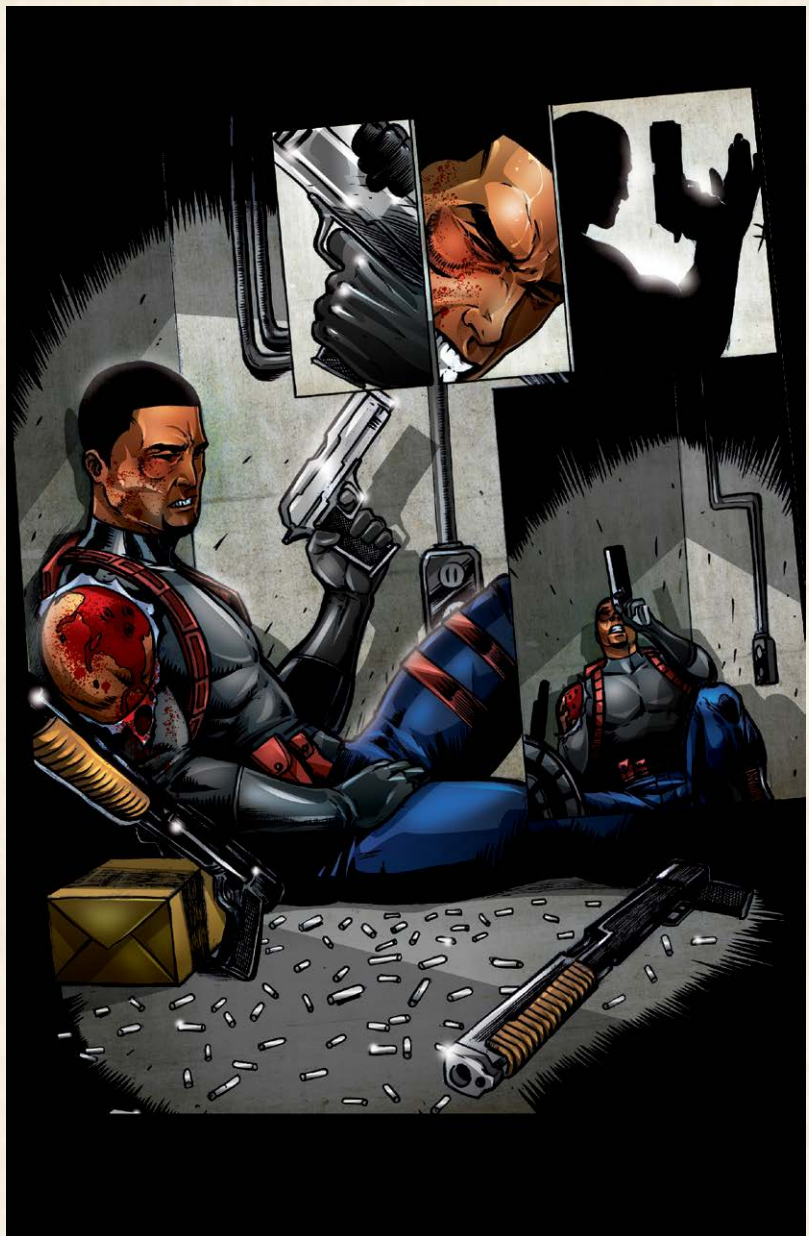
TECHNOLOGY

The technology of Hell is full-on sci-fi/fantasy fare. People from Earth are stunned at what's available, but for the most part the technology is a blunt instrument. Rather than making life easier for inhabitants, it's generally based on weaponry. The technology of Hell is built entirely around grabbing and keeping its slave labor force intact. There's no concern about subtlety or conservatism in Hell. If a building catches on fire, a 20-foot-high robot will be dispatched to destroy the building rather than wasting energy fighting the fire.

INHABITANTS OF HELL

There are three main species in Hell: Demons, Hybrids and Weepers.

DEMONS: The dominant sentient lifeform in Hell, demons come in literally every shape and size. Some look very human. Others are gigantic, amorphous horrors with pseudopods and tentacles. Others are big blobs of slime and still others look like dragons, minotaurs or other mythical creatures. Subraces of demons may have names like Balam Na or imp, but for the



most part, they're just demons, and they pretty much look down upon and hate any other kind of demon that doesn't look like them. They especially hate humans.

Some demons possess a fearsome ability to assume a gigantic, horrific form known as "full demon." This monstrous form gives them unique abilities, monstrous strength, and powerful resistance to damage. Those facing a full demon form would do well to change their shorts...if they survive. Unfortunately (or fortunately, depending on how you look at things), with the decadent, hedonistic and corrupt society in Hell today, most demons have lost the ability to tap into this power.

WEEPERS: Weepers are human souls who have had the misfortune of ending up in Hell either upon death or by accident. Here they serve in indentured servitude for centuries, a commodity to be bartered and used as currency. They are transported from place to place by the Organic Cargo Transports, or O.C.T.s, which are more commonly known as Weeper Wagons. Weepers get their name because most of them

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start crying during transport, bemoaning their situation and wondering what they did to deserve it. The truth is, they may not have done anything. It's like winning the lottery, only the prize is servitude and damnation.

These souls are ferried to processing centers where they are assessed for their talents and shipped off to take on any job from assassin to bartender to sewage plant cleaner, based on their aptitude. The only thing that keeps many going (aside from those that find job satisfaction) is the possibility that one day, they might win their freedom. Those weepers that are freed end up forming a sort of second-class society in Hell. True success is rare for these folks, but a minority do get “burned in” to Corporate society and manage to live among the elite, even if they are at the bottom of the food chain.

HYBRIDS: Exceptionally rare, these are the offspring of a human/demon pairing. Most hybrids don't last long in Hell, as they're looked at as garbage by demons, and the Weepers are terrified of them. Brimstone survived because of his somewhat auspicious parentage, and is certainly the most well-known of all hybrids. Hybrids have access to certain demonic powers, among them the ability to use *Forza Infernis*. They can create hellfire, boost their strength, agility and endurance, and even if they get powerful enough, create magical effects from the essence of Hell. They also have the ability to teleport to and from Earth, though doing so basically lays waste to everything in an area the size of a football field so it's not something they do lightly.

That's a basic overview of the cosmos as it sits. For more information about the major players in Hell, see the Rogue's Gallery and GM section of the complete *Brimstone and the Borderhounds* rules.

ROADS OF ADVENTURE

The kinds of adventure scenario you can run in **Brimstone and the Borderhounds** are many, broad and varied. For those who aren't sure where to begin, you have really two big possibilities: an Earth-based campaign, or one based in Hell or one of the other afterlives.

THE EARTH-BASED CAMPAIGN

A Brimstone game set on Earth can take several forms. It can be your typical investigative or monster-fighting urban fantasy game, and this may be the most common approach. This type of game offers the familiarity of earth settings, mundane trappings and the like, while adding a sense of dread and unease. The characters will be monster hunters, fighting off incursions of the supernatural from various afterlives and gradually uncovering the truth about the universe. While there may be hybrid characters in such a campaign, it is highly unlikely there will be any full demons, unless such characters are exiles or on the run from Hell's forces for some reason or another. But we'll leave that to you.

Characters in such a game can be private investigators, independent monster hunters, paranormal investigators, or a government-sponsored team of specialists dedicated to beating back the minions

of Hell and freeing Earth from the clutches of the corporations. Eventually, the PCs may create or gain access to portal generators, enabling them to hop between worlds and take on the minions of the various afterlife corporations head-to-head!

Alternately, these campaigns can be dark, moody and harsh, incorporating elements of sanity-blasting horror with heavy research, investigation and learning. Occultists and scholars would play a heavy role in these games, their humanity and sanity dwindling with each new truth they uncover.

Many issues of the comic feature storylines partially set on Earth and partially in Hell. Issues 7 and 8 of the comic show what happens when an incursion from Hell happens on Earth.

THE HELL-BASED CAMPAIGN

When you set your campaign in Hell, all bets are off and the options are limitless. Do you have fans of the cyberpunk genre in your group? Add demons into the mix and a Hell-based campaign is ideal for all those trappings they love. You can create “helltech” versions of biotech or cybernetic implants using demonic gadget rules. Your borderhound teams become corporate espionage experts, retrieving or recovering secrets and souls from enemy corporations or terrorist groups, or bounty hunters tracking down terrorists and dangerous escaped souls. You live in what is a shining example of a cyberpunk megacorp city. **Brimstone and the Borderhounds** is in many ways a cyberpunk world with demons dropped on top.

What if post-apocalyptic road warriors and gritty survivalism in the blasted wastes are your thing? We've got you covered there, as well. The Wastelands are exactly the kind of barren, deadly landscape explored in the post-apocalyptic genre. Create demonic or weeper gangs with souped-up vehicles duking it out in the barren deserts with all manner of creative weaponry as tentacled horrors burst from the ground, making everyone's life more difficult.

As mentioned earlier, there are bound to be tons of unexplored and forgotten ruins scattered across the Wastelands from days gone by—Hell is, after all, billions of years old. Your characters could be Hellspawned archaeologists seeking the secrets of the ancients to bolster or challenge the corporation's power.

Really, whatever kind of adventure you and your group care to run, **Brimstone and the Borderhounds** has you covered. In fact, more than a few of these concepts have already been covered in the comics, which can (and should) serve as inspiration for your own campaigns!

CHARACTER TYPES

As a quick start set, this package does not include character generation rules. For those wishing a look at what kinds of characters you can play in a BBH game, check out the *Amazing Adventures* roleplaying game. Many of the character classes therein (including the mentalist, arcanist, gumshoe and hooligan) are quite similar to the types of characters you'll play in a BBH game.

INTRODUCTORY ADVENTURE: A COLD DAY IN HELL

Here you'll find a complete introductory adventure to get you up and running in the BBH universe. Rules references are included where necessary throughout the adventure, so when the time comes, all you have to do is follow the instructions, roll dice, and go! Relevant statistics and a collection of six sample characters are included at the end of the module so you can even continue your adventures after this game, if you like! Again, if you're picking this up before the book comes out, you can easily integrate characters from *Amazing Adventures* into this game to expand your options further.

THE BASICS

In many ways a role playing game is like playing pretend when you were a kid, except with rules to stop you from going, "I shot you!" "Nuh-uh; I'm wearin' armor!" Also, you sit around a table and describe what each of your characters are doing, instead of acting it out with toy guns in the back yard. It's somewhere between interactive shared storytelling and improvisational theater.

You will need at least two, but preferably four to six, players for this game. One player acts as the Game Master, or GM. That player reads the adventure to follow and learns all the rules as best as they can. Don't worry if it's all unclear right now—the rules reference sidebars will explain each step of the way. The adventure is essentially the plot outline of a story that the characters will journey through and help you tell. You'll need to present the events listed, but be willing to adapt to your players coming up with unconventional ideas and outside-the-box solutions. Don't try to force them along the path; if they come up with something cool and unique, go with it and figure out how you can adapt the story to them. You'll have to think on your feet, play all of the villains and non-player characters to the best of your ability, and present a challenge to the players, while making sure everyone has a good time. It's a big responsibility.

The other players each adopt one of the sample characters in Appendix 2. As the GM then presents the adventure, the players react to the situations they encounter and try to resolve the crisis, overcome obstacles and achieve their group (and sometimes individual) goals. Conflicts and uncertainties are resolved through the use of dice and your character statistics. For now, decide who will be the GM—they should be the only one that reads the adventure to follow.

Everyone else can choose a character and get ready to pretend! You'll need a set of dice: a four, six, eight, ten, twelve and twenty-sided, noted as d4, d6, d8, d10, d12 and d20. The d20 will be the most common die you'll use, with the others generally representing damage rolls (see the Combat sidebar for more information). A number before the die code indicates the number of dice to roll; thus, 3d6 means "roll 3 six-sided dice and add the results together."



RULES REFERENCES

Throughout this adventure you'll see "Rules Reference" sidebars, which explain how to accomplish the various tasks in game. These sidebars give you all the basics for playing in a *Brimstone and the Borderhounds* adventure. In general, there are three main aspects to each character: their level, their class and their attributes.

CHARACTER LEVEL

A character's level is an indicator of generally how powerful they are. A level one character is brand new to the adventuring game, is a bit more vulnerable than other characters, and generally not great at what they do...yet. A 12th-level character, on the other hand, is an ace at what they do. When you make SIEGE checks (explained later) you'll add your character level to most of your checks.

CHARACTER CLASS

Your character class defines the career path you've undertaken and the special abilities you have as a result. The power to move silently, to call upon magical or psychic energies, to charm an opponent, to be an expert scholar, or to pummel an enemy with your fists better than the average brawler are all parts of your

class. Many classes include abilities that just about anyone can try; anyone, for example, could try to sneak up on someone. When it's part of your class, however, you're much better at it. See the SIEGE checks side bar later on for more information.

ATTRIBUTES

Your attributes are the physical and mental capabilities and limits of your character. Each is defined on a scale of 1-20 (the normal human range being from 3-18), with your score breaking down further into a bonus you will add to SIEGE checks (again, explained later). These six attributes define your character's Strength (Str), Dexterity (Dex), Constitution (Con), Intelligence (Int), Wisdom (Wis) and Charisma (Cha). Almost everything you do in this game revolves around rolling a die and adding the appropriate attribute bonus (determined by the Game Master, or GM) to the roll.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

It all starts with a Kitten attack on a Weeper van, and the PCs getting framed for the crime. As they sit in prison, lamenting their fate, they get a visit from Orgrathan and Chris Farquis, who explain that they've been framed to get them off the radar.

The PCs are assigned to recover a kidnapped soul who is a military genius that has been recruited for burning into the corp to shore up Hell's defenses (and possibly offense) against a suspected incursion from one or more other Afterlives

After an investigation, the PCs discover that the Kittens behind the attack are working for Hel, an old girlfriend of the Architect who is associated with the Norse afterlife. A mad journey across the Wastelands results, with the PCs having to contend with monsters and eventually the Kitten attackers who started this whole mess. Eventually, the trail leads them into the heart of Niflheim, one of the coldest and dankest areas of Hell, where they must confront a secret conspiracy to open the gates to an invasion of the Corporation, and an upset of the entire cosmic balance...

ACT ONE: INTRODUCTION

RUNDOWN

The PCs are framed for attacking a Weeper Wagon, only to be hired by the Corporation to track down the true villains, and retrieve a very valuable soul for Orgrathan.

FRAMED!

The PCs are relaxing, enjoying some down time, when they are each suddenly and out of nowhere, arrested and imprisoned. It seems that a Weeper Wagon bearing a shipment of new souls has been attacked by a group of Kittens, and evidence at the scene (including video footage) links our erstwhile anti-heroes to the attack. According to the latest broadcast by Hell's own favorite DeeJay Chavez Raoul, there were no survivors, and the driver of this particular Wagon was one of the most well-liked and revered guys on the block.

IF THE PCS FIGHT

The idea here is to set up the adventure with the arrest of the PCs. If they decide to fight it out, you might have to pull out all the stops to beat them down—first, remind them that these are the legitimate authorities and as bounty hunters themselves they know well what happens to fugitives from Hell's justice system.

Should they still insist on fighting, don't be afraid to use overwhelming odds to pummel them into submission. If you're afraid that's too much like railroading, and think your crew might be prone to throw down with the authorities rather than submit to arrest, it may be best to just start out with them in custody and fill them in on the background.

If things turn sideways and they manage to battle their way out, that makes things a bit more complicated, but doesn't skew them entirely. It just means they're fugitives and a really experienced borderhound (like, say, Brimstone himself) tracks them down with Farquis or Orgrathan in tow to make the ensuing offer. The following attack can still occur, as it was dependent on the attackers tracking Orgrathan or Farquis, not the PCs. It will just be relocated to wherever the PCs are hiding out.

While in jail, they get a visit from Chris Farquis and/or Orgrathan. It is explained that they have been framed so they can operate invisibly, outside the radar, since the job in question is sensitive and not to be known by the public at large. The only ones who know are Chris and Orgrathan, and until this mission is done, they'll disavow any knowledge. If the borderhounds are successful, it'll certainly mean a reputation boost and a step up on the leaderboard.

The mission is this: someone has kidnapped an important Weeper soul, a brilliant paramilitary leader and strategist named General Javier Mendoza, whom Hell desperately needs for its legions, since incursions from the other afterlives are becoming too prevalent and the Architect fears a full invasion may be gearing up. Orgrathan wants to know who the Kittens are working for, and wants the PCs to get the kidnapped asset back.

ATTACK ON THE PRISON

While the borderhounds and corporate execs are talking, there is an attack on the prison. Someone, it seems, has been able to somehow track Orgrathan's movements and is after the executive as well as trying to kill the borderhounds—possibly to keep them from talking so that they remain solidly blamed for the attack. The attackers are a mix of human and otherworldly, though not of any demon race the PCs have ever personally seen. Some have bluish skin, glowing yellow eyes and are of tall, muscular stature, while others have pale skin and are lithe and graceful with long, tapered ears, red eyes and flowing white hair, clad in black, ornate armor.

ATTACKERS: (these 3rd-level creatures have vital stats HD 3d8 (13 hp each), AC 15, move 30 ft. Their primary attributes are Physical. They attack by Dark Energy carbines for 3d6+3 damage (Rof: 3, Acc: +1, Rec: -3) or knife for 1d6 damage, plus 1d4 cold damage. Their special abilities are Take 'em Down as a 3rd level Investigator, Climb, Hide, Move Silently, Case Target, Lingo (call signs and codes specific to their security forces) and Listen as a 3rd-level Renegade. Traps and Survival as a 3rd-level Scholar. Embolden as a 3rd-level Blueblood.)

Farquis and Orgrathan fight beside the borderhounds, but it's possible that Orgrathan gets captured and spirited away in this fight—in fact, it's ideal if he does because then the borderhounds have even more motive to take on the mission; only Orgrathan can clear their names.

RULES REFERENCE: COMBAT!

Combat is the core of most rpgs. In the SIEGE engine, the process of combat is very simple. First, everyone rolls a ten-sided die or d10. Action then proceeds in order from the highest result to the lowest. This is called the initiative phase. Normally each combatant will make one attack per “round.” A round is roughly 6-10 seconds long, the amount of time it takes each combatant to take a single action and move if needed. After each combatant has acted, the action returns to the top of the initiative order and repeats until the combat ends with one side dead, defeated, fleeing, etc.

Attacking is determined by the result of a twenty-sided die (d20) roll. Every character has a Base to Hit (BtH) bonus. To attack a foe, roll a d20, add your BtH and appropriate ability score bonus (Strength for melee, Dexterity for ranged) and attempt to equal or beat the Armor Class (AC) of the opponent. If you succeed, you have scored a hit and roll the indicated dice for damage, which is subtracted from the opponent's overall hit points. When hit points reach zero, the opponent is out, either dead or unconscious.

When using guns, you will notice three additional ratings: Rof, Acc, and Rec. Rof is Rate of Fire, the number of times a weapon can fire as part of their action. Acc is the weapon's accuracy bonus. This is added to every shot you make with the weapon. Rec is the weapon's Recoil rating. Each shot after the first suffers a cumulative penalty equal to the recoil rating. So a gun with Rof 3, Acc 2 and Rec 2 could fire three times in a round. The first would be at +2. The second would be at +0, and the third, at -2. All of these are in addition to the base roll of d20 + BtH + Dex (or d20 + HD, in the case of monsters and NPCs).

During the battle, it is noted that the attackers are not only not Hellspawn, but use high-end weaponry that is certainly not Helltech. Occultists, Scholars or characters with the right Backgrounds or Knowledge (at the GM's discretion) who succeed at a CL3 Intelligence Check might be able to pin them down as being of Norse origin, meaning they came from one of the Nine Worlds of Yggdrasil. Since they are obviously not of

earthly make, that narrows the possibilities down to eight right away. Depending on how high the PCs roll on their Intelligence checks, they may be able to narrow it down further. For every 2 points above the requisite CC the characters achieve in total, the characters narrow the list of worlds down further. A basic success means they identify the weapons as Nordic, but not of Earth. Each level of success (2 points above the CC) thereafter eliminates the following worlds, in order:

- 1 Asgard (the location of Valhalla), a realm of war and battle
- 2 Vanaheim, a direct competitor to Valhalla
- 3 Alfheim, the domain of creatures of light who call themselves “Elves”
- 4 Jotunheim, a land of giants
- 5 Svartalfheim, which is sort of to Alfheim what Hell is to Heaven. Where fallen, or “dark elves” reside.
- 6 Nidavellir, where live a depraved and stunted race of craftsmen who call themselves “dwarves.”
- 7 Muspelheim, a world not unlike Hell, where reside creatures of fire and warlike depravity.

RULES REFERENCE: SIEGE CHECKS

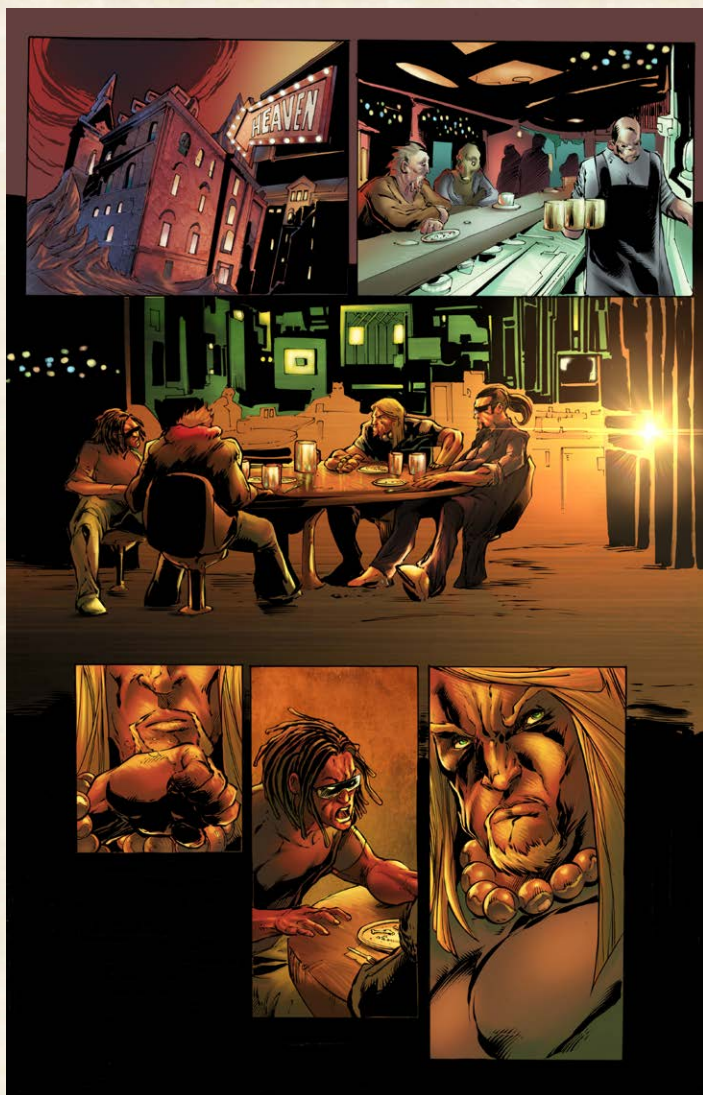
Here the PCs have to make their first SIEGE check. A SIEGE check is an attribute check to accomplish a task or avoid something bad (which is called a saving throw or save). Every character has class abilities; these are almost always activated by making a SIEGE check. In most cases the ability used will be indicated by the ability; in others it is self-explanatory. If you're not sure what ability to use, the GM can simply make a judgment call as to which ability is appropriate. A SIEGE check is made by rolling a 20-sided die, adding the appropriate ability score bonus, and the character's level.

In this particular case, each player who is an Occultist, Scholar or has an appropriate Background or Knowledge (the last two at the discretion of the GM) rolls a d20 (that's a twenty-sided die) and adds their level and their intelligence bonus (since this is an intelligence check) to the total. If Intelligence is a Prime attribute for the characters, they need a 15 or better to succeed. If Intelligence is not a Prime, they need a 21 or better to succeed. This number (15 or 21) is the Challenge Class, or CC of the task. It is determined by adding the Challenge Level (CL) of 3 to the Challenge Base (CB), which is 12 for Prime attributes and 18 for non-Prime attributes.

As noted, in this case for each 2 points they achieve above the base CC, they gain an extra bit of knowledge.

The only exception to the above is when a character attempts to mimic a class ability of another character type. For example, renegades have the ability to move silently as part of their class. If a Blueblood, who doesn't have this ability, tries to move silently, they can still make a dexterity check, but do not add their level to the check.

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RULES REFERENCE: STAT BLOCKS AND NPCs

The stat block for the attackers, above, is standard for NPCs and monsters. When making a check of any kind for a monster or NPC, roll a d20 and add their number of hit dice (HD) to it. Since Jason has 5d6 (five, six-sided dice) for his hit dice, he rolls a d20 and adds 5. His Primes determine his CB, as with PCs. Some monsters will simply list “P,” “M,” or “P, M” for Primes. “P” stands for Physical, meaning any checks based on Strength, Dexterity or Constitution are considered Prime, while “M” stands for “Mental, meaning checks based in Intelligence, Wisdom or Charisma” are Prime. Monsters with “P, M” as Prime make all checks as though the attribute in question were a Prime attribute. The same goes for combat: monsters and NPCs roll d20 + HD to attack.

RULES REFERENCE: FATE POINTS

Each character has a number of Fate points with a die code (5d6, for example). A character can spend a fate point at any time to add the appropriate indicated die to any d20 roll, so long as he spends it before the GM announces whether the check or attack was a success.

In the example above, once the character spends a fate point, he then has 4d6 left instead of his original 5.

Fate points can also be spent to add to damage, but may do this only once per damage roll.

The full *Brimstone and the Borderhounds* rules have many other uses for Fate Points, from gaining plot breaks to increasing speed to automatic successes on saving throws.

If the PCs do not manage to eliminate all seven worlds, Farquis knows someone who might help. There is an occultist who has been burned into the Corporation and works in the Department of Records and Security who knows as much about the various competitors out there as anyone. His name is Jason Crowley, and Farquis will set up a meeting at a secret and secured location, which he feeds directly to the PCs.

Crowley is an unsettling man, who appears in tattered grey robes and a cloak, the hood drawn close about his face. He is able to fill in whatever gaps the characters miss, including narrowing down the list of possible worlds to one. Eliminating all seven worlds above leaves only one option: Niflheim, the domain of the demon goddess Hel...which exists, in Hell. Niflheim is a dismal and dark domain located several weeks’ journey across the Wastelands in a region that is absolutely frigid and covered with icy mists. It is nominally a competitor to the Corporation but has existed in an uneasy truce for many millennia. The CEO of Niflheim, Hel, has had romantic dalliances with the Architect from time to time, but the two, in general, are something akin to bitter exes who hook up on occasion.

The weapons, likewise, he can confirm of are Niflheim make. Each one seems attuned to a specific user, so that even if the PCs have managed to recover one or more, they won’t work for our borderhounds. Crowley would need access to files from Niflheim in order to repair or re-tune the items, so he’s not able to help beyond that, but at least the PCs know that the weapons are from Hell.

Finally, Crowley suspects that such a brazen attack on a Weeper Wagon could not have succeeded without some sort of inside contacts. Even with backing from Niflheim—which unto itself makes little sense as Niflheim has nothing to gain from attacking Hell—the sheer amount of planning and infrastructure it would take to pull this off is phenomenal. Niflheim is thousands of miles away and there are no portal generators directly connecting the two realms due to a mutual agreement between Queen Hel and the Architect.

He suggests heading to the Club Inferno deep in the center of town, where Chavez Raoul holds a rave once per week, to check out information and rumors on possible Kitten cells operating within city limits. This might provide a lead as to the motives and identity of the group behind the attack. Crowley offers to tag along to provide some mystical support on behalf of the Corporation, and both Orgrathan and Farquis think this a good idea. They give “burner” hellphones to the borderhounds so they can stay in touch without compromising the mission.

JASON CROWLEY (This 6th level human Int-based Occultist has HD 6d6 HP 25 Mv. 30ft. AC 15. His Primes are Int, Wis, Dex. He attacks by Luger pistol (1d10), knife (1d6) or spell. His special abilities are shapeshift into any form at will, spellcasting. He has 35 MEP and knows the following spells: 0-level: Ghost Sound, Mage Hand, Light, System Shock 1-Level: Call Vermin, Charm Person, Read Magic, Spider Climb, Torment of the Grave, Vermin Weapon 2-Level: Acid Arrow, Darkness, Ray of Enfeeblement 3-Level: Animate Dead)

RULES REFERENCE: CASTING SPELLS

Jason Crowley has the ability to cast spells. To cast a spell he must first spend points from his pool of Mana Energy Points (MEP) equal to the spell's level + 1. Thus, casting a level 1 spell costs him 2 points. He must then make an Intelligence check with a CL equal to the spell's level. If he succeeds, the spell goes off! If he fails he suffers 1d4 points of "Spell burn" damage and may not attempt to cast that spell again for 24 hours. His available MEP resets to 35 at midnight each night.

Most spells allow the victim a "saving throw" to resist the effects. A saving throw is an attribute check with a CL equal to the spell caster's level or hit dice. Success on this saving throw usually results in the spell having no effect or only partial effect on the target (as outlined in the spell description). Spellcasters do not take spell burn from their targets successfully saving against their spells.

ACT TWO: A KITTEN CONSPIRACY

RUNDOWN

The PCs track down a Kitten cell operating within city limits and gain a lead as to where the attackers might be. Unfortunately, the whole thing is a setup and they find themselves betrayed at a critical moment.

CLUB INFERNO

The borderhounds, with Crowley in tow (or possibly not, depending on how they took to the suggestion earlier) head for the Club Inferno to put their ears to the ground. If there are any Investigators in the group, have them make an On the Trail Check to get an appointment to talk with Chavez himself. If there are no Investigators, but a Blueblood is in play, the Blueblood's Connected ability can yield the same lead. Failing that, a Renegade might be able to pick up a lead with a basic Intelligence or Wisdom check.

If the group has no Renegades, Bluebloods or Investigators, just have them role play their interactions with club patrons or go on Wisdom checks to ask the right questions to get them in to see Chavez, who has the inside information on everyone.

Chavez, it seems, has been given the heads' up that the borderhounds are coming, but he doesn't see them in the open—they are, after all, still technically fugitives. Rather, he has them "escorted" by security to a back room, where he enters with a flourish.

ROLE PLAYING CHAVEZ

Chavez speaks with a Jamaican accent and is as flamboyant as a party-going rave DJ who spends every hour of every day partying should be. He stands and walks for the most part, and is very animated and excitable. In his calmer moments, he sits on a throne-like chair as though he's holding court. As humans in Hell go, he's pretty important and he knows it. He also knows that his position is tenuous and if he wants to keep living the high afterlife, he needs to stay in line and do what he's told. The Corporation gives him a little leeway, knowing that allowing him an air of neutrality keeps him a viable contact. In this case, however, while he might play hard to get, he's got information that he knows he has to cough up.

WHAT CHAVEZ KNOWS

After some refreshments and bantering back and forth, Chavez will reveal that he's been waiting for the PCs. He's got wind of a Kitten cell operating out of a business in the heart of the city. It's a small accounting firm with low-level ties to the corporation. The CFO of the firm is a Bat House demon named Toby, the once-favorite youngest son of an important family.

Unfortunately, Toby has fallen out of favor with Dear old Dad and been left with this firm as something of a consolation prize. Word on the street is that Toby is pretty pissed about the whole thing and may have reached out to some of Hell's enemies. Possibly even an old girlfriend of the Architect.

Chavez gives the PCs the address and admonishes them to watch their back. He also tells them he's pulling for them and will make sure they get a leg up on the leader board if they make good on this one. Seems he thinks they've got potential. Alternately, if the PCs happen to be Xi'Balba, he tells them he's banking on them to clear their name and get back to the top of the board once more.

BETRAYAL AND BATTLE ROYALE

It's up to the PCs how they want to proceed. They can go confront Toby directly, or they can try to break in and rifle through his files late at night when he's not around. Either way, they're expected when they show up. Roleplay the situation and give them some time to find evidence against Toby, that he's been working with Valhalla (and possibly Hel) on some level, before springing the trap. Toby himself is something of a coward; he is secure in his position but if he thinks he's about to have the whistle blown, he'll fall apart, beg for mercy and spill the beans. He doesn't know who his patron is, only that it's someone important from Asgard, and he's been working out of Niflheim. The contact works through middlemen and agents, so Toby has never met him, but there's a major incursion planned, and Toby has the coordinates for a teleporter locked in his safe, behind a picture of his dad on the wall. Along with the teleport coordinates is a set of plans for the invasion, which is to occur within three days.

Just as the PCs think they have what they want, Jason sounds an alarm to call in "Security," or simply shows up at the door

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with them if he wasn't along for the ride. Seems the Kittens have promised Jason a burned-in place as an executive in the new Hell and he's putting all his eggs in that basket. In fact, Jason is one of the agents through which the mysterious benefactor is working. Jason, however, knows the consequences of being caught at this point and is not about to be taken alive. He will try just about anything to get out of this one alive—playing dead and spending Fate Points are not remotely out of the question. If cornered, he'll fight to the death and even kill himself to avoid being taken back to the Corporation—he'd rather be a mindless beast in Purgatory than subjected to Orgrathan's tortures.

THE TRUTH

At least, that's what he wants the PCs to believe. The truth is that the real Jason Crowley was killed a long time ago, and the man the cast now faces is the Norse god Loki, who is behind this whole mess. This means that he'll play up the role of a 5th-level Occultist to a T, even feigning death if he would be reduced to zero hit points, only to come back later. Loki cannot be killed by the PCs; as a god of trickery and magic he has access to any spell he wishes, at will. What restrains him is that he doesn't want to show his hand. He does not want to kill the borderhounds outright. He'd much rather see them continue to be framed for his work.

When he escapes, a Wisdom check at CL 5 will note that something was a bit off about his ability to extricate himself from the situation. Mentalists or Occultists in the group, or anyone with Forza Infernis, may get a whiff of vast power from him for just the barest instant

The thugs he calls to his aid are the security officers of the accounting firm. There should be at least 5 of these per player character; all are your basic soldier types with Hell blasters. Naturally, all of the security will not show up at once. It's unlikely that the borderhounds can win this fight. Their objective should be to get what they came for and escape with their lives. Make this a running battle and try to drive them up to the rooftops.

TOBY: *(This Sotz'na has vital stats HD 4d10 (32 hp), AC 17, move 30ft. His primary attributes are physical. He attacks by Hellblaster for 3d8 damage (Rof: 2, Acc: +1, Rec: -3) or 2 claws (1d8) and bite (1d6). His special abilities are On the Trail, Connected and Gadgets. He has 30 Infernis Points.)*

SECURITY: *(these 3rd-level humans have vital stats HD 3d8 (13 hp each), AC 15, move 30 ft. Their primary attributes are Physical. They attack by Hellblaster carbines for 3d6+3 damage (Rof: 3, Acc: +1, Rec: -3) or knife for 1d6 damage. Their special abilities are Take 'em Down as a 3rd level Investigator, Climb, Hide, Move Silently, Case Target, Lingo (call signs and codes specific to their security forces) and Listen as a 3rd-level Renegade. Traps and Survival as a 3rd-level Scholar. Embolden as a 3rd-level Blueblood.)*

RULES REFERENCE: SOTZ'NA AND GADGETS

The demons of Sotz'na house are known as being gadgeteers and manufacturers of Helltech weapons and equipment. A Sotz'na can use its Infernis Points to cook up gadgets on the fly. In general, the game effects of

these gadgets are based on spell effects (see the lists later in this document) but they can be original if desired. Each gadget costs a number of Infernis Points equal to its spell effect, plus one. So if the demon produces a gadget mimicking a first level spell, it costs two Infernis points to produce. A sixth-level effect, on the other hand, costs seven points. Producing a gadget takes one action—the gadget is assumed to already have been built and is in the demon's arsenal. This isn't a case of, "let me build something." It's more like, "Good thing I brought along this handy net gun!"

Once the points are spent the demon has the gadget for the remainder of the adventure and the points aren't regained until the gadget is broken down at the end of the adventure, at which point they return for the beginning of the next one.

Gadgets do not have to be restricted to standard spell effects. When creating gadgets that aren't based on a listed spell effect, the GM should assign a cost based on what they view as the approximate power level, based on the spells listed.

Finally, if the character doesn't give the gadget an appropriate name, but refers to it by the spell effect mimicked, the cost for the gadget is increased by 4 points. You should never create an "Arcane Blast" gadget. You should produce a Hellfire Blaster.

The security forces have two directives: the first is to kill Toby. The second is to stop the PCs from escaping by any means necessary and preferably, to kill them. That way the cover-up can be secured with the PCs looking like villains and the invasion secured.

The PCs, on the other hand, have several objectives here. Their primary goal should be to get the teleport coordinates and get out alive. Using one of their burner phones can yield them an escape route from the roof in the form of a flying vehicle or creature. Alternately, the teleport coordinates come in the form of a disc, which a hybrid character could use to hone in and teleport to using his natural abilities, or which a mechanically inclined character might be able to jury rig to use as a one-shot teleport as an escape route. In either case, a successful Intelligence check will yield this information to any appropriate characters.

THE TELEPORT

Upon their escape, one of two things will happen. They will either be en route to a meeting with Orgrathan and Chris, or they will have teleported into the jaws of the beast. If they deliver the information they have to Orgrathan, he will arrange for them to be able to sneak into a teleport facility to use the coordinates and follow up on the matter. The GM can make this as easy or tension-filled as she likes—do the PCs simply walk in late at night, or do they have to still avoid guards and the like, with Orgrathan only being able to lighten security? It's really up to you, in the end, how difficult you want to make this sequence and may largely depend on the level of the characters being played. Brimstone and Xi'Balba should face a far more difficult time with this adventure than new first-level characters, after all.

The end result is the same: the PCs engage the teleport in whatever fashion they work out, and end up in a dark cave. It's brutally cold inside, and quite dark. The PCs emerge into a barren landscape with a sky the color of smoke. It is as brutally cold here as it is hot in Hell, though off in the far distance they can see peeks of an orange sky, much like an erupting volcano. This distant orange glow is the sky over the plains of the Wastelands. Off to their right, hidden in a valley within the mountains, the borderhounds can see what appears to be a factory, belching black smoke and flame into the sky. There is certainly a lot of activity going on therein, with blue-skinned giants whipping and beating Weeper workers, and trucks going in and out.

The PCs are in Niflheim.

ACT THREE: THE FACTORY

RUNDOWN

The PCs uncover an invasion force preparing to assault Hell, and discover that there's more going on than they previously thought.

THE FACTORY

It's up to the PCs how they choose to get into the factory. Inside, the place consists of a massive room full of Asgardian tech and munitions. There are ground assault vehicles, planes, battle robots, suits of powered armor, all with a distinctly Norse flair—blue metal, covered in runes, and with wicked-looking blades and blaster tech. It certainly appears that Niflheim is gearing up for war. What is unclear at first blush is how they intend to conduct the assault; the Corporation would see an army like this coming from a mile away. There has to be a larger portal generator somewhere through which they can drive all this, but the energy that would be required to move this kind of gear is staggering—that's why such invasions don't happen all the time.

Above the massive hangar-type room is a sort of balcony which leads off into the offices and research spaces on the second floor. Somewhere in here has to be an answer to the borderhounds' trouble. Sneaking about in the offices will reveal notes and plans for the invasion of Hell—it seems that somewhere in the desert is a military base where another Norse god is being used to power a teleporter that can send the entire army to the Corporation. The General who the borderhounds seek is scheduled to be transported there as well, and may already be on his way!

MOOD AND PACE

Running this section should feel like a spy film. The exact layout of the factory is left deliberately vague so the GM can create however intricate or basic a complex as she likes. Call for a lot of stealth checks and work in avoiding roving guards both weeper and giant. These giants are the Frost Giants of Norse myth. For statistics, use Jaguar House and Razor House demon stats as found on page [?], but describe them as twelve-foot tall, blue-skinned monstrosities with no hair anywhere on their body, clad in gleaming midnight blue armor with clouds of frost emitting from their mouths as they breathe. Human security uses the same stats as the security, above.



In the end, just as the borderhounds get the information they need, they will be discovered and a fight will ensue. There should be 2 human security per player character; a single giant counts as two security. From here it becomes a running battle to get out of the complex alive. There are a lot of giants in here. If you were to play out the combat round by round the characters might not have a prayer. Thus, keep it fast and furious. Throw a few guards in there way here and there and don't sweat the minutiae of combat too much. Keep it running and exciting.

At some point as the PCs are either on the main floor or on the balcony overlooking, they will see a jeep, tricked out and loaded with weapons, crash through the front door and bounce off into the wilderness. A confused-looking human with Latino features in a paramilitary uniform will be seen in the back seat. This would be the quarry the characters seek: Xavier Mendoza.

STEALING VEHICLES

It is certainly possible that the PCs may wish to commandeer powered armor or vehicles to give chase. This is certainly doable. Powered armor is there to fit just about any sized character. It provides +4 to Strength, Dexterity and Perception-based Wisdom checks, grants an AC of 21, move of 60' per round overland and has embedded Asgardian blasters that deal 4d6 damage as well as Asgard-tech vibroblades on the arms which deal 3d6 damage in melee combat. These suits allow the use of the Two-Fisted generic class ability; blasters are RoF 3/A, Rec -2, Range 150 and Cap 50 rounds each. However, donning this armor takes 1d6 minutes, which would give the fleeing Jeep a huge head start.

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Tanks and aircraft are unfamiliar to the PCs in their Asgardian design, so may only be effectively piloted by a character with the Ace generic class ability, and then at a -2 to all checks. Anyone without the Ace ability attempting to pilot these must first make a CL 10 Intelligence Check just to figure out the controls, and then all maneuvers see their CL increased by 10. Failure on any check when trying to pilot one of these vehicles unskilled should be spectacularly bad and very likely fatal.

There are, however, good old-fashioned souped-up battle cars that work just about the same anywhere.

ASGARDIAN TANK: Dex: +4, Con +4, Spd: 21 (+4) AC: 25 DR: 25 HP: 250 Weapons: Asgardian Cannon (5d10), Asgardian Heavy Blasters: (3d8+5/A)

ASGARDIAN FIGHTER: Dex: +5 Con: +3 Spd: 30 (+7) AC: 17 DR: 10 HP: 100 Weapons: Twin Asgardian blaster cannons (3d8+5/a), twin Asgardian missile cannons (4d10; 3 missiles each side)

ASGARDIAN BATTLE CAR: Dex: +4 Con: +3 Spd: 23 (+4) AC: 17 DR: 10 HP: 90 Weapons: Asgardian blaster cannon (turret-mounted; manual fire; 3d8, RoF 3/A, Acc: +3 Rec: -4 Range 75, Capacity 100 rounds)

The chase is on!

RULES REFERENCE: VEHICLE COMBAT

Piloting a vehicle is done with SIEGE checks. When piloting a vehicle, a character uses either his Dexterity score or the vehicle's, whichever is higher. However, if the vehicle has a negative Dexterity score, this negative acts as a penalty to the character's Dex.

Vehicle combat proceeds just like normal combat. Player characters in a car may attempt to fire their guns at other vehicles or at pedestrians on the street. To do this the players simply lean out the window and open up! This requires a Dexterity check with a CL equal to the vehicle's Speed bonus (to avoid falling out!). If successful, the player characters may freely attack with any ranged weapons they have, albeit at a penalty equal to double the vehicle's Speed Bonus.

This means that if the vehicle is traveling at a speed of 17 (+2 bonus), characters firing from the vehicle must make a Dex check at CL 2 to avoid falling out, then suffer a -4 penalty to attacks as the car jerks, jolts, bumps and serves.

A vehicle does not have to travel its maximum speed all the time. It may voluntarily reduce its speed to as low as 1 (if a ground vehicle), representing a dead stop. Each round, a vehicle may increase its speed attribute by 1d6 (for ground vehicles) or 1d8 (for aerial vehicles), all the way up to its maximum.

Deceleration can safely be performed at the same rate. However, a vehicle can "brake slam" to decelerate suddenly; this requires a Dexterity check by the pilot and a Dexterity save by the passengers, all at a CL equal to the vehicle's current speed bonus. Failing this save

means taking 1d4 points of damage times the current speed bonus, from getting violently bounced around and hurled forward. Post-1949, wearing a seat belt negates damage from sudden stops.

Vehicles reduce all damage from every hit suffered by their DR rating. When a vehicle hits 0 hit points, it's severely damaged, but not necessarily out of the action yet. It loses its Dexterity bonus to AC, but may make a Constitution save (CL = damage below zero the vehicle currently is) to keep going. When the vehicle hits -10 hit points, it's rendered inoperable. If it takes enough damage to reduce its hit points to its constitution score below zero, it's completely destroyed.

RULES REFERENCE: AUTOMATIC FIRE

Some vehicular weapons (and handheld weapons like assault rifles) have a RoF of a number followed by a slash and "A" (such as RoF: 3/A). The "A" indicates automatic fire. A weapon on automatic fire can shoot "bursts" of ten rounds. Make a standard attack against the AC as standard. For every 3 points above the AC the attack scores, an additional bullet hits the target for full damage. Regardless of how many bullets hit, 10 rounds are expended. Guns that attack on autofire do not get their normal Rate of fire; they make one single attack for the round. The RoF: 3/A gun above may thus either attack three times with single bullets or once in a spray of 10.

Alternately, the 10 rounds can be sprayed against an area. In this case, multiple targets can be struck. Compare the attack to the lowest AC of all targets in a roughly cone-shaped area five feet wide at the point of origin, thirty-feet long and fifteen feet wide at the far end (GMs should feel free to make a guesstimate as to the area of effect and how many targets can be struck); the result is the damage multiplier to all targets, each of whom may make a dexterity based save (CL = attacker's BtH) for half damage. Thus, if you attack with a spray against the lowest AC of 12 in a cone containing 6 targets, your BtH is +3 and your total attack roll is 18, that indicates 3 bullets strike home. The damage is equal to that of one bullet, multiplied by 3. Each target may make a CL 3 dexterity save for half damage by diving for cover.

ACT 4: BATTLE FOR THE WASTELANDS

RUNDOWN

The heroes engage in a mad chase to "rescue" the general and cart him back to the Corporation while trying to uncover and expose the Kitten plot!

RAGE ROAD

The PCs engage in a wild chase across the desert. Use the vehicle rules on p. [?] to run the battle and chase. Remember, you're in Kitten territory, so the vehicle with the General will likely not be the only one the PCs face. Throw multiple enemies at them on land and in the air and make this an ongoing, furious, running battle with tons of environmental factors affecting things.

Bumps, jars, slick landscapes, sudden turns—all of these can affect the CL of driving checks. This section of the adventure should be like the best car-battle post-apocalyptic movie you've ever seen, and yes: movie physics should be in full force!

Likewise, the chase isn't across open desert. You're in mountainous terrain, so run it along the bases of cliffs, through canyons and valleys dotted with caves where giants can take pot shots. Why not use the Jaguar demon stats to conjure up Valkyries to ride down on mechanical steeds that breathe fire? Get creative but remember, the foes are basically the gods and creatures of Norse myth: dark elves, Vikings, Valkyries and giants. Modify demon stats to make them happen, and just re-skin their abilities and you're good to go.

Eventually, the battle will lead the borderhounds to a military encampment where it's unlikely they'll be able to win the day. They will either have to retreat into the mountains to plan their next act, or be captured.

OPTION ONE: RETREAT AND REGROUP

The Borderhounds may have to retreat into the cave systems nearby. With the proper stealth-based SIEGE checks, they should be able to avoid hunting parties sent to sniff them out. Again, this can be as easy, brief, complicated or tough as the GM wishes to make it. From the mountains, however, they can eventually find a good vantage point to take stock of the situation. The encampment itself is not large—it consists of perhaps a dozen temporary buildings and an equal number of tents. There are medical buildings, supply depots, command tents, bunkers, barracks, a mess hall, a brig and a number of other locations. If it seems reasonable for it to exist in what is essentially a paramilitary rebel camp, slot it in there!

The PCs have the job of trying to infiltrate the area, retrieving the General, and figuring out what's going on. At some point, they will encounter Jason/Loki again, who has miraculously survived their earlier encounter and is ready to take them on again. He'll be tougher this time: double his hit dice and hit points, add two more zero level spells, one more first and second level spell, and two third-level spells to his repertoire. Once again, he will not reveal his hand. The god of trickery is far too canny for that.

OPTION TWO: CAPTURED

If the PCs don't manage to escape into the mountains, they are captured and brought before the leader of the rebels, an embittered Jaguar House demon named Marta, who inhabits the command tent with her paramour at her side: none other than Jason Crowley, who has again, mysteriously survived his last encounter with the Borderhounds.

The heroes will be questioned, tortured, and thrown into the brig. Marta may ply her seduction wiles on one or more of the characters in an effort to enslave them to her will. She is unwilling to kill them as she doesn't know how important they are to Hell at this point, and Jason keeps whispering into her ear that it might be a bad idea to kill them outright.

What happens here is left to the GM and players' devices. Escape from here is not easy but should be possible; otherwise the game will come to a brief and unfortunate end!

THE QUARRY

There are several things the borderhounds may want to tackle here. The General is quickly enslaved to Marta, so he won't necessarily leave of his own free will. Getting him out may require a kidnapping operation and he'll look to betray the characters at every turn. The only way to undo this damage is to get him away from Marta long enough for it to wear off, or to have a loyal Jaguar House demon enslave him to Hell's designs.

In any case, he is currently in his own tent, working on strategy to invade Hell. In his tent and in Marta's command tent are detailed plans for the operation, including the location of the other portal generator, and information that indicates the operation is going on under Hel's nose, that the god Loki is behind it, and that the god who is imprisoned and slaved to the portal generator is none other than Thor himself. A lot of this may currently be far above the pay grade of the PCs and an operation to free Thor is not part of this adventure. If your PCs chose to take on that route, it is left to you to work out the details.

There are, however, coordinates to a portal generator inside of Hel's castle which would allow the PCs to warn her of the rebel incursion in her own lands.

OPERATION: RESCUE AND REPORT

This again is another battle and espionage scenario. In all likelihood the PCs will grab the general and the plans, steal a car and flee back towards the portal generator that got them here. When they arrive (after another desert car chase and possibly blowing the rebel base sky high), they can either head back to Hell with their quarry and report to Orgrathan to clear their names and deliver the General.

If they choose to report to Hel, they will have to convince her that they are not spies; certainly if they are captured they will be dragged before her for questioning. If they can prove the existence of the Kitten cell, she will be enraged. If she catches a glimpse of Jason from photos or chooses to scan the minds of the PCs (which she very easily can do) she will identify him as Loki—she knows her own son in any guise. She will personally transport the PCs back to Hell and treat with the Architect, agreeing to free Thor and destroy the portal generator, but not agreeing to destroy the military gear—after all, it's valuable to the defense of Niflheim. In exchange, however, she'll give up the General.

DENOUEMENT

In either case, the borderhounds gain a hefty permanent Reputation bonus of +3 to all future checks. Their names are cleared and they are congratulated on a job well done. After all, they've not only served Hell's interests, but averted a war between the Corporation and Niflheim—and possibly all of Asgard!

They're not paid for their work, of course. After all, this was to clear their names and not being fugitives anymore should be payment enough. A borderhound's work is never done...

APPENDIX: THE ROGUES GALLERY

BRIMSTONE

Brimstone is a hybrid, the son of a demon (THE Demon, if you must know) and a human warrior queen from Earth. After a series of epic and legendary adventures and military campaigns (Seriously; look it up), she wound up in Hell, where the Architect became enamored of her. While she never had any intention of settling down with the Devil, she did end up pregnant. That situation lasted a few months and her tenure as “mom” lasted about 20 minutes before she up and abandoned Baby Brim and his father.

For his part, the Architect was not exactly a doting father, but always favored Brim over Brim’s full-demon half-brother Orgathan just made things worse. Brim grew up never able to find a place in a world where demons hated him for being half-human and humans resented him for his birthright. He competed with his half-brother in all things fiercely, and very much resents that Orgathan is a corporate executive for whom Brim works.

Thus it was that Brim grew up with a fierce sense of independence and a sense of his own destiny, which revealed itself one day when he neatly wrapped up and delivered to the DOR a group of escaped weepers who had tried to jump him in the Wastelands. He was offered a job on the spot, much to his father’s disapproval.

Brim took to the job like a fire demon to lava and climbed the leader board faster than any other Borderhound in history. His co-workers came to despise and resent him for his success, but that was nothing he hadn’t dealt with before.

Things changed for him again when he was on patrol one day and came across two crass, high-spirited, and tough brothers who were ex-roadies. These two, Dawg and Luscious, were just hanging out, drinking beer, and eating whatever they could kill. Brim somehow became fond of the two and took them on as sidekicks. Thus was the Borderhound team of Xi’Balba born.

Brimstone is extremely competitive and possessive of Xi’Balba’s spot at the top of the leader board. He lives for his work and loves nothing more than to rub the noses of his competitors in his success. Though he nominally works as a freelance operative for the Corporation, he resents and hates them deeply. He secretly hates his human half and battles against his conscience every day. That he has fallen in love with and married a human woman to whom he has fathered two kids has made matters only worse. He is a doting father who is determined that his children will not suffer the indignancies that he did as a child.

BRIMSTONE: (this 12th-level Hybrid Investigator/Street Fighter has vital stats HD 12d10 (98 hp), AC 18, move 60 ft. His primary attributes are Str 20 (+4), Dex 16 (+2), 18 Con (+3) and Wis 9 (+0). He attacks by fists for 1d10+4 and 1d6+4 or by weapon (various Helltech blasters). His special abilities are Climb, On the Trail (Wis; criminal investigation, tracking), Hide, Move Silently, Take ‘em Down (+12 damage against fugitives, Kittens and renegades), Deadeye Shot (ignore

cover, extra shot, +1 to hit and ignore range with handguns), Adversary (+2 on checks and combat vs. other Borderhound teams), Wrestling (Str; +4 to grappling), Deflect Missiles (Dex vs. attack roll), Submission Hold (Grapple first; victim makes con check or unconscious), Fast Healing (12d4+12 hp/day), Death Strike (unarmed only, 1/wk: victim makes Con check or dies), Granite Jaw (1/2 damage vs. blunt), Forza Infernis (Infernis Points: 17), Fate Points: 20d10.)

DAWG AND LUSCIOUS

Latino ex-roadie brothers from Hell, these guys are out for nothing but a good time, and to them, “good time” means blowing up city blocks, eating fried chicken, and hanging out on Brim’s couch playing video games, watching movies, or playing “uncle” to Brim’s children.

These two were orphaned by a psychic mother who couldn’t handle what she saw of their future, and raised themselves on the streets of Latin and South America. When they were kids (Dawg was eleven; Luscious just past a toddler) they were captured by slavers who intended to sell them to a rich white businessman in the U.S. Dawg managed for him and Luscious to escape, and through sheer, blind luck they were found by a kindly nun who hid them and raised them as her own.

Even still, the two were prone to trouble and as they entered their teenage years they again struck out on their own and spent the next dozen years as heavy metal roadies getting into trouble and working their way through the penal systems all over North America, South America and Europe before a mishap with an evil talisman that they took for a video game controller landed them in Hell. Luscious took the idea of being a slave a bit personally and the two beat the crap out of their guards and fled into the Wastelands, where they eventually made the acquaintance of Brimstone, who adopted them as his sidekicks.

For Dawg and Luscious, life is pretty basic. It’s all about, “Shoot, detonate, dismantle, burn, vaporize, eat, decorate, and ask questions later.”

Dawg is all-business and no-nonsense. He has a grim personality, especially around his birthday, when his childhood experiences come back to haunt him. Every other day of the year, however, he spends all his time building gadgets, fixing cars, and constructing explosive devices. He’s the guy who looks at the Anarchist’s Cookbook and has to keep reams of corrections and annotations.

DAWG: (this 10th-level Weeper Renegade/Investigator has vital stats HD 10d8 (57 hp), AC 20, move 30 ft. His primary attributes are Str 16 (+2), Dex 18 (+3), Int 13 (+1). He attacks by guns for 2d8 or knives for 1d6. His special abilities are Climb, On the Trail (Wis; criminal investigation and tracking), Hide, Move Silently, Take ‘em Down (+10 damage against fugitives, Kittens and renegades), Deadeye Shot (+1 to hit, ignore cover and range penalties with handguns), Face in the Crowd (Cha; pass unnoticed in a crowd), Adversary (+2 on checks/attacks vs. other Borderhound teams), Back Attack

(double damage on attacks from behind), Case Target (Wis; learn information about targets after observing for 10 minutes), Lingo (street speak), Listen, Open Lock, Pick Pockets, Traps, Sneak Attack (+3 hit/+5 dmg vs unsuspecting opponents), Fate Points: 18d10.)

LUSCIOUS

Every team needs muscle, and Luscious is Xi'Balba's. He is larger than life, the guy who looks at the elephant in the room, picks it up, throws it out the window, and asks who's next. He is fabulous and flamboyant to a fault--the Latino version of Richard Simmons, Elmo, David Lee Roth, and The Ultimate Warrior all rolled up into one. Just because he wears a purple boa, though, that doesn't mean he can't come down there and righteously kick your ass. It takes a lot to get him angry, but when he does, look out! If he loses his temper he will destroy everything in his path until he calms down...which usually doesn't happen until whoever pissed him off is paste.

Normally, however, he's just a big Teddy Bear. All he wants to do is hang out with his brothers, play video games with Brim's family, and live his afterlife for good fun. Naturally, that includes eating every piece of chicken in the multiverse, and when that's gone, anything else he can slather in barbecue sauce will do the trick. In many ways, Lush has become Brimstone's connection to humanity and to the joys of life. Lush, in turn, looks on Brim as a big brother with fabulous hair.

LUSCIOUS: (this 10th-level Weeper Renegade/Street Fighter has vital stats HD 10d10 (85 hp), AC 17, move 60 ft. His primary attributes are Str 19 (+3), Dex 15 (+1), Con 19 (+3). He attacks by unarmed 1d10+3 and 1d6+3. His special abilities are back attack (double damage on attacks from rear), case target (Wis; study target for 10 minutes and gain detailed info), climb, hide, lingo (street speak), listen, move silently, open lock, pick pockets, traps, sneak attack (+3 hit, +5 damage vs unsuspecting opponents), wrestling (Str; +2 on grapple checks), deflect missiles (Dex vs. attack), roll with fall (Dex; negate falling damage), choke hold (grapple first; victim makes Con save or is unconscious), granite jaw (1/2 damage from blunt attacks), fast healing (10d4+10 hp/day), combat dominance (3 extra attacks vs. enemies with 5 HD or less), relentless warrior (Con check to keep fighting below zero hp). Fate Points: 16d10)

ORGRATHAN

Orgrathan is Brimstone's full-demon younger half-brother and is the consummate corporate executive in Hell: greedy, ruthless, arrogant, and utterly amoral. He views all life outside of Hell (and indeed, most life in Hell) as inferior to him. He sees Brimstone as a bastard mongrel who does not deserve the affection their father lavishes upon him. He has, over the years, built up a loyal and cult-like entourage who are devoted to his every whim, and he uses this whim to lord over his hated big brother as often as possible.

Lording over his brother, indeed, became even easier when Orgrathan appointed himself head of the DOR, and began to throw every wrench into Brimstone's machinery that he could.

Much to Orgrathan's disdain, however, Brimstone has a knack for succeeding against all odds and has even, on occasion, saved Orgrathan's life. As things are now, Orgrathan and Brimstone sit in an unspoken, but mutually agreed upon, stalemate, and Orgrathan has set his sights on something higher: taking over their father's business as lord of Hell.

ORGRATHAN: (this 12-level Demon Blueblood has vital stats HD 12d8 (28 hp), AC 10, move 30 ft. His primary attributes are Cha 17 (+2), Dex 16 (+2). He attacks by Forza Infernis or weapon. His special abilities are Charm Person, Connected, Exalt (ally gains +4 on any save or non-combat check, Embolden (1/day; all allies in 30ft gain +1 to str, dex, con and int saves and +2 on wis and cha saves for 12 rounds), Fascinate (entrance creature by talking if target fails a cha save), Demoralize (Cha; victims suffer -4 to Cha checks and -1 to hit), Exhort Greatness (two allies gain +2 to hit and 2 HD for 12 rounds), Forza Infernis (Infernis Points: 16), Fate Points: 12d8.)

CHRISTOPHER FARQUIS (A.K.A. MR. HOSTILE)

Christopher Farquis was born into wealth and privilege to a wealthy surfboard manufacturer. Christopher graduated from Harvard Business School, took over his father's company, and his star soared...until his corrupt business practices destroyed his business and left him in ruin. When his world shattered around him, so did his mind, and Christopher Farquis became the brutal serial killer known as Mr. Hostile.

Mr. Hostile terrorized New York City for nearly a year before rookie police officer Billy Altar hunted him down and arrested him in a confrontation that cost Billy his wife and child, and nearly cost him his life. Farquis was sentenced to life in prison. He died under mysterious circumstances in his cell, and woke up in Hell, his sanity and brilliance somehow restored.

In Hell, Farquis has no memory of the things he did as Mr. Hostile and serves as the head supervisor of the Department of Retrieval. He is the first ever Weeper to hold a position in the Corporation at the Executive level. On Earth, his sanity vanishes and he becomes Mr. Hostile once again, intent on "punishing" all those who are "dirty" for his imaginary, "Mommy," who in fact may be a demonic patron. Somehow, though no one is sure quite how, Farquis (as Mr. Hostile) has access to Forza Infernis while on Earth.

CHRISTOPHER FARQUIS (MR. HOSTILE): (this 5th-level Renegade/Blueblood has vital stats HD 5d8 (23 hp), AC 19, move 30 ft. His primary attributes are Dex 16 (+2), Int 16 (+2), Cha 13 (+1). He attacks by weapon or Forza Infernis. His special abilities are Charm Person, Connected, Exalt (Grant 1 ally +2 to save or non-combat check), Embolden (all allies in 30ft gain +1 to str, con, dex, int checks and +2 to wis and cha checks for 5 rounds), Fascinate (entrance a creature who fails a Cha save), Demoralize (1/day; Cha; victims -1 to all attacks, -4 on cha checks for 5 rounds), Back Attack (double damage on attacks from behind), Case Target (study target for 10 minutes to learn detailed info), Climb, Hide, Lingo (street speak), Listen, Move Silently, Open Lock, Pick Pockets, Traps, Sneak Attack (+2 hit, +4 damage on unsuspecting opponents), Forza Infernis (Infernis Points: 5) Fate Points: 8d8.)

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CHAVEZ RAOUL

Chavez Raoul is the best Jamaican Party DJ you could ever hope to hear, and the star of Hell's only entertainment network (TV, Radio, Internet, you name it), WHEL. For Chavez, life as Hell's ultimate DJ is a party—he's well burned in and he not only provides incredible jams, he provides stats and updates for the Borderhound leaderboards, as well as putting out calls for teams when the DOR needs him to.

In addition, Raoul has his ear to the ground in Hell. If there's something you want to know, he's the guy who knows it. And he might even help you out...for a favor, and so long as it doesn't put his ass on the line with the Corporation.

CHAVEZ RAOUL: (this 9th-level Blueblood has vital stats HD 9d8 (57 hp), AC 17, move 30 ft. His primary attributes are Dex 11 (0), Wis 13 (+1), Cha 18 (+3). He attacks by weapon (if he has to). His special abilities are Charm Person, Connected, Exalt (one ally gets +2 to a save or non-combat check), Embolden (Allies in 30' gain +1 to Str, Dex, Con, Int and +2 to Wis and Cha checks for 9 rounds), Fascinate (Cha; entrance a target through speech), Demoralize (1/day; opponents make Cha save or -2 to hit and -4 on cha saves for 9 rounds), Exhort Greatness (1/day; one ally gains +2 to hit, 2 HD). Fate Points: 11d8)

THE DEMON HOUSES OF HELL

Below you'll find information about the major demonic houses (and races) of Hell, the role they fill in society, a stat block for a typical member of the species and brief descriptions of the Forza Infernis powers unique to that house.

SOTZ'NA (BAT HOUSE)

XiBalba's only real competition for the top of the leader board are Txigon, Zythor and Phil, the Borderhounds of Sotz'na. These guys are haughty, arrogant, underhanded and dirty. Their primary mission in life is to gain the spot of top hound... preferably by taking out Brimstone, Luscious, and Dawg for good. They use cutting edge technology and the most insidious methods to achieve their goals.

SOTZ'NA: (These demons have vital stats HD 8d10+24 (72 hp each), AC 17, move 30ft. Their primary attributes are P. They attack by Claws (1d8), Teeth (1d6) or by Hellblaster (3d8). Their special abilities are On the Trail, Connected, Gadgets. Infernis Points: 15)

SOTZ'NA SPECIAL ABILITIES

ON THE TRAIL: Sotz'na are adept at scouring the scene of any incident for clues as to what happened, hidden items or passages, or at tracking their prey either in the city or in the wilderness. They make a Wisdom check to accomplish this, treating it as a Prime for this ability only (normally their Primes are Physical).

CONNECTED: Sotz'na have a network of spies and informants and can call upon an ally in just about any situation. It's rare to catch a Sotz'na unaware, alone, or without backup.

GADGETS: Infamous as tinkers and gadget makers, Sotz'na can produce useful items seemingly out of thin air (see the "Gadgets" Sidebar in the adventure). They must spend Infernis Points to produce these gadgets.

CH'AM (RAZOR HOUSE)

Gorgo, Brutulu and Sopo hail from the mountainous regions of the barren Wastelands outside the Corporate metropolis. They are huge, brutish and fiendishly strong but not all that bright. Still, their propensity for using a bazooka to say "hello" marks them as dangerously unpredictable. They have no concept of finesse or couth; the best way to beat them is to outsmart them, because in a stand-up fight they'll steamroller right over you-- sometimes with an actual steamroller.

CH'AM: (These demons have vital stats HD 10d12+30 (95 hp each), AC 19, move 40 ft. Their primary attributes are P. They attack by Slam (2d6), Claws (1d8) and teeth (1d6) or by weapon. Their special abilities are Darkvision 60ft, Intimidate, Primeval Will, Twilight Vision, Whirlwind Attack.)

SPECIAL CH'AM ABILITIES

INTIMIDATE: Make a constitution check to inflict -2 to all of the opponent's attacks, initiative, damage and SIEGE checks. Affect up to 8 creatures at a time.

PRIMEVAL WILL: If reduced to less than 18 hp, they immediately gain a one-time bonus of an additional 12 hit points which vanish at the end of the battle.

WHIRLWIND ATTACK: Once per combat encounter, attack up to four enemies within reach.

AKAB'NA (DARK HOUSE)

Other borderhounds pee a little bit at the idea of facing down against Dark House. They hail from the darkest, oldest, and most corrupt regions of Hell, and are shrouded in cloaks made of the substance of shadow. Some say they are Shades who regained some of their past memories and used them to gain unholy power. They operate with surgical precision and it is rumored that they feed upon the very Weepers they hunt. It is true that the reason they are not closer to the top of the leader board is that many of the Weepers they capture go missing while in custody...

AKAB'NA: (These demons have vital stats HD 10d12 (71 hp each), AC 13, move 30ft. Their primary attributes are P,M. They attack by Incorporeal Touch (1d4 damage straight to Strength Score). Their special abilities are Create spawn (10 IP), Incorporeal Touch (3 IP), Darkvision 60ft. Incorporeal (5 IP/Round), Blend 5 IP/Round), Sunlight Vulnerable. Infernis Points: 20)

AKAB'NA FORZA INFERNIS

INCORPOREAL TOUCH: Ignores Dexterity bonus to AC, drains victim's strength score. If strength hits zero, victim dies.

CREATE SPAWN: Spend 10 Infernis Points to raise the victim as a mindless 3 HD (20hp) Akab'na with P saves.

INCORPOREAL: Spend 5 Infernis Points/round to become incorporeal. Immune to physical attacks, but also cannot affect the material world.

BLEND: Spend 5 Infernis Points/round to meld with shadows, becoming effectively invisible

HELLCASTING: Spend Infernis Points equal to spell level to use magic.

SUNLIGHT VULNERABLE: Takes double damage from light-based attacks and 1d10 damage/round in direct sunlight.

BALAM NA (JAGUAR HOUSE)

Seeka, Boudica and Sasha are from a house with a long tradition of female hunters and assassins. The Balam na are, in Earth demonology, the species of demon often called “succubi.” They are as beautiful and entrancing as they are deadly. Duelists one and all, there are few in Hell that can match them with swords. They are fanatically loyal to the Corporation and their house serves not only as Borderhounds, but bodyguards and assassins. They view the CEO as almost a god, and obey his orders unquestioningly.

The sisters maintain day jobs and cover identities as mundane workers--Seeka as a vehicle maintenance worker, Boudica as an IT person and Sasha as a personal assistant to Brim's brother Orgrathan. These undercover identities allow them to hone their individual special skills and keep an eye on the workings of the Corporation at all levels.

BALAM NA: *(These demons have vital stats HD 8d8 (45 hp each), AC 18, move 30ft (40ft fly). Their primary attributes are M. They attack by 2 claws (1d4) and bite (1d4) or sword (1d10). Their special abilities are Create Shade (10 IP), Drain Life (5 IP), Improved Grapple, Rake, Spell-like abilities. Infernis Points: 25)*

BALAM NA SPECIAL ABILITIES

IMPROVED GRAPPLE: Balam Na automatically grapple their opponents if they hit with both claws. Grappled opponents lose Dexterity bonus to AC, are -4 to all attacks, strength and dexterity checks (except those made to escape the grapple) and are subject to automatic claw and bite damage each round. Grappling Balam Na can take no actions but inflicting damage to their victim unless they release the grapple.

RAKE: Balam Na who hit with both claws and their bite can tear away from a victim dealing an extra 2d6 damage.

BALAM NA FORZA INFERNIS

CREATE SHADE: The Balam Na can forever enslave the souls of her victims through the use of her Drain Life power. If she chooses to do so, she raises these souls as Shades under her absolute control. Shades created by Balam Na are identical to those created by Akab'Na, above, but are under the absolute control of their creator.

DRAIN LIFE: The Balam Na seduces her victim and kisses or mates with them. The victim must succeed at a CL8 Charisma save or become completely dominated and under the thrall of the Balam Na, and suffer from 1d4 to 2d10 damage to their Constitution Score at the discretion of the Balam Na. The Balam Na gains a number of hit points equal to the drained Constitution points. Constitution drain returns at the rate of 1d4 points per day. Victims whose Constitution reach zero die and cannot return to life through any means. The Balam Na

can always choose not to drain her victim utterly, leaving them drained but alive and in her thrall.

SPELL-LIKE ABILITIES: The Balam Na can use Alter Self, Clairaudience/Clairvoyance, Command, Darkness, Detect Thoughts, Emotion, Fog Cloud, Hypnotic Pattern, Influence, Sleep and Suggestion at will by spending Infernis Points equal to the spell's level.

K'AK NA (FIRE HOUSE)

The Borderhounds from Fire House--Ferno, Magnus and Chroma--hail from the volcanic regions of the wasteland, where great cities rise constructed from lava rock. Their ability to manipulate Forza Infernis is unparalleled, as is the damage they can inflict using these powers of Hell.

These guys are often contracted directly by the Corporation's Board of Directors to take on private missions. They are proud and honorable to a fault, and look upon the profession of Borderhound as a long and noble tradition. This makes them occasional potential allies to other units, who can always trust K'ak'na to keep their word and not engage in betrayal. Of course, these other units invariably try to betray Fire House, and quickly discover that doing so is not a great idea by any stretch...

K'AK NA: *(These demons have vital stats HD 9d8 (36 hp each), AC 17, move 30ft (60ft fly). Their primary attributes are P, M. They attack by Hellfire (4d6). Their special abilities are Flight, Hellfire, Forza Infernis. Infernis Points: 20)*

K'AK NA FORZA INFERNIS

FLIGHT: K'ak Na demons can fly at a speed of 60 feet. In flight they are wreathed by an aura of flame.

HELLFIRE: The K'ak Na can issue hellfire blasts dealing 4d6 damage, requiring a ranged attack and at a cost of zero Infernis Points. Each Infernis Point spent does one of the following: increases damage by 1d10, adds +1 (cumulative) to hit, allows an additional attack this round (rec 4 as firearm), half total recoil penalty for an additional attack, create a (cumulative) 5-foot radius burst instead of a blast, ignore one ally in the path or burst of the hellfire.

FORZA INFERNIS: Each Infernis Point spent allows one of the following effects: Add +1 to a single ability check, gain darkvision 60ft, or Danger Sense (cannot be surprised).

SIS NA (COLD HOUSE)

The thing that makes Cold House scary is that nobody knows who the Hell they are. Not a single other Borderhound team can claim to have seen or had dealings with them, and no one knows how they end up on the leader board, because they can't account for any jobs the Cold House demons have completed. They just kind of appear on the board. Some people wonder whether they really even exist, or if they're just a cover for a Corporate tracking operation.

Cold house demons are included here for completeness' sake, but do not have stat blocks since they are in many ways the “boogeymen” of the Hound 'verse.

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APPENDIX 2: SAMPLE CHARACTERS

Here are the sample characters for use in the introductory scenario. Every effort has been made to explain all abilities inline; specific demon powers are detailed under the description of the demon houses.

NAME: Shana

RACE: Sotz'na Demon

CLASS/LEVEL: Renegade 3

ABILITIES: Str 16 (+2) Dex 17 (+2) Con 15 (+1) Int 15 (+1) Wis 10 (+0) Cha 7 (-1)

PRIMES: Str, Wis

AC: 16

COSTUME DESCRIPTION: Torn yoga pants, battered high-heel boots, leather vest, gloves, goggles

HIT DICE: 3d6

HIT POINTS: 16

BTH: +1

MOVE: 30ft

CLASS ABILITIES: Back attack (double damage on attacks from behind), Case Target (Wis; learn details about target after studying for 10 minutes), Climb (Dex), Hide (Dex), Lingo (Street speak), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Open Locks (Dex), Pick Pockets (Dex), Traps (Int; find, remove, set), On the Trail (Wis; find hidden objects and evidence, track quarry), Connected (Cha; find a friend anywhere).

FATE POINTS: 5d6

GEAR: Hellblaster (3d6; Rof 2, Acc 0, Rec -4), Lock picks

APPEARANCE: Ogre-like female with protruding lower fangs... who thinks she's the hottest thing since Hell.

FORZA INERNIS / OTHER POWERS: Gadgets. Infernis Points: 14; Claws (1d8), Teeth (1d6)

NAME: Alisa

RACE: Balam na Demon

CLASS/LEVEL: Duelist 3

ABILITIES: Str 15 (+1) Dex 18 (+3) Con 13 (+1) Int 11 (0) Wis 9 (0) Cha 13 (+1)

PRIMES: Dex, Cha

AC: 21

COSTUME DESCRIPTION: Leather body suit, thigh-high boots, long gloves, scarf, mask

HIT DICE: 3d6

HIT POINTS: 16

BTH: +1

MOVE: 30ft

CLASS ABILITIES: Florentine (Fight with 2 swords; primary -2, secondary -3, +1 AC), Taunt (Cha; enemy must attack Alisa)

FATE POINTS: 5d6

GEAR: Paired swords (1d10, 1d8)

APPEARANCE: Stunning, curvaceous and athletic female with small horns, black hair, and skin that is dark red with black tiger-stripes.

FORZA INERNIS / OTHER POWERS: Drain Life, Create Shade, Spell-Like Abilities. Infernis Points: 14

NAME: Tyler

RACE: Human

CLASS/LEVEL: Occultist 3

ABILITIES: Str 10 (+0) Dex 16 (+2) Con 13 (+1) Int 16 (+2) Wis 14 (+1) Cha 13 (+1)

PRIMES: Dex, Int, Cha

AC: 17

COSTUME DESCRIPTION: Black robes trimmed with red, gloves, boots.

HIT DICE: 3d6

HIT POINTS: 16

BTH: +1

MOVE: 30ft

CLASS ABILITIES: Spellcraft (Int; identify magical effects), Spells, Knowledge: Arcana (+3 to arcana-related SIEGE checks), Knowledge: Hell Lore (+3 to SIEGE checks related to his knowledge of Hell, its history, peoples, etc.)

FATE POINTS: 5d6

GEAR: Luger pistol (1d10; RoF 3, Acc 2, Rec 3), ceremonial knife (1d4), spellbook, component pouches.

APPEARANCE: Long, wild red-blond hair, full beard flecked with gray, flowing robes, intense with a sparkle in his eyes

FORZA INERNIS / OTHER POWERS: Spells (0-level: Ghost Sound, Influence, Mage Hand, Prestidigitation, System Shock; 1-level: Arcane Bolt, Charm Person, Command, Cure Light Wounds). MEP: 14

NAME: Stephen

RACE: Hybrid

CLASS/LEVEL: Soldier 3

ABILITIES: Str 13 (+1) Dex 15 (+1) Con 13 (+1) Int 13 (+1) Wis 12 (+1) Cha 12 (+1)

PRIMES: Wis, Cha

AC: 18

COSTUME DESCRIPTION: Military fatigues, combat boots, gloves, shades

HIT DICE: 3d8

HIT POINTS: 20

BTH: +2

MOVE: 30ft

CLASS ABILITIES: Strategy/Tactics (+3 to all SIEGE checks were strategy and tactics can be a factor), Embolden (All allies in 30ft gain +1 to Str, Con, Dex and Int Saves and +2 to Wis, Cha saves), Bayonet Training (+2 to hit when charging with mounted bayonet), Brothers in Arms (If fighting with at least 2 allies nearby, soldier and 2 allies within 10 ft gain +1 damage), Formation Fighting (when fighting with at least 2 allies nearby, soldier and 2 allies within 10ft gain +1 AC), Sniper (+1 to hit and damage with rifles)

FATE POINTS: 5d6

GEAR: Rucksack, Helltech Carbine (3d6; RoF 3/A, Acc +3, Rec -4), .45 pistol (1d12; RoF 3, Acc +2, Rec -3); Combat knife (1d6), MREs, Canteen, Dog-eared paperback books on history and mythology.

APPEARANCE: Square-jawed, tall and lean with close-cropped light brown hair.

FORZA INFERNIS / OTHER POWERS: Forza Infernis (hybrid; p. [?]); Infernis Points: 8, Supernatural Senses (Sense demons and supernatural on Earth, natives of other afterlife planes in Hell), Cross Over (teleport between Hell and Earth)

NAME: Todd

RACE: Ch'am Demon

CLASS/LEVEL: Street Fighter 3

ABILITIES: Str 19 (+3) Dex 13 (+1) Con 19 (+3) Int 10 (+0) Wis 10 (+0) Cha 9 (+0)

PRIMES: Str, Con

AC: 13

COSTUME DESCRIPTION: Bare-chested, tom pants, battered boots

HIT DICE: 3d12

HIT POINTS: 34

BTH: +2

MOVE: 40ft.

CLASS ABILITIES: Wrestling (+2 to all grappling checks), Tough as Nails (+2 to Con saves), Unarmed Attack (1d6+1

in addition to claw/tooth damage), Deflect Missiles (Dex; CL=attacker's BtH plus Dex bonus, or HD; 1/round), Fast movement (move 40'/round)

FATE POINTS: 5d6

GEAR: Fists

APPEARANCE: Barrel-chested, enormous demon with pointed ears, gray skin and a buzz cut.

FORZA INFERNIS / OTHER POWERS: Claws (1d8), Teeth (1d6), Darkvision 60', Twilight Vision, Intimidate, Primeval Will (See Ch'am for descriptions of special abilities. Todd does not have Whirlwind attack at this point).

NAME: Tim

RACE: Ak'ab na Demon

CLASS/LEVEL: Blueblood 3

ABILITIES: Str 10 (+0) Dex 16 (+2) Con 13 (+1) Int 13 (+1) Wis 13 (+1) Cha 15 (+1)

PRIMES: Wis, Cha

AC: 18

COSTUME DESCRIPTION: 3-piece suit, trench coat, gloves, sunglasses

HIT DICE: 3d8

HIT POINTS: 20

BTH: +2

CLASS ABILITIES: Charm (Cha; victim charmed); Connected (Cha; find allies anywhere); Exalt (Cha, 3/day; one ally gains +2 on all non-combat actions for 3 rounds); Embolden (allies within 30 ft gain +1 to Str, Con, Dex, Int saves and +2 to Wis and Cha saves)

FATE POINTS: 5d6

GEAR: Hellblaster compact pistol (2d6; RoF 3, Acc +2, Rec -3)

APPEARANCE: Thin, angular-featured, skin the color of shadows, moves with an air of confidence.

FORZA INFERNIS / OTHER POWERS: Light Sensitivity (double damage from light-based attacks, sunlight deals 1d10 damage/round), Incorporeal Touch, Blend (See Ak'ab na). Infernis Points: 13

APPENDIX 2: MAGIC AND FORZA INFERNIS

FORZA INFERNIS

Forza Infernis means, literally, “Powers of Hell.” These are the innate abilities upon which demons and hybrids can call by virtue of being from the Pit. When a demon unleashes a blast of hellfire, assumes phenomenal strength, or leaps tall buildings in...well, you get the idea, that’s Forza Infernis.

Demons, hybrids and those with the Forza Infernis Generic Class Ability gain a pool of points which they can use to call upon these abilities. Anyone with the touch of Hell has the ability to call upon a broad range of powers at any given time. They have more diversity than sorcerers at a given moment, even if sorcerers have a broader range of abilities from which to choose. Brimstone, as a hybrid could boost his strength phenomenally, or he could decide to channel a burst of hellfire through his mini-gun.

INFERNIS POINTS

Each character who is capable of accessing Forza Infernis has a pool of Infernis Points that may be used to activate their abilities. Each ability requires the expenditure of one or more points to use, based on the exact effect you wish to achieve.

Infernis Points refresh at midnight every night.

RESTRICTIONS ON FORZA INFERNIS

DEMONS: Demons have no restrictions on their use of the powers of Hell.

HYBRIDS: After using Forza Infernis, the hybrid must make a Constitution-based saving throw or become Fatigued, suffering -2 to all SIEGE checks, saves and attacks until they rest for 1 hour. Using powers while Fatigued requires another saving throw; failure results Exhaustion, increasing penalties to -4 and requiring 2 hours’ rest. A third use requires another saving throw or the Hybrid collapses, unconscious, for 6 hours. Hybrids can spend a Fate Point to automatically succeed at these saving throws.

HUMANS AND WEEPERS: Using Forza Infernis automatically results in Fatigue, with a second use automatically resulting in Exhaustion. No save is permitted. As with hybrids, fatigue from use of these abilities goes away after a good hour’s rest and exhaustion from 2. Humans can spend a Fate Point to avoid fatigue if they choose.

FORZA INFERNIS POWERS

There are several uses of the powers of Hell. These uses are to create Hellfire, to boost physical abilities and to boost senses. Each power requires the expenditure of the listed Infernis Points and yields the listed effect. Characters with access to full Forza Infernis can produce any of the effects below as they desire; each demon race has their own specific powers in lieu of those below.

HELLFIRE BLAST

COST: 1 point

EFFECT: Creates a blast of hellfire that can be directed at any one target. Requires a “to hit” roll for ranged combat and uses similar statistics (rate of fire, accuracy and recoil) as a firearm.

BASE DAMAGE: 1d10

ACCURACY: 0

RATE OF FIRE: 1

RANGE: 20 yards

REC: 4

EXTRA SPENDING: Each point spent grants 1d10 damage OR +1 Accuracy OR 20 yards range OR Rate of Fire +1 OR Halves Recoil (minimum Rec: 1)

HELLFIRE BURST

COST: 2 points

EFFECT: Creates a hellfire “grenade” that the character can hurl at a target, which explodes on impact. Must make a “to hit” roll to strike as with any thrown weapon.

BASE DAMAGE: 1d10

AREA OF EFFECT: 10-foot radius

RANGE: 20 yards

SAVE: Dexterity half

ACCURACY: Miss means rolling 1d8 (for direction) and 2d10 (for feet)

EXTRA SPENDING: Each point grants 1d10 damage OR Selective Damage OR +1 to hit

BOOST ATTRIBUTE

COST: 1

EFFECT: Raise one physical attribute by one point OR double movement rate OR double carrying and lifting capacity, OR gain Damage Reduction (2x Con bonus)

EXTRA SPENDING: Each point grants one more ability score increase OR increase multiplier for movement, carrying or DR by 1, to a maximum of 1/2 character level

GREAT LEAP

COST: 3

EFFECT: leap 30 feet long, 10 feet high with 10-foot run-up. CL increases are in increments of five feet rather than one (see jumping rules)

EXTRA SPENDING: Each point spent adds +1 to the strength check for leaping.

ENHANCED SENSES

COST: 1

EFFECT: Improve the basic five senses beyond normal human range. +2 to Int or Wis checks based on one of the four senses (sight, hearing, smell or taste) for one scene of play.

ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURES: Each point spent will increase the sensory bonus by +1 to a maximum of the character’s level or hit dice.

SEE IN THE DARK

COST: 2

EFFECT: improve nightvision. Base cost grants duskvision.

EXTRA SPENDING: Spending 1 more point also grants Darkvision. Spending 2 more points also grants Deepvision (spending a total of 4 points grants all three).

DANGER SENSE

COST: 2 points

EFFECT: You gain a sixth sense that warns you of impending danger. You always get a Wisdom check to avoid surprise; the CL for this check is set by the GM. You also gain +1 to Initiative rolls. Lasts for one combat or one scene of play.

SENSE HELL

COST: 5

EFFECT: Gain Tracking Generic Class Ability related to following the trail of a creature from Hell or another Afterlife Corporation, once you have caught their "scent."

COVER TRACKS

COST: 1

EFFECT: While being tracked, each point you spent increases the CL for another hellspawn to track you by 1.

HELLCASTING

Characters with Forza Infernis who are at least tenth level or hit dice and have a Wisdom score of at least 15 can access sorcery using the energies of Hell. Any spell can be cast whose level is nine lower than the character's current level or hit dice (thus, a tenth level character can cast first level spells). Spells cast by those using Forza Infernis cost double the spell's level in Infernis Points (minimum 1 point), and the character must make an ability check using their best mental Attribute, with a CL equal to the spell's level. If this check fails, the points are still spent, but the spell does not go off.

For example: Casting a first-level spell on the Intelligence spell list requires spending 2 Infernis Points (double the spell's level), and an Intelligence check at CL 1. Success means the spell works as normal. Failure means the 2 Infernis Points are spent but the spell fails to go off.

SPELLS AND MAGIC

Spellcasting works as outlined in the rules reference sidebar. Individual spells, their associated levels, and their basic effects, are outlined below. Saving throws for spells always have a CL equal to the level or hit dice of the spell caster. Some saves negate spell effects; others reduce damage as indicated. Save: none means no save is possible.

Spells that deal temporary damage cannot kill, and temporary damage heals at 1d6 points per hour. It is also the first damage healed by medical care or healing magic. Finally, the magic presented here is streamlined and trimmed from that found in the final game. We have done this for space and ease of play for new gamers.

GADGETS

The effects of these spells can also be used to model Gadgets; the cost in Infernis Points to do so is equal to the spell's level. Infernis points spent to create gadgets do not refresh as long as the gadget exists. Breaking the gadget down allows Infernis Points to refresh at Midnight as standard. For spells with level-based effects, gadgets are created at the base level of effect. Each additional Infernis Point spent increases the effective level by one. Any gadget that deals damage (one based on Arcane Bolt or Lightning Bolt, for example) requires an attack roll, though the GM may apply accuracy bonuses to the weaponry of +4 or +5.

O-LEVEL:

DETECT MAGIC: Sense magic energy within 50 feet + 10 feet/level. Save: None.

DETECT [ILLUSION/TRAPS/POISON/UNDEAD/EVIL]: Other detect spells are possible. Each is a separate spell.

GHOST SOUND: Create disembodied sound within 150 feet. Save: Int negates.

MAGE HAND: Telekinetically move object up to 5lbs up to 25 ft. away. Save: None.

INFLUENCE: Victim sees you as a trusted friend for 3 minutes. Save: Cha negates.

LIGHT: Object lights as bright as a camping lantern for 10 minutes. Save: None

PRESTIDIGITATION: Perform minor magical effects and illusions. Save: None

STUN: Victim -4 to all actions and movement halved for 1d4 rounds. Save: Wis negates

SYSTEM SHOCK: Victim suffers 1d4 temporary damage and is -2 to actions for 1 round. Save: Con negates.

1-LEVEL:

ARCANE BOLT: Magical energy automatically deals 1d4+1 damage. Extra missile for every 2 experience levels. Save: none

CALL VERMIN: Summon swarm of 1d6x5 vermin; every 10 is 1d8 HD for attack and damage. Swarm dissipates after 1d6 rounds. Save: Con negates attack damage.

CHARM PERSON: Victim views caster as trusted friend or beloved for 1 hour/level. Save: Cha negates.

COMMAND: Issue a one-word command to 1 creature per 2 levels. Save: Cha negates

CURE LIGHT WOUNDS: Touch a target and heal 1d8 points of damage. Save: None

READ MAGIC: Read magical writings

SPIDER CLIMB: Crawl on walls or ceilings as a spider would for 2 rounds/level. Save: None

SLEEP: Up to 2d4 HD worth of creatures fall into a natural sleep for 10 min/level. Save: None.

TORMENT OF THE GRAVE: Victim wracked with pain, takes 1d6 temporary damage and is stunned for 1d6 rounds. Save: Con negates.

VERMIN WEAPON: Pick up a vermin and use it as a weapon. -2 to hit, but deals 1d3 damage plus 1d6 poison damage and -1 to all actions for 10 minutes. Save: Con negates poison and penalties.

2-LEVEL:

ACID ARROW: Ranged attack ignores armor (target AC 10 plus dex bonus) and deals 2d4 damage. Save: none

ALTER SELF: Change appearance, gender, race, height and weight (up to 1ft/50lbs) for 10 min/level. Save: none.

DARKNESS: Create a 20-foot area of magical darkness for 10 minutes/level. Save: None

DETECT THOUGHTS: Sense the surface thoughts of a target for 10 minutes/level. Save: None.

FOG CLOUD: Cloud of mist extends out from caster at 5ft/round up to 20x20x50foot area, obscuring sight in the area. Save: None.

HYPNOTIC PATTERN: 2d4+1 HD per caster level of victims stand and stare at pattern of colors and light as long as the caster concentrates on the effect. Save: Int negates.

INVISIBILITY: Caster becomes invisible until they do something to reveal themselves. Save: none

RAY OF ENFEEBLEMENT: All attributes are non-prime and victims -1 to hit and damage for every four caster levels. Duration is 1 round/level. Save: Con negates.

3-LEVEL:

ANIMATE DEAD: Raise a number of dead bodies equal to caster's level within 25 feet as undead with no Primes, 1d8 HD each, and a slam attack for 1d6 damage. Zombies obey caster. Save: none

CLAIRVOYANCE/CLAIRAUDIENCE: See or hear events in another place familiar to the caster for 10 minutes/level. Save: None

CURE SERIOUS WOUNDS: Touch target and heal 3d8 points of damage. Save: None

FIREBALL: Explosion up to 150 ft away deals 1d6 damage per caster level to a 20ft radius. Save: Dex half

LIGHTNING BOLT: Bolt of lightning from caster's hand deals 1d6 damage per caster level to all in a straight line up to 50ft away. Solid objects stop the lightning. Save: Dex half.

SUGGESTION: Issue a one-sentence command. Save: Cha negates

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BASIC RULES 25

BRIMSTONE AND THE BORDERHOUNDS ROLE PLAYING GAME

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A Cold Day in Hell

HELL IS AN UNKIND PLACE. A SPRAWLING MEGALOPOLIS OF TWISTED STREETS AND RAMSHACKLE BUILDINGS PILED ONE ON TOP OF THE OTHER, CLAWING THEIR WAY TO HEIGHT'S UNSEEN WHERE THE LORDS OF HELL RULE. HERE THE HARVESTED SOULS OF EVIL LABOR AS SLAVES, DOOMED TO ETERNAL TORMENT. BOUND TO A WORLD OF SUFFERING, ALWAYS YEARNING FOR A WORLD BEYOND THEIR OWN. THOSE WICKED WHO ARE ABLE SEEK TO FLEE THIS CITY OF THE DAMNED AND DO SO WITH WHATEVER TOOL THEY CAN: GREED, VIOLENCE, AVARICE. FLEEING HELL IS THE ONLY GOAL.

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