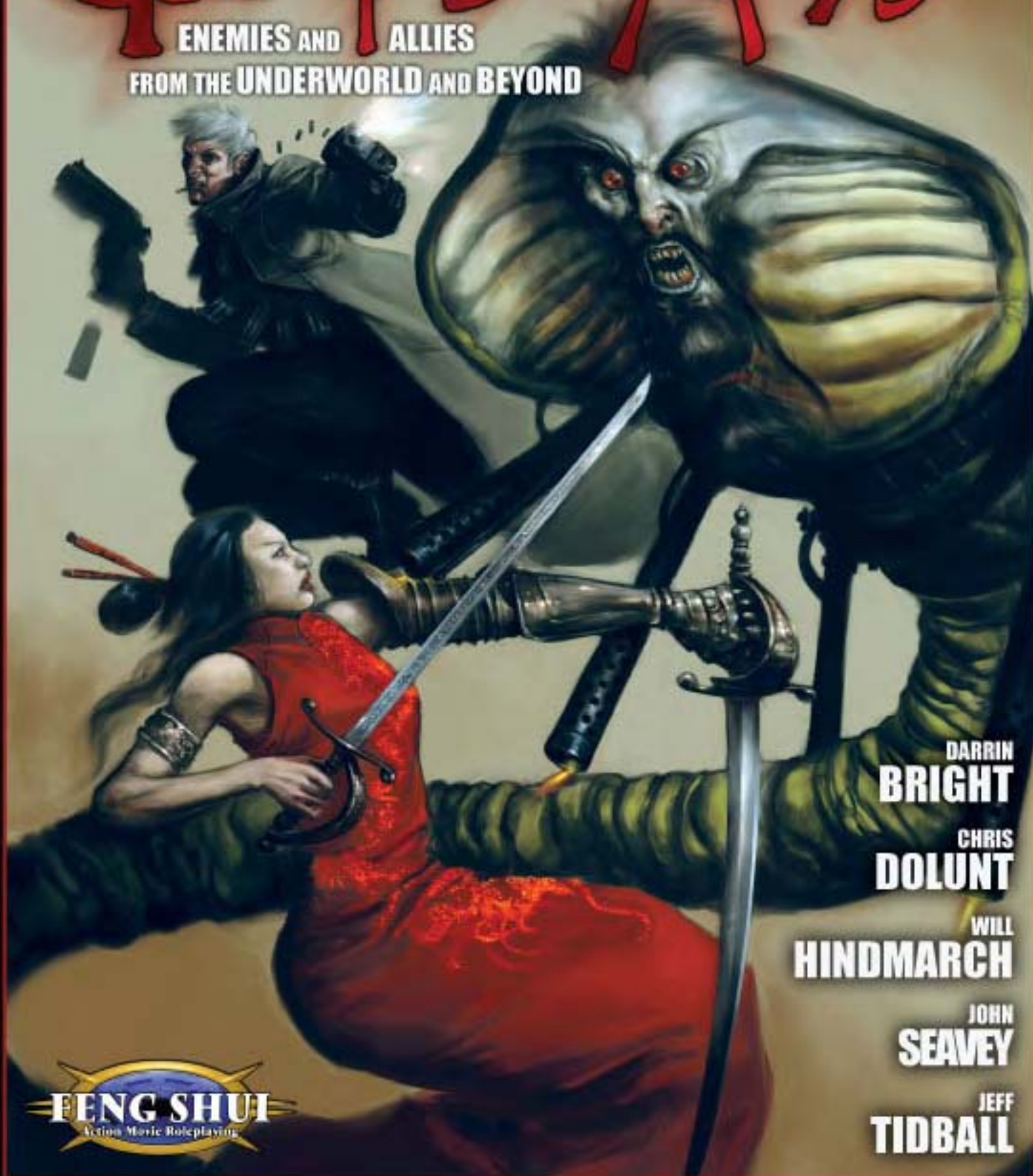


Glimpse of the Abyss

ENEMIES AND ALLIES
FROM THE UNDERWORLD AND BEYOND



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DIGITAL EDITION VERSION 1.0

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CAN YOU SEE IT?

(OR, "INTRODUCTION")

DEAD BIRDS

Welcome to *Glimpse of the Abyss*, a *Feng Shui* sourcebook that kills three birds with one stone. (Which is a -3 AV stunt, but we figured we were up to it, and we were right.)

First Dead Bird: It catalogs a boatload of enemies and opponents you can use in your *Feng Shui* adventures. That's a practical purpose — it saves GMs time and acts like an imagination springboard. Need some inspiration for an adventure or encounter? Open to a random page and dive in.

Second Dead Bird: Most of the creature entries here have one or two new bits of crunchy goodness — new schticks, powers, equipment, and so on — that players and GMs can use when creating heroes, GMCs, and custom creatures. Unless otherwise noted, these can all be selected and gained in the usual ways.

Third Dead Bird: By way of copious example, *Glimpse of the Abyss* is a guidebook to the Underworld. Most — maybe all — of the creatures described include a little bit of the flavor of Di Yu, whether it's naming conventions of hellish locations, the way groups of demons are organized, how infernal creatures behave, or whatever. No, this book isn't a Fodor's-style travel guidebook to walk you through each room, court, level, and chamber of Hell. That approach would limit the possibilities by telling you what you can't do. This approach illustrates what you *can* do, and gives lots of useful examples, to boot.

NAMED, GENERIC, UNNAMED

You're familiar with the difference between named and unnamed characters. Most of the creature entries in *Glimpse of the Abyss* have sample stat blocks for both kinds: a powerful, named antagonist type on one hand, and a faceless, unnamed mook type on the other. You can tell the difference because the named blocks have, well, *names* ("Gui Pa" or "BERNARD," for example), while the unnamed blocks are designated as "unnamed."

But you'll also find a new kind of stat set for some of the creature entries: "generic named," or "generic" for short. Generic stat blocks are given for creature types where faceless combatants just wouldn't exist. There are no mookish Abyssal Daughters, for example, because each one is a powerful, individual saboteur. So generic stats are given instead, to show you the baseline for named creatures of that type.

There are two ways you can use generic stats. You can slap on a name and use the generic stats as-is. Or, alternately, you can name the creature and also pump up its stats, to create a higher-caliber opponent. But to be clear, generic creatures always use the rules for named combatants; they're 100% named characters, they just haven't gotten names yet.

Named and generic stat blocks are usually presented together, by the way. The generic version is the baseline, while the named version is usually a more powerful example.

SCHTICKS

As noted above, most new schticks introduced in *Glimpse of the Abyss* can be selected at will by players creating new characters or improving existing ones. The rules to use — experience point costs and so on — depend on the type of schtick, which is listed in each case. The exception is unique schticks, which can't be used by PCs. GMs should feel free to repurpose them for new creatures or GMCs, but they're off limits to players.

AUXILIARY SCHTICKS

You'll see a smattering of new auxiliary schticks in this book. Auxiliary schticks were introduced in *Golden Comeback* (p. 103), are available to any character who can afford them, and cost $(3 + X)$ experience points each, where X is the total number of all schticks of all types you'll have once you learn the new one. Auxiliary schticks aren't available to starting characters without GM permission.

STAT SCHTICKS

Stat schticks were also introduced in *Golden Comeback* (p. 63). They're available to experienced (i.e., non-starting) characters with a score of 11 or more in the relevant stat. They cost (current stat score + current number of schticks in that stat) experience points. A given stat schtick can't generally be bought multiple times.

WEAKNESSES

Weaknesses are a new schtick type (though you'll generally see them called simply "weaknesses," not "weakness schticks") that encompasses flaws, faults, shortcomings, and debilities.

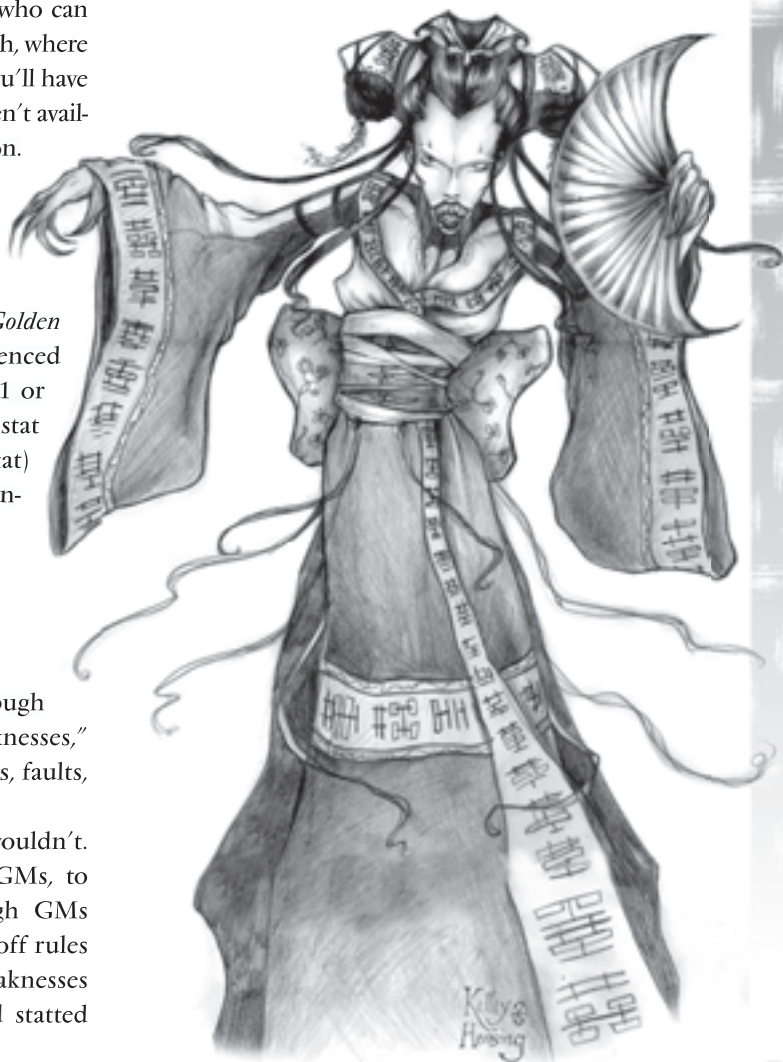
Why would a hero take a weakness? She wouldn't. (So she can't.) Weaknesses are intended for GMs, to give flavor to GMCs and creatures. Although GMs could just create new unique schticks and one-off rules to deal with these kinds of Achilles heels, weaknesses allow common debilities to be described and stated once, and re-used many times.

"Someone Says..."

If you've picked up a *Feng Shui* supplement in the last decade or so, you've seen lots of stat blocks led off by "Sample Dialogue" that tries to spell "growl" in some fascinating new way. ("GRRR!" "ROWR!" "GrHHgHR!!!")

It got ridiculous pretty fast — we're sorry, our bad.

In *Glimpse of the Abyss*, for creatures where "Sample Dialogue" doesn't make sense, you'll see "Someone Says," instead. Sometimes you'll see it even when sample dialog would make sense, to mix things up. It's something somebody meeting or dealing with that creature might say. Use it right in the encounter, right while you're playing.



ABYSSAL DAUGHTER

Origin: China, 69 AD

Type: Spawn of demons, eunuchs, and dark magic

Allegiance: Eaters of the Lotus

DESCRIPTION

Their faces, at least, betray no hint of their tainted essence. Look upon them and you look upon beautiful women with seductive smiles and hooded, knowing eyes.

As for the rest of them, abyssal daughters dress to accentuate those parts of their body that are human — and conceal the rest. They are universally perfect when so attired, slim and attractive. Only when clad without artifice can it be seen that all have the legs of crabs, and that wiggling spider's legs sprout from their spines. Each abyssal daughter also has one additional, unique deformity, for each was born of a different mother. All, however, share the same father... the eunuch sorcerer Gui Zedong.

BORN OF BLACK BILE

Some take castration better than others. Gui Zedong is the last of an illustrious noble line that traces its lineage to a general in service to the First Emperor. And while he does not regret that the crime that cost him his genitals put him in touch with the Empire's secret rulers — the Eaters of the Lotus — he very much regrets that it cost him the ability to father an heir to his noble line.

After his castration, Gui Zedong searched high and low for anything that could restore his virility, even as he publicly (among Lotus sorcerers, anyway) agreed that his eunuch-dom was a badge of honor. He summoned demons and questioned them, tortured scientists from the future for their secret knowledge, and uncovered dark fertility magics that could bring forth grain from barren earth, although it grew forth withered and bitter to taste. From these and other sources, he devised a ritual spell to fit his purposes.

Gui Zedong summoned a succubus — his ritual would not work on a human woman — and although she was as barren as he was impotent, he wove his spell about

Gui Pa

Gui Pa was Gui Zedong's first daughter, and remains the most skilled of his assassins. Her perfectly smooth, milky-white skin secretes a lethal poison when she wills it, and her webbed feet are easy to hide.

Sample Dialogue: "Apologies for my forwardness, but I find you most attractive."

Attributes: Bod 6, Chi 3 (Mag 9), Mnd 9 (Cha 11), Ref 6

Skills: Creature Powers 16, Deceit 16, Martial Arts 13, Sabotage 13, Seduction 17

Creature Schticks: Glamour, Poison (skin), Soul Twist (x2)

Weapons: dagger (9), Soul Twist (9)

Abyssal Daughter (Generic)

Someone Says: "I'm here to tell you, honey, the scale of one to ten that describes other women... totally insufficient for you."

Attributes: Bod 5, Chi 2 (Mag 7), Mnd 7 (Cha 11), Ref 4

Skills: Creature Powers 8, Deceit 12, Martial Arts 7, Sabotage 12, Seduction 12

Creature Schticks: Glamour

Weapons: dagger (8)

their "lovmaking" and ejaculated black bile at its climax. Then, he waited.

Nine months later, the demoness gave birth to a baby girl. Within a month, it grew to a strange, deformed womanhood. Gui Zedong's ritual was a success, but he could not see it as such — he needed a son to continue his family legacy. He trained the half-demon child as an assassin and saboteur while he impregnated other succubi with his unholy seed.

Now, 25 years later, Gui Zedong has many abyssal daughters, but continues to experiment with fertility magic, as none of his perverse unions have yet to give him the man-child of his obsession.

THE ABYSSAL DESECRATORS

Gui Zedong's ambitions revolve around extending his family line rather than world conquest, so he has less use for his daughters' unique skills than some others. However, since his research requires costly components and access to dark, hidden knowledge, he's taken to hiring out his offspring out in exchange for help with his personal projects. Thus, Gui Zedong's abyssal daughters frequently turn up across the secret war's battlefields, even where he himself does not.

Abyssal daughters rarely enter direct combat with their enemies. Instead, they act covertly, concealing their demonic heritage when it's possible and relying on inventive cover stories when it isn't. One said she was running away from her father, who had tried to

Glamour

New Charisma Stat Schtick

You have supernatural charisma; although you can't actually control minds, you're adept at charming people into doing things for you. Whenever you fail a Charisma check, or a skill check that relies on Charisma (Deceit, say), you may immediately make a second check. If the second check succeeds, you've succeeded, though others may notice that your victim(s) are a little dazed by your personality. If both checks fail, you fail normally.

force her to be an assassin. Another claimed to be under a magical curse that deformed her body until she found true love. In the secret war, stranger things have happened.



Origin: China, 2056

Type: Cloud given intelligence by arcanowave technology

Allegiance: None

DESCRIPTION

An angry cloud is a cloud the size and shape of a human with eerie red flashes of lightning illuminating it from within. Occasionally, glowing red orbs of chi energy float to its surface, giving the impression of glaring, bloodshot eyes.

SEEDING THE CLOUDS

In the early twenty-first century, China's government took up "cloud seeding" in times of drought. The practice consists of loading an artillery shell with silver iodide crystals and using a howitzer to fire it into a cloud. Condensation collects on the crystals, releasing the water trapped in the cloud and causing rain. Unfortunately, the procedure wasn't very successful until the Architects improved it by using arcanowave technology.

Cumulonimbus

One of the first clouds to gain sentience, Cumulonimbus has somehow avoided the attacks of the Architects, and wages guerrilla war against the Buro.

Sample Dialogue: "It's raining, it's pouring, Cumulonimbus is scoring! I'll blast your head, you'll end up dead, and never get up in the morning!"

Attributes: Bod 14, Chi 0 (Mag 10), Mnd 3, Ref 5

Skills: Arcanowave Device 15, Creature Powers 15, Martial Arts 11

Arcanowave Schticks: Threat Evaluator, Weather Control Crystals

Creature Schticks: Blast (lightning), Flight, Insustantial (fire, dirt, iron, water, wood)

Weapons: blast (12)

By enchanting the crystals to call forth the "weather spirits" in the cloud, the Architects could effectively control the weather. Eventually, though, the spirits in

Angry Cloud (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "That cloud looks like a bunny. That one looks like... hot death!"

Attributes: Bod 12, Chi 0 (Mag 9), Mnd 1, Ref 4

Skills: Arcanowave Device 10, Creature Powers 10, Martial Arts 9

Arcanowave Schticks: Weather Control Crystals

Creature Schticks: Blast (lightning), Flight, Insubstantial (fire, dirt, iron, water, wood)

Weapons: blast (11)

the clouds learned to resist the seeding effect. They were none too happy about being manipulated by feeble humans, and began a campaign of violence against Architects and Jammers alike.

THUNDER AND LIGHTNING

Angry clouds don't like being sentient, and try to blast the heck out of any living creatures they can find, out of nothing other than spite. They reserve a special hatred for abominations, cyborgs, and others who use arcanowave technology. They prefer to attack from a distance using Blast, but those who close the distance

Weather Control Crystals

New Arcanowave Schtick

These tiny crystals have been enchanted with arcanowave technology, and act as powerful focal points for elemental water. Normally, they are loaded into ARB bullets and fired from a gun, but certain creatures (like angry clouds) can deliver them with Martial Arts attacks.

If the crystals are shot into a cloud, it immediately starts raining. If they come into contact with a living being, the target must make a Constitution check with a Difficulty equal to the attacker's Arcanowave Device AV, or else the crystals draw all of the water out of the surrounding air, surrounding the target with a miniature storm cloud. This cloud obscures vision (2 points of Impairment), but also provides cover against attacks (-1 to attacks against the character). The cloud remains in effect for a number of shots equal to the attacker's Chi score, after which it dissipates with a bolt of lightning (treat as a lightning Blast directed against the character, using the attacker's Arcanowave Device skill at a -2 penalty).

receive a rude surprise, as the cloud uses its internal wind to pepper its opponents with weather control crystals.



Origin: Netherworld or Underworld

Type: Bloodsucking insect

Allegiance: None

DESCRIPTION

Blooderflies are one of the more common supernatural dangers in the Netherworld, and can be quite dangerous in large groups. Individually, they range in size from a paperback book to a movie poster. As they feast on victims, their wings gradually turn from beige or grey to pink, eventually deepening to a dark, blood red.

A SPOT OF TEA

First documented in Huan Ken's *Zoological Survey of the Inner Kingdom* while he was setting up his sky gardens in Thunder Valley, no one is sure if blooderflies are Netherworld natives or displaced from some long-forgotten nightmare juncture. They were not popularly hunted until a few years ago when a deranged entomologist discovered the wings could be boiled with spices in a pot of water to create "blooderfly tea," a potent

Bloodfairy

Larger, older, and craftier than a standard blooderfly, Bloodfairy has fed on so many supernatural creatures and sorcerers that she has acquired some sorcerous abilities herself. She often uses Influence to appear as an innocent damsel, enchanting lone wanderers into hidden corners where she can suck them dry. Bloodfairy has a particular craving for the Thunder King's Butterfly Knights, and has been so successful hunting them down that Huan Ken has offered the pick of any item in his personal trophy room as a reward to anyone who can permanently dispose of her.

Sample Dialogue: "You look so sweet. But how do you taste?"

Attributes: Bod 6, Chi 0 (Mag 8), Mnd 3 (Cha 9), Ref 7

Skills: Creature Powers 12, Deceit 10, Martial Arts 12, Seduction 12, Sorcery 10

Creature Schticks: Abysmal Fangs (x2), Blood Drain (AV gain), Conditional Escalation (inflict 10 Wound Points, Chi +1), Flight (x2) (Move 8)

Auxiliary Schticks: Henchmen

Sorcery Schticks: Influence

Weapons: fangs (11)

Blooderfly (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "Get 'em off me! Getemoff-getemoff-GETEMOFFME!"

Attributes: Bod 3, Chi 0 (Mag 8), Mnd 1, Ref 6

Skills: Creature Powers 9, Martial Arts 9

Creature Schticks: Abysmal Fangs (x2), Blood Drain (AV gain), Flight (x3) (Move 7)

Auxiliary Schticks: Group Attack

Weaknesses: Fragile (x2)

Weapons: fangs (8)

beverage that grants the imbiber limited supernatural abilities.

There are two varieties of the tea:

White Blooderfly Tea: The safer and more popular mixture, made from young or starved blooderflies. The drinker loses the ability to see colors for a couple hours, but can see in the dark without penalty.

Red Blooderfly Tea: A much more gruesome concoction brewed from freshly fed blooderflies.

Henchmen

New Auxiliary Schtick

At the beginning of a scene, a character with this schtick can designate up to five unnamed characters who're nearby and under his ostensible leadership to act as henchmen. So long as henchmen remain, any attack directed at the controlling character automatically hits one of them instead. For each additional schtick purchased, add five henchmen to the total that can be appointed.

Note that PCs with this schtick don't automatically get free minions. They'll still need Dominate, Summoning, contacts, or persistence to attract some "mook armor."

Fragile

New Weakness

Fragile characters have a glass jaw, delicate frame, or such a severe allergy to pain that they go down more easily than your average mook. For each level of Fragile, the Outcome necessary to take out one of these characters is reduced by 1. Only unnamed characters can have Fragile.

Note that Fragile is distinct from Fragility, the unique limitation of the ice falcons described in *Elevator to the Netherworld*, p. 16.

Drinking gives the imbiber Damage Immunity: Creature Powers for the next few hours... along with a craving for fresh blood. (Make a Difficulty 7 Willpower roll; failure means 1 point of Impairment for one day or until more blood is consumed). It's rumored that those who die after drinking a strong batch come back as hopping vampires.

NETHERWORLD PESTS

These little bloodsuckers can be thrown in to spice up any Netherworld encounter. The Group Attack schtick allows them to be easily scaled up or down according to the party's strength.

Blooderfly tea could also be an important plot element, for example, as the only means to placate a pretentious vampire sorcerer or the only safe way to travel through the cavern blocked by the Tentacles of Inappropriate Groping.

Group Attack

New Auxiliary Schtick

Multiple characters with this schtick who're obviously part of a group and who have roughly similar statistics can act and attack together. Roll once for initiative and track shot costs for the group as if they were a single character. The group attacks with a single check, adding +1 AV for each member past the first. If members have varying attributes or AVs, use the highest value among them. (Though if they have wildly divergent stats, they probably shouldn't be taken as a group in the first place.) When taking defensive actions, every member must dodge on the same shot, or smaller groups can split off from the group for the rest of the sequence at the GM's discretion.

GMs should be aware that while this schtick isn't so scary with 2–3 member groups, an army of 50 could easily kill with a single attack, so make sure you scale groups according to the heroes' abilities.

Although Group Attack and Swarming Mass (see p. 55) describe somewhat similar situations and capabilities, their effects are distinct, and they should not be confused. Think of Group Attack first when group members are at least moderately intelligent, are trained to fight as a group, and/or are readily distinct from each other. Swarming Mass is more appropriate when the individuals are nigh mindless, and/or so numerous as to be indistinct from each other.



Origin: *London Arcanotech*

Research Division, 2056

Type: *Luck-sucking gargoyles*

Allegiance: *Architects of the Flesh*

DESCRIPTION

A chi-sucker's gargoyle ancestry can be clearly seen in its stone-like grey flesh, wings, and basic body shape — they are quite obviously descendants of the stone creatures that hunched on churches and cathedrals for centuries, protecting them from dangers both mundane and supernatural. Most chi-suckers are relatively small, at one to two feet from tip of horn to tip of (vestigial) tail. Visual CDCA "improvements" include enlarged, dome-shaped heads that bespeak enhanced intellectual capacity, and — when they open their mouths — tubular, seven-foot tongues that allow chi-suckers to suck chi more efficiently.

BUILDING A BETTER GARGOYLE

Bonengel issued the order to destroy the cathedrals personally; with the Catholic Church officially dissolved, they were nothing more than an anachronism that stood for obeisance to ancient superstition and ir-

Unit #476253

This unit has remained concealed at a Lodge rock garden for close to six months, driving the gardener insane as weeds shoot up in his carefully raked gravel patterns. Already, it has grown more powerful, and can now focus the chi it consumes into harmful blasts of energy. Soon, it hopes to fry out its neural grepper.

Someone Says: "Have you ever noticed that it kinda stinks in here? Not very harmonious, is it?"

Attributes: Bod 7, Chi 3 (Mag 8), Mnd 8, Ref 7

Skills: Creature Powers 17, Intrusion 16, Martial Arts 12

Creature Schticks: Armor, Blast (chi), Chi Desecration (x3), Flight

Weapons: blast (10), punch (8), kick (9)

rational thought. With the Buro's scientific understanding of the power of chi, nobody — Bonengel thought — would fight to save the edifices of Christianity.

When the gargoyles leapt from the parapets and attacked the demolitions crews, he learned otherwise. Still, you don't get to be the ruler of the world with-

Chi Desecration

New Creature Schtick

You drain the positive chi from feng shui sites, depriving those attuned to them of the positive effects they would otherwise experience. To use this ability, you must spend an uninterrupted 24-hour period at the feng shui site in question, feeding from its chi flow and allowing your unnatural essence to permeate it. At the end of this period, the site is considered desecrated.

A desecrated feng shui site gives those attuned to it one less experience point per session than normal. That's not so bad... but what is so bad is that this ability can be used more than once on the same site for cumulative effect, up to a number of times equal to your Magic rating. Multiple desecrations can eventually reverse experience point flow — four desecrations would cause attuned characters to lose one experience point per session, for example. (Though the experience point floor for a character from a session of play is one.) If more than one creature desecrates the same site, these are cumulative, but the maximum number of desecrations that can accumulate is equal to the highest involved desecrator's Magic rating.

As a site grows progressively desecrated, it shows in various cosmetic ways: paint peels, weeds grow, wood rots, and so forth. No matter how many times these problems are repaired, they recur. The problem is with the site's chi, not the composition of its paint.

Desecration is permanent, although an experienced geomancer might be able to reverse the effects of the schtick with magic. Looking for a sufficiently powerful, experienced, and generous geomancer should be the focus of a scenario.

For every two additional schticks you spend on this power, you gain one additional experience point per session for each site you have desecrated — not each measure of desecration, each *individual site* — as you feed on its twisted chi. The maximum benefit is five additional experience points per session, if you buy 11 schticks total and desecrate five different sites. However, if you gain benefits from desecration and that desecration is ever reversed, you suffer the effects of de-attunement (see *Feng Shui*, p. 167).

out having a few monsters of one's own, and the Buro quickly brought the creatures to heel.

The gargoyles were delivered to the CDCA's London division, where they found the stone beings were essentially sedentary creatures attracted by the "flavor" of chi emanating from religious structures. Mucking around (as they are wont to do), the CDCA shrunk the gargoyles' size, boosted their appetite, improved their ability to feed, and made them smarter... *et voila!* Instant chi-boteurs.

The new, improved gargoyles — imaginatively dubbed "chi-suckers" — were ready to be turned loose to subvert enemy feng shui sites, diverting chi flow from those attuned to the site to the creature itself.

HAUNTED HOUSES

Chi-suckers function as saboteurs that can disrupt heroes' feng shui site attunements. When found

Chi-sucker (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "Did you see that? Something moved up in the eaves."

Attributes: Bod 4, Chi 2 (Mag 6), Mnd 7, Ref 5

Skills: Creature Powers 7, Intrusion 12, Martial Arts 6

Creature Schticks: Chi Desecration, Flight

Weapons: punch (5), kick (6)

out, they flee and hide, fighting only when cornered, as a last resort. These tactics give rise to "bug hunt" scenarios where PCs search desperately through property that's become actively cursed, for a weaselly little creature that's grown spiritually fat on stolen fortune. Sure, it can't really hurt or kill them, but it's sneaky, stealthy, and fights like a cornered rat.

CONJUNCTION BUG

Origin: First described in the “Spellbinder” texts (modern Hubei Province, China, 217 BC), but can be found in any feng shui site

Type: Evil insect demon

Allegiance: None

DESCRIPTION

A conjunction bug is a demonic creature resembling a three-foot-long cockroach with a human-like head. Though each one resembles the person or persons responsible for its creation, they all have long wild hair, glowing red eyes, and slobbering mouths filled with jagged teeth. Conjunction bugs can speak, but usually don’t have much to say except to issue threats and streams of obscenities.

WHAT’S YOUR FUNCTION?

Conjunction bugs usually form when a nest of cockroaches is destroyed inside a feng shui site. The spirits of the roaches return from the dead as demons seeking revenge upon not only their exterminators, but also anyone else who dares trespass inside their home.

BUGHUNT

Conjunction bugs avoid direct confrontation; instead, they burrow beneath the floorboards or foundation and radiate waves of destructive chi, causing those in the building to suffer dangerous seizures.

Seizure

New Creature Schtick

You can release waves of harmful chi energy, causing violent seizures in those nearby. Every opponent within two meters must make a Constitution check with a Difficulty equal to your Creature Powers AV, or suffer 1 point of Impairment until he leaves the area of effect. Each additional schtick either adds 1 additional point of Impairment to the effect or doubles the range in meters (from two, to four, to eight, to sixteen, and so on).

Phantom Killer

When he was a mere cockroach, Phantom Killer lived inside a TV set and saw a lot of cheesy wuxia movies. He takes his name from his personal favorite, *The Victim*. Phantom Killer infiltrates feng shui sites, and if his powers do not drive out the inhabitants, he eventually tries to kill them.

Sample Dialogue: “I am the Phantom Killer. I work in secret. No one knows who I’ll kill next.”

Attributes: Bod 8, Chi 0 (Mag 8), Mnd 3, Ref 8

Skills: Creature Powers 14, Info/Wuxia Movies 5, Intrusion 12, Martial Arts 14

Creature Schticks: Burrowing (see *Thorns of the Lotus*, p. 102) (no usable tunnels), Immune to Hand Weapons (except magical weapons and iron hammers), Rancid Breath, Seizure (x3) (2 point of Impairment, 4 meters)

Weapons: fangs (10), rancid breath (10)

Conjunction Bug (Unnamed)

Someone Says: “We’re gonna need a bigger roach motel.”

Attributes: Bod 8, Chi 0 (Mag 8), Mnd 1, Ref 8

Skills: Creature Powers 9, Intrusion 10, Martial Arts 9

Creature Schticks: Burrowing (see *Thorns of the Lotus*, p. 102) (no usable tunnels), Immune to Hand Weapons (except magical weapons and iron hammers), Seizure

Weapons: fangs (10)

A skilled geomancer or practitioner of Eastern medicine can recognize the influence of conjunction bugs on a Difficulty 10 Info/Geomancy or Medicine check. Digging up the bugs and killing them by smashing their heads with an iron hammer is the only sure way to end the infestation. Otherwise, those affected usually end up having to abandon the site.

CORPSE FACTORY

Origin: Cairo CDCA Arcanotech Research Facility, 2056

Type: Zombie-making zombie monster

Allegiance: Architects of the Flesh

DESCRIPTION

The trick to identifying corpse factories is in distinguishing them from their zombie drones. Both look similar — like zombies of the Romero school — with the bloated, pale skin of the recently deceased and eyes thick with cataracts that don't particularly impede their vision. The difference is that while drones are dumb as concrete and can't speak — they just mumble out low, tortured moans — the corpse factories that control them can and do make plans, issue orders, and use group tactics. The factories are also much faster than the drones.

Another way to determine if a given zombie is a corpse factory is to catch it in the act of converting one of its drones into a new corpse factory, which they do by means of the necromantic implanter under the flap of skin on their right palm; when they want to "promote" one of their drones, the flap opens and a disturbingly phallic tube slides out to dump a zombie slug into the soon-to-be-factory's brain.

Both corpse factories and their zombie drones are consumed with lust to kill and zombify. Naturally.

PROJECT: DUSK

The corpse factories came out of Cairo and the North African bureau of the CDCA, specializing in weapons of terror and mass destruction. The project lead was so sure he'd created the ultimate weapon of said mass-destructive terror that he stuck his head in an industrial press.

The corpse factories started like so many other CDCA weapons: a group of monster hunters brought back something new and different from a capture expedition. In this case, it was a walking, flesh-hungry corpse from 69 AD that the locals had called one of the "lonely dead." It could make new zombies, which were enslaved to its will, just by killing people. Fortunately for the human race (and probably the main reason it still exists in junctures after 69), the lonely dead were

Zhan Za

Zhan Za was the original lonely dead captured in 69 AD. He nearly died his first dawn away from his cemetery, and it was only in attempting to stabilize his condition that the CDCA scientists discovered what kind of creature he was. He's cognizant of what he's been made into, and some small part of him (but just a small part) regrets the damage he would wreak on the world if let loose.

Sample Dialogue: "The grave is so cold... share my pain!"

Attributes: Bod 10, Chi 0 (Mag 8), Mnd 5, Ref 6

Skills: Arcanowave Device 15, Creature Powers 17, Martial Arts 12

Arcanowave Schticks: Necromantic Implanter (x3)

Creature Schticks: Will Not Die (x2) (see *Thorns of the Lotus*, p. 104), Zombify

Weapons: punch (11)

Corpse Factory (Generic)

Someone Says: "Watch out for the handjob!"

Attributes: Bod 9, Chi 0 (Mag 7), Mnd 4, Ref 5

Skills: Arcanowave Device 12, Creature Powers 12, Martial Arts 10

Arcanowave Schticks: Necromantic Implanter

Creature Schticks: Will Not Die, Zombify

Weapons: punch (10)

destroyed at dawn if they were away from the cemeteries where they had been buried.

Unfortunately for the human race, the CDCA made a few "improvements." When the cyber-masterminds had finished, they had turned the lonely dead into the corpse factory. The new, improved model had no restrictions on its movement or location, and could make new zombies a lot faster than it could before. It retained the ability to control its victims once they had risen, but the CDCA went one better by developing an arcanowave device called the necromantic implanter, a bit of tech that allowed the corpse factory to shave off

Necromantic Implanter

New Arcanowave Schtick

You have a small device in your wrist that manufactures small slug-like creatures, each containing a small sliver of your free will. The device has a retractable, flexible tube attached to it, which you can extend through a flap of skin in your palm (right where your life-line is, ironically) to excrete a slug at will.

When a slug comes into contact with a zombie corpse's neck (whether it's a zombie corpse you created or not), it burrows into the brainstem and turns the zombie into a new corpse factory. (If not released in immediate proximity to an appropriate host, the slugs die in a matter of seconds. If the zombie doesn't have a brain

stem — its head was crushed in an industrial press, say — the conversion is a non-starter.) Zombie drones so converted get smarter, get to do what they want, and get right to work building themselves their own necromantic implanters out of biological what-have-you and the spare parts they find lying around. This takes anywhere from an hour to a few days, depending on the availability of discarded tech in the creature's surroundings.

You can produce one slug per day per schtick you put into Necromantic Implanter, although you can't stockpile more than your per-day limit. There's no limit to the number of schticks you can take.

Zombify

New Creature Schtick

This schtick is like the existing creature power Corruption (see *Feng Shui*, p. 103), with the following modifications:

- A victim must be killed to be turned into a zombie, not just suffer 25 Wound Points. The same Constitution check is made to avoid this fate, however.
- Instead of taking hold in three midnights, the effect takes over after three hours.
- A corrupted victim is under the absolute control of the corpse factory that corrupted it (or the corpse factory that corrupted the zombie drone that corrupted it, going back through as many drone generations as necessary). There is no range or limit to this absolute domination. If a corpse factory dies, its zombie drone minions become uncontrolled (though no less sociopathic).
- Corruption Points accrue to the corpse factory that controls a given zombie drone, not to the zombie drone that corrupted it. Corpse factories atop vast
- pyramids of zombification can — needless to say — become very, very dangerous. (A newly made corpse factory has no Corruption Points, and controls no drones, even if that particular creature and its progeny corrupted a great many zombie drones before the transformation. All the original progeny remain under the influence of their old master.)
- The creature's statistics only change as described if the zombie drone ever becomes a corpse factory by agency of a necromantic implanter. Otherwise (and in the meantime), it has regular zombie drone statistics.
- In addition to making checks to lose its personality "whenever confronted with the opportunity to act in a savage or monstrous manner," new zombie drones must also make checks whenever they want to resist the mental control of their corpse factory overlord.
- Zombification is not reversible through blood transfusion or the Heal schtick.

a sliver of its free will, put it into one of its zombie drones, and thereby make new corpse factories, capable of spreading the love even further.

CDCA experts estimated that a single parent corpse factory could annihilate an entire city in the course of a week, destroy a country in a month, and cover the world in zombies by the end of a year.

The CDCA has five corpse factories. Each one is kept in a maximum-security biotech containment facility, inside a locked cell, in a sealed tube pumped full of sedative gas. (You don't even want to know what the gas that sedates corpse factories does to the living.) Five junctures, five zombies... good times.

Unnamed Will Not Die

New Creature Schtick

Since unnamed creatures don't track Wound Points, the existing Will Not Die schtick (see *Thorns of the Lotus*, p. 104) doesn't work very well for them. Unnamed creatures may take this schtick, instead.

Creatures with this schtick don't die when they'd otherwise be killed. Instead, they sustain 1 point of Impairment, gaining an additional point each time they'd otherwise die.

Since most unnamed creatures have relatively low AVs, this eventually results in creatures with very little hope of doing even mundane tasks successfully. GMs should begin to disregard such creatures as anything but cosmetic elements of a fight as their Impairment approaches their relevant combat AV.

"THE PEOPLE IT KILLS GET UP AND KILL!"

Watch *Dawn of the Dead* and you'll learn just about everything you need to know about why these things are dangerous with a capital "dangerous." You

Zombie Drone (Unnamed)

Sample Dialogue: "Erm... ungghh..."

Attributes: Bod 8 (Mov 4), Chi 0 (Mag 5), Mnd 1, Ref 4

Skills: Creature Powers 7, Martial Arts 8

Creature Schticks: Regeneration*, Unnamed Will Not Die

Weapons: punch (9)

* Rather than reducing the drone's Wound Point total (since you don't track that for unnamed creatures), Regeneration reduces its running Impairment total by 1 point at the beginning of each sequence.

don't even need to let them loose. The *potential* for escape is threat enough to mobilize a race against time to prevent the end of the human species as we know it. (Of course, why *not* let the thing loose, at least inside the bunker where it's stored? It's the heroes versus the horde, with our guys as *homo sapiens'* last line of defense.)

Or, heck, if you want to make a whole campaign out of the concept, overrun the world with corpse factories. Sure, a couple people may get away in a helicopter... but where's the long term future there?



Origin: Contemporary Hong Kong

Type: Zombie bikers

Allegiance: Eaters of the Lotus

DESCRIPTION

Dead riders wear heavy leathers and full helmets, and ride motorcycles. They have big knives, tire irons, and the occasional machete strapped to their persons or bikes for easy access. Without exception, they smell awful. Even living bikers get a little ripe on the open road, and they don't have rotting flesh to contend with.

Some dead riders are tied to their motorcycles with barbed wire, or attached with steel spikes. Where this has been done, it serves dual purposes. First, it prevents not-so-bright specimens from wandering away from

their hogs when stopped, or falling off when in motion. (Messy business, the latter.) Second, it can serve to keep rotting body parts from flying off on the open road, which allows "veteran" dead riders to serve a little longer before they fall apart entirely.

Dead riders lack independent intelligence, and must be commanded by either the sorcerer who created them or someone he designates. Although the radios in the helmets of many riders allow commands to be issued over a distance, this is difficult if the riders' leader can't see what's going on. So, just like "where there's smoke, there's fire," "where there are zombie riders, there's a Lotus operative."

Jack Nabors

Jack Nabors was a work-a-day personal trainer and bona fide nice guy. He also had a weekend hog hobby, and made the mistake of stopping for a drink at the wrong biker bar. Ji Shan claimed what was left of him. Ironically, Jack's more accepted by his biker fellows post-death... he just doesn't know it.

Someone Says: "Hey you, in the helmet! What died and crawled up your— gack!"

Attributes: Bod 10, Chi 1 (Mag 8), Mnd 3, Ref 8

Skills: Creature Powers 15, Driving 13, Martial Arts 12

Creature Schticks: Inevitable Comeback (x5)

Weapons: spiked baseball bat (14)

Vehicle: Harley-Davidson Sportster (+1/2)

Dead Rider (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "Bring it, black leather. Your punch can't be half as bad as your stink."

Attributes: Bod 9, Chi 1 (Mag 8), Mnd 2, Ref 7

Skills: Creature Powers 8, Driving 8, Martial Arts 8

Creature Schticks: Unnamed Inevitable Comeback (x3)

Weapons: buck knife (11), machete (13), punch (10), tire iron (12)

Vehicle: Various Harleys, Indians, Hondas, Yamahas, BMWs, and custom jobs (+1/2)

Unnamed Inevitable Comeback

New Creature Schtick

Since unnamed creatures don't track Wound Points, the existing Inevitable Comeback schtick doesn't work very well for them. Unnamed creatures may take this schtick, instead.

When a creature with this schtick dies, it falls to apparent death as observers would expect. However, if it then makes a successful Difficulty 10 Constitution check, it rises again at the beginning of the next sequence. If it fails, it remains dead. Only one check may be made.

Multiple schticks of Unnamed Inevitable Comeback allow multiple checks per creature per session. These checks can either apply to multiple deaths, or be used to make multiple checks to overcome the same death, if initial checks fail.

polloi to travel from place to place quickly, or spontaneously communicate halfway around the world.

Dead riders are just one attempt made by Ji Shan, a Lotus operative assigned to the contemporary juncture, to narrow the technology gap. He used them as messengers and quick-fast shock troops. He also lent them out to other Lotus operatives in need of either, even across other junctures, when dire situations pressed.

Ji Shan is dead now. Such is sometimes the fate of clever, ambitious Lotus lieutenants. His innovations, however, live on. (Well, sort of.)

MODERN WAYS

Lotus sorcerers come from a time when the fastest news travels at the speed of a Mongolian horseman. While their sorcery gives them a huge advantage over the technology of their native juncture, their egos make it hard to accept the fact that modern technology (much less future technology) has allowed even the hoi

HELL'S ZOMBIES

Dead riders make handy minions for any Lotus sorcerer. Being vehicle enabled, they're a good addition to a vehicle chase, especially if you're using the chase rules from *Golden Comeback* (p. 113).



DEMON OF SEDUCTION

Origin: The Underworld
Type: Hunks of burnin' love
Allegiance: None

DESCRIPTION

Demons of seduction, called succubi (female) and incubi (male) in the Western world, tempt others to have sex with them. This both exhausts the demons' lovers — sometimes to the point of death — and sustains the demons' life force.

A demon of seduction, in its native form, is a highly alluring specimen of whichever gender it chooses at a given moment. But this beauty is always marred by one hideous, demonic feature. Most often, it's a mouth full of sharp, horrible teeth, but other possibilities run the gamut of disfigurement. Sometimes the feature isn't visible; repulsive smells and sounds are also possible. All these defects, however, are undetectable to those who've fallen victim to these demons' wiles. And it's pretty repugnant to see them fawning (and worse) in apparent indifference to their seducers' foulness.

In addition to its native appearance, a demon of seduction has a unique manifestation of the Blood Drain schtick that allows it to appear to be anyone with whom it's had sex. These forms always conceal the demon's foul characteristic, unless the object of the transforma-

tion had it, too. Most demons have a wide repertoire of such forms.

While demons of seduction can obviously work their wiles in the flesh, many also use dream magic to

Lily

A veteran of her trade, *Lily* is a frequent ally of the Lotus, with whose eunuch sorcerers she feels comfortable relaxing her "professional" facade. They've got no personal interest in her, nor she in them, which she finds kind of refreshing.

Sample Dialogue: "Come over here so I can take you in, all at once."

Attributes: Bod 4 (Con 5), Chi 0 (Mag 7), Mnd 5 (Cha 9), Ref 6

Skills: Deceit 12, Martial Arts 7, Seduction 16, Sorcery 14

Creature Schticks: Blood Drain* (x3) (energy drain, voice gain, visage gain), Insubstantial (x4) (lead, wood), Transformation*

Sorcery Schticks: Dream, Fertility, Influence†

Unique Schticks: Reaping and Sowing

Weapons: bite (5), punch (5)

* A demon of seduction's Blood Drain and Transformation work differently than normal. Sex is the operative draining "attack" and blood is not involved per se, although a Creature Powers check against the victim's Chi or Magic rating is required as normal for Blood Drain. "Visage gain" means the demon can use Transformation to take on the appearance of anyone it has drained. "Energy drain" works like AV drain, but affects Constitution rather than a skill value; if a victim's Constitution is reduced to zero, he dies. Demons of seduction do not change their statistics when they change form, as other creatures with Transformation do.

† In addition to the normal effects of Influence, anyone affected by a demon of seduction's Influence is rendered permanently incapable of seeing that demon's physical flaw, even if they later learn the demon's true nature and are relieved of its domination.

Unnamed Demon of Seduction (Generic)

Sample Dialogue: "Shh... shhhh... stop talking, lover..."

Attributes: Bod 4 (Con 5), Chi 0 (Mag 6), Mnd 5 (Cha 7), Ref 5

Skills: Deceit 10, Martial Arts 7, Seduction 14, Sorcery 11

Creature Schticks: Blood Drain* (x3) (energy drain, voice gain, visage gain), Insubstantial (x2) (dirt, lead, leather, wood), Transformation*

Sorcery Schticks: Dream, Fertility, Influence†

Unique Schticks: Reaping and Sowing

Weapons: bite (5), punch (5)

*, † As Lily, above.

Dream

New Sorcery Schtick

The sorcerer can create and manipulate dreams, drive the unwilling to slumber, and read portents in dreams. Backlash results in the caster being knocked into an unconscious sleep beset with unspeakable nightmares.

Dream Special Effects

Mold Dream. The sorcerer can manipulate a sleeper's dreams, controlling what they're about. Inserting some element — generally a person, thing, or place — into a dream takes a check with Difficulty equal to the dreamer's Chi or Magic, whichever is higher. The Difficulty is increased by 3 if the sorcerer wants to control, in a general way, how the element behaves or interacts with the dreamer. The basic Difficulty might allow the introduction of a sword or the dreamer's mother into a dream, for example, while an increased Difficulty would allow the caster to specify that the sword pierces the dreamer, or the dreamer's mother scolds him. To create and control all elements of a dream requires Difficulty of Chi or Magic plus 9. This lets the sorcerer dictate everything that happens in as much detail as he'd like.

Nightmares. The caster can cause a sleeper to suffer horrible nightmares. The base Difficulty is the higher of the dreamer's Chi or Magic, and is increased by 3 or 9, per mold dream, if the caster wants to control the content of the nightmare to a lesser or greater degree,

respectively. Nightmares are upsetting and prevent good rest; consecutive nights of restlessness eventually result in waking Impairment, depending on the victim's Constitution and the GM's discretion.

Shut Eye. Causes drowsiness, sleep, or outright unconsciousness. Difficulty is the highest of the target's Chi, Magic, or Constitution. Simple success makes the victim drowsy to the tune of 1 point of Impairment for the duration of the scene, an Outcome of 3 or more puts the target into a regular sleep (from which normal interruptions like noise or pain awaken him, so this isn't all that useful in combat), and an outcome of 9 or more knocks him flat unconscious.

Portend. The sorcerer either sleeps or enters a trance where he can observe, but not affect, another sleeper's dreams as they unfold. Based on what he sees, he then portends the dreamer's future. This is similar to Divination's prediction special effect, except that it applies in a personal way to the dreamer rather than the world at large, and is couched in the symbolism of dreams. For extra credit, use a dream dictionary to describe specific symbols and what they augur (though try to find Asian rather than Freudian or Jungian sources). The content of dreams is frequently information that the dreamer's ancestors want to impart, especially if they think his life's going in the wrong direction.

seduce and make love to their victims. Even in dreams, though, demons of seduction are limited to taking on the forms they can have in the waking world.

LUST IN THEIR HEARTS

Demons of seduction pop up in the folklore of cultures around the world. The biblical Lilith was said to be one, there are Middle Eastern versions, and some theorize Russian rusalka are demons of seduction, as well. It's conceivable that Cleopatra and Casanova were actually demons of seduction, and the Don Juan legend may have roots with them, too.

Demons of seduction are often associated with "bad" love and sex: carnal, jealous, petty, casual. It's not

theoretically impossible for a succubus to settle down into a monogamous relationship... but nobody's ever heard of it. (On the other hand, it would make great melodrama.)

Although demons of seduction are, themselves, both sterile and infertile, they can harvest semen from men during sex, which they can then use to impregnate either human women or other demons during subsequent intercourse. This capacity, obviously, can serve demonic ends in a wide variety of corrupt ways.

THE JOY OF SEX

When introducing demons of seduction to a storyline, make good use of dreams. At the very least, de-

scribe characters' dreams to them in order to establish mood, gives clues, and set the stage for encounters to come. To take it one step farther, invoke the hoary cliché where you begin some scene normally, introduce strangeness incrementally, and then, when the weirdness meter is pegged and the players are thrown for a loop, smash cut to a character waking up in a sweat — it was all a dream.

As unusual as it is for a *Feng Shui* creature, demons of seduction are wasted as straight up combat opponents. In addition to being relatively weak in a fight, a hand-to-hand battle against one squanders all its potential for manipulation and subterfuge. At the very least, a combat situation involving a demon of seduction should involve one or more of the heroes being under the demon's influence, fighting for the other side. Encourage the players involved to really get into playing for the opposite team. Their characters think it's all just a misunderstanding, making it pure melodramatic gold. Needless to say, a demon of seduction's go-to power is Influence, especially enchantment and illusion.

Reaping and Sowing

Unique Schtick

A demon of seduction who has sex with a male can collect his seed within its body, and then, transforming into a member of the other sex, plant that seed within a female by having sex with her. Using fertility magic, the demon can make it very likely that the union-at-one-remove will conceive a child, which is frequently tainted in some way due to the circumstances of conception.

Don't ignore the inter-party dynamic when incorporating demons of seduction into your story. Consider how the demon can play multiple lovers against each other, and consider (and encourage) the ways jealousy might play out among the party.

Although theoretically possible (and statistics are provided), unnamed demons of seduction should be very, very rare. Use those stats mostly as a starting point for named demons of seduction you create.



Origin: *Hell of Burning Water*
Type: *Ravenous demonic amphibian*
Allegiance: *None*

DESCRIPTION

A demonfish is a lot like those scary deep-sea fish with giant mouths, knife-sharp teeth, crazy floating tendrils, and little glowing lights on their heads so they can see in pitch black ocean trenches.

There are five differences:

1. Demonfish are from Hell, not the ocean.
2. Demonfish are the size of horses.
3. Demonfish have human arms and hands — six of 'em — among all their other weird-ass, alien-looking, floating appendages. They can grab stuff and use tools.
4. Instead of giving off light, demonfish give off dark. They use a creepy demon-sense — like sonar, but with waves of demonic chi — to know where things are. The darkness helps them overwhelm opponents who need light to see.

5. Water's their native environment, but land isn't a problem. Out of the water, they get around on their arms, walking and climbing with equal facility. Being on land for them is a lot like going to Vegas for us — great place to indulge the vices, wouldn't want to live there.

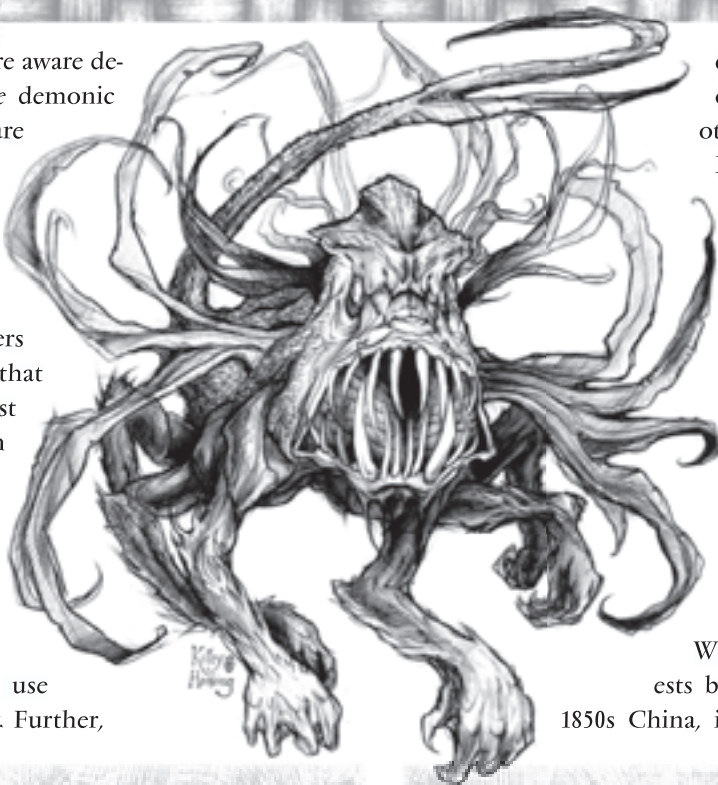
Underwater, demonfish appear larger than they are (when they can be seen at all), their appendages floating out around them. On land, the appendages drag along behind them like seaweed, all wet and oozy.

GINSU OF THE DEEP

To this point in the secret war, demonfish have only been encountered in the Netherworld, where they inhabit the Sunless Sea.

"Demonfish" continues on the next page.

Only the Lotus are aware demonfish are *bona fide* demonic (not that others care about the distinction between “hella dangerous” and “hella dangerous + demonic” all that much). Lotus sorcerers have also discovered that demonfish are almost easy to summon in darkness and water: subtract 3 from the normal Invocation Difficulty, or summon 2d6 unnamed demonfish for the price of one if you use the normal Difficulty. Further,



demonfish aren't bright or picky, as opposed to other demons you've got to Dominate or bargain with. Demonfish, turned loose, hunt down living creatures and eat them. They're unsuitable for complex plans, but make great (if indiscriminate) shock troops.

Given all this, demonfish will become increasingly common as the Lotus think of more uses for them, and “deploy” them more widely.

With British shipping interests being such a key factor in 1850s China, it's beyond foregone that

The Fisherman

This crafty, crusty old demon — much smarter than the average demonfish — taught itself to use the crate of spearguns some of its victims dropped over the gunwale of their vessel a couple months back. It uses all of its arms to use them two or three at a time when it can, to minimize the interruption of reloading.

Someone Says: “Please, someone tell me that thing's not holding what I think it is.”

Attributes: Bod 9 (Str 10, Mov 11/7), Chi 0, Mnd 5 (Cha 0), Ref 8

Skills: Creature Powers 15, Guns 12, Martial Arts 14

Creature Schticks: Abysmal Fangs (x2), Amphibian (+2 water / -2 land), Multiple Arms (x3)* (see p. 34), Fog of Darkness

Weapons: fangs (15), punch (11), speargun† (13*/6/1)

*The benefits of two of the three pairs are lost on land, where the Fisherman must use them to get around.

† Can't be used past short range. Reload time is 5 shots. In addition to the damage, a speargun spear can be attached to a cord or cable, which, if the spear sets properly (on an Outcome of 3 or more), can be used to reel the victim in with a Strength check that uses the victim's Strength as its Difficulty.

Demonfish (Unnamed)

Someone Says: “I had some fighting fish when I was a kid, how bad can— hey, who turned out th— GAK!”

Attributes: Bod 7 (Mov 9/5), Chi 0, Mnd 2, Ref 7

Skills: Creature Powers 10, Martial Arts 9

Creature Schticks: Abysmal Fangs, Amphibian (+2 water / -2 land), Multiple Arms (x3)* (see p. 34), Fog of Darkness

Weapons: fangs (10), punch (8)

*The benefits of two of the three pairs are lost on land, where the demonfish must use them to get around.

Fog of Darkness

New Creature Schtick

You can create a field of darkness around yourself and manipulate it, making it more or less impenetrable at will. The fog extends 3–5 meters, depending on its intensity. In game terms, choose one of the four entries on the Cover Chart (see *Feng Shui*, p. 138) and halve the Difficulty listed (because it provides non-blocking cover) for the modifier to hit you and anyone next to you. Use the full penalty for perception-related checks, such as to see you, use tools within the field, and so on.

demonfish will soon start showing up to harass Guiding Hand and Ascended operations in that juncture.

HEEERE FISHIE-FISHIE-FISHIE

First things first: go ahead and call them demonfish at the game table. The benefit of the word “demon” is that it makes them sound scary. The benefit of the word “fish” is that it plants the idea they’re going to stay in the water. Bad assumption, secret warrior — but it’s an assumption that gives you a great surprise

to spring at the worst possible moment, like when the heroes have just, by the skin of their teeth, beaten a swarm of demonfish to land where they erroneously believe they’ll be safe.

Make sure to use demonfish in fight settings where you can make the most of their amphibian capabilities: your sewers, your dockyards, your offshore drilling platforms. Places where the level of ambient light is low and changing also work to their benefit, because they can put their powers of darkness to best use in an ambush.

Because demonfish are indiscriminate, they don’t work very well as part of a larger fighting force.



Origin: First described in the “Spellbinder” texts (modern Hubei Province, China, 217 BC), but can be found in the 69 and 1850 junctures

Type: Demonic chicken embryo

Allegiance: None

DESCRIPTION

An egg demon looks like an embryonic chicken, with undeveloped eyes, featherless wings, and wobbly little feet. Because an egg demon is so weak and scrawny, it never leaves its egg, keeping the rest of its body protected within the shell. When in danger, or when it wishes to disguise itself, the demon pulls its limbs inside the shell and closes flaps over the openings, making it indistinguishable from a normal egg.

WHICH CAME FIRST?

Egg demons sometimes form when a fertilized chicken egg is collected from a farm. If the egg is not eaten promptly, the chicken embryo dies, and returns from the dead as an evil demon to unleash its vengeance upon breakfasters everywhere. These fowl monsters typically lurk around factory farms, breakfast buffets, and other places where eggs are gathered or eaten.

Though they are consumed with hatred and mostly obsessed with killing or enslaving those who eat eggs, egg demons are intelligent, and some are even capable

Egg Fu Yung

Egg Fu Yung wants to be a master criminal in the tradition of “yellow peril” villains like Fu Manchu, but as a demonic chicken egg, he has difficulty getting the unquestioning obedience from his followers he truly deserves.

Sample Dialogue: “You and your ovivorous kin shall — cluck! — one day kiss my shell. I — cluck! — swear it!”

Attributes: Bod 4 (Mov 7), Chi 8 (For 3), Mnd 6 (Cha 9), Ref 5 (Spd 8)

Skills: Creature Powers 9, Martial Arts 9

Creature Schticks: Abysmal Beak

General Transformed Animal Schticks: Nauseating Touch

Transformed Rooster Schticks: Crow, Display, Flight

Transformed Tortoise Schticks: Shell (x2)

Weapons: pointy beak (7)

of speech. The smarter specimens are noted for having delusions of grandeur that far exceed their frail bodies and ridiculous appearances.

Egg Demon (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "Umm... when's the last time you cleaned out your fridge?"

Attributes: Bod 3 (Mov 6), Chi 6 (For 1), Mnd 4 (Cha 7), Ref 4 (Spd 7)

Skills: Creature Powers 8, Martial Arts 8

Creature Schticks: Abysmal Beak

General Transformed Animal Schticks: Nauseating Touch

Transformed Rooster Schticks: Flight

Transformed Tortoise Schticks: Shell (x2)

Weapons: pointy beak (6)

Nauseating Touch

New General Transformed Animal Schtick

Chi: 3 / Shots: 3

Make an unarmed Martial Arts attack. If it hits, it does normal damage and the victim must make a Constitution check with a Difficulty equal to your Martial Arts AV, or contract food poisoning (salmonella in the case of an egg demon).

Those who are affected immediately gain 2 points of Impairment from cramps, vomiting, and diarrhea. An affected character remains sick for 24 hours.

FOOD FIGHT

Egg demons prefer to attack by surprise, disguising themselves as normal eggs and hiding in baskets, egg cartons, refrigerators, or similar containers. Then, when their victims least expect danger, they take to the

air and attack.

Egg demons use schticks as if they were ascended animals instead of supernatural creatures. They can use the following schticks: Flight (rooster), Shell (tortoise), and Nauseating Touch (described here). Named egg demons usually have access to one or more additional Rooster schticks.



Origin: The Netherworld

Type: Physical manifestation of feng shui

Allegiance: None

DESCRIPTION

Elemental spirits look a lot like humans, but there's always something slightly "wrong" about them:

- Fire spirits smell like smoke and anything they touch is smudged with ash.
- Water spirits smell like salt water and anything they touch is splashed with water.
- Metal spirits have a metallic sheen to their skin, and anything they touch is smudged with rust.
- Wood spirits have rough, bark-like skin, and anything they touch is layered with sap.
- Earth spirits sound like grinding stone when they move, and anything they touch is smudged with dirt.

ELEMENTARY

Skilled geomancers can alter a site's feng shui and call forth its elemental energies, giving the elements intelligence and human form. These elemental spirits will serve the geomancer, but if such a spirit is killed, it weakens the site's chi, so they are rarely summoned except as a last resort. Similarly, if a geomancer is killed, any spirits under his control become free-willed beings, and the chi they once provided to the site is lost. Generally speaking, summoned elemental spirits are unnamed mooks, while free-willed elemental spirits are named characters.

Elemental

"From earth I came, into the ground you'll go."

At some point in your past, you remember being one with the chi of a place of harmony, a feng shui site. Then, at a time of great peril, a geomancer summoned you forth to fight. The site you defended was destroyed, so now you wander the junctures waging war against those who sacked your home. Or, perhaps they simply took over, and even now pervert its energies to their warped ends. Either way, you've got some ass to kick.



Juncture: 69, 1850, contemporary, 2056

Attributes: Bod 4
Chi =8
Mnd 4
Ref 4

Add 3 to one primary attribute. Add 2 to a different primary attribute. Add 1 to a third primary attribute.

Skills: Martial Arts +6 (10) [Max 14]
Info/Geomancy +6 (10)

If you wish, substitute "Sorcery +6 (=14)" for Martial Arts. Add 4 Skill Bonuses either way.

Schticks: Elemental Body, plus 3 fu schticks or 3 sorcery schticks

Quick Schtick Pick: Elemental Body (earth), Claw of the Tiger, Tiger Stance, Unyielding Tiger Stance

Limitation: You can't be healed by characters using the Medicine skill, unless they learned it in 69 AD.

Wealth Level: poor

"Elemental Spirits " continues on the next page.

NATURE'S WRATH

Summoning a spirit requires an Info/Geomancy stunt by a character attuned to the site, with a Difficulty determined by the GM. The types of elementals that can be called forth depend on the site. An earth spirit could be called from a rock garden, and if the garden had a pond, the geomancer could probably summon a water spirit or even a wood spirit.

Elemental Body

New Creature Schtick

You appear to be a normal being, but are actually made of living earth, fire, water, metal, or wood.

Earthly Body: Provides 1 point of armor-like Toughness bonus, adds 1 to damage values for unarmed hand-to-hand attacks, and is immune to unarmed attacks (except fu schticks).

Fiery Body: Adds 1 point of magical fire damage to unarmed hand-to-hand attacks, is immune to fire (except magical fire), and can set flammable objects (like paper, cloth, gasoline, etc.) on fire just by touching them (3 shots).

Metallic Body: Gets 1 point of armor-like Toughness bonus, adds 1 to damage values for unarmed hand-to-hand attacks, and is immune to hand-to-hand weapons (except for magical weapons and wooden clubs).

Wooden Body: Gets 1 point of armor-like Toughness bonus, adds 1 to damage values for unarmed hand-to-hand attacks, and is immune to hand-to-hand weapons (except for magical weapons and metal axes).

Watery Body: Increases Dodge AV by 1, is immune to Blasts (except for fire), and can squeeze through any opening with an area of 12 square inches or greater (3 shots).

Treat the immunities described above as similar to the Damage Immunity creature schtick. This schtick can normally only be taken by elementals, and can't normally be purchased with experience points after character creation. GMs who allow exceptions for unusual circumstances should charge players 5–6 times the normal number of experience points for these schticks.

Jasper Lee

The Jammers freed Jasper from a sacred burial cave. Now he plans to liberate his other elemental brethren.

Sample Dialogue: "I'm going to pound you into the dirt!"

Attributes: Bod 7, Chi 8, Mnd 5, Ref 6

Skills: Info/Geomancy 11, Intimidation 9, Martial Arts 12

Creature Schticks: Elemental Body (earth)

Fu Schticks: Claw of the Tiger, Tiger Stance, Unyielding Tiger Stance

Weapons: punch (9), kick (10)

Earth Elemental (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "Remember to wipe your feet after kicking its ass!"

Attributes: Bod 5, Chi 6, Mnd 3, Ref 4

Skills: Info/Geomancy 7, Intimidation 5, Martial Arts 8

Creature Schticks: Elemental Body (earth)

Fu Schticks: Claw of the Tiger

Weapons: punch (7), kick (8)

Caliente Rodriguez

Caliente was summoned to act as a concubine, but she seduced her summoner and then used her powers to kill him.

Sample Dialogue: "Is it hot in here, or is it just me?"

Attributes: Bod 6, Chi 8, Mnd 5, Ref 7

Skills: Info/Geomancy 11, Martial Arts 13, Seduction 9

Creature Schticks: Elemental Body (fire)

Fu Schticks: Fire Fist, Fire Stance, Fire Strike

Weapons: punch (8), kick (9)

Fire Elemental (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "Don't you know smoking's bad for you?"

Attributes: Bod 4, Chi 6, Mnd 3, Ref 5

Skills: Info/Geomancy 7, Martial Arts 9, Seduction 5

Creature Schticks: Elemental Body (fire)

Fu Schticks: Fire Strike

Weapons: punch (6), kick (7)

Holly Chow

Holly was conjured up from Stonehenge and freed by a friendly geomancer.

Sample Dialogue: "Can I help you with that splinter?"

Attributes: Bod 5, Chi 8, Mnd 7, Ref 6

Skills: Info/Geomancy 13, Medicine 11, Sorcery 14

Creature Schticks: Elemental Body (wood)

Sorcery Schticks: Blast (chi), Fertility, Healing

Weapons: blast (10)

Wood Elemental (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "All right! My very own mokojin!"

Attributes: Bod 3, Chi 6, Mnd 5, Ref 4

Skills: Info/Geomancy 9, Medicine 7, Sorcery 10

Creature Schticks: Elemental Body (wood)

Sorcery Schticks: Blast (chi)

Weapons: blast (8)

Slippery Chang

Slippery took up a life of crime when his Lotus-eating summoner fell in battle against the Ascended.

Sample Dialogue: "Wanna see me do the wave?"

Attributes: Bod 5, Chi 8, Mnd 6, Ref 7

Skills: Info/Geomancy 12, Intrusion 11, Sorcery 14

Creature Schticks: Elemental Body (water)

Sorcery Schticks: Blast (acid), Movement, Weather

Weapons: blast (10)

Water Elemental (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "Time to pound the surf!"

Attributes: Bod 3, Chi 6, Mnd 4, Ref 5

Skills: Info/Geomancy 8, Intrusion 7, Sorcery 10

Creature Schticks: Elemental Body (water)

Sorcery Schticks: Blast (acid)

Weapons: blast (8)

Dick Steel

Dick fancies himself a hard-boiled, kung-fu fighting private detective in the tradition of Sam Spade.

Sample Dialogue: "Sorry, I'm a little rusty."

Attributes: Bod 7, Chi 8, Mnd 6, Ref 5

Skills: Detective 7, Info/Geomancy 12, Martial Arts 14

Creature Schticks: Elemental Body (metal)

Fu Schticks: Bite of the Dragon, Breath of the Dragon, Claw of the Dragon

Weapons: punch (9), kick (10)

Metal Elemental (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "What're yew, huh? Some kinda fer-rin' robot er somethin'?"

Attributes: Bod 5, Chi 6, Mnd 4, Ref 3

Skills: Info/Geomancy 8, Martial Arts 10

Creature Schticks: Elemental Body (metal)

Fu Schticks: Bite of the Dragon

Weapons: punch (7), kick (8)





Origin: China, 69 AD
Type: Supernatural animal
Allegiance: None

DESCRIPTION

A feng huang is an unusual-looking bird with the head of a swan, the beak of a rooster, the throat of a swallow, the neck of a snake, and the tail of a peacock. Its has a striped pattern of plumage in the five fundamental colors of black, white, red, green, and yellow, and its song makes up the five basic notes of the Chinese musical scale.

PRETTY BIRD

The feng huang, or “Asian phoenix,” is a magical bird whose origin is shrouded in mystery. Unlike the phoenix of the Middle East, the Asian phoenix is not reborn from its ashes, nor does it burst into flames. Instead, they descend from the sky as an omen when a virtuous ruler is born, or to signify other important events. They are usually encountered in matched pairs, male and female (though technically the feng are the male and the huang are the female).

FLIPPING THE IMPERIAL BIRD

All feng huang are named creatures. Without exception, they embody Confucian virtues and are dedi-

cated foes of evil. The female feng huang uses her magical powers to soothe demons and other foul creatures, while the male feng huang uses his considerable combat abilities to pummel his opponents into chicken feed.

Five Notes in Progression

Five Notes in Progression is deeply disappointed with Gao Zhang and the way the Eaters of the Lotus have corrupted the imperial government. She would lend her support to a champion if she could only find someone brave enough to stand up to the eunuch. Unlike her mate, *Five Colors in Motion*, she feels that if they were to take direct action, it would cheapen the striving of humanity’s heroes.

Someone Says: “It may be trying to peck my eyes out, but I could stand here and listen to it all day.”

Attributes: Bod 6, Chi 10, Mnd 10, Ref 12

Skills: Creature Powers 14, Info/Music 16, Martial Arts 16

Creature Schticks: Death Resistance, Inevitable Comeback, Mesmerizing Song

Weapons: pointy beak (8)

Five Colors in Motion

Unlike *Five Notes in Progression*, *Five Colors in Motion* wants to take on the Eaters of the Lotus himself. So far she’s managed to dissuade him, but it’s only a matter of time before he gets fed up with the situation and mounts an assault on the palace.

Someone Says: “Who’d have guessed something so beautiful could kick butt so prodigiously?”

Attributes: Bod 10, Chi 8, Mnd 8, Ref 6 (Agl 12)

Skills: Creature Powers 14, Martial Arts 18

Creature Schticks: Death Resistance, Inevitable Comeback

Fu Schticks: Fire Strike, Fire Stance, Fire Fist

Weapons: pointy beak (12)

Mesmerizing Song

New Creature Schtick

You can entrance an opponent with beautiful singing. Make a Creature Powers check, with a Difficulty equal to the Willpower rating of a chosen opponent. If successful, the opponent can’t do anything but listen to the hypnotic song (passive dodge only). This lasts until you either stop singing or the opponent is the subject of an attack. It takes 3 shots to start singing, but once the song begins, you can move and act normally as long as you don’t speak, make a bite attack, or do something else that would prevent singing. Each additional schtick spent on this ability allows you to entrance an additional foe.

FLYING ANCESTRAL PLAQUE

Origin: 69, 1850, and contemporary junctures

Type: Possessed, flying hunk of wood

Allegiance: Family or clan

DESCRIPTION

A flying ancestral plaque is a rectangular block of wood, or occasionally stone or metal. Marked upon its surface is the name of a departed ancestor, and possibly a quick biography as well.

Normally, the plaque is inert, but when it attacks it grows wings and a biting mouth. The precise nature of this transformation varies according to the personality of the ancestor; for example, a gentle and grandmotherly sorceress's plaque might grow nightingale wings and attack with a beak, while the plaque of an evil necromancer might sprout bat wings and slavering fangs.

ANCESTRAL SPIRITS

An ancestral plaque is usually placed in a household shrine and acts as a "focal point" for a departed ancestor, funneling sacrifices into the hereafter and allowing the ancestor to enjoy food, drink, money, or other amenities of the living world. In addition to easing the difficulties of the afterlife, the flow of sacrifices also forms a conduit that allows the ancestor to have some effect on the physical world. Usually this gives the deceased's descendants simple good luck, but if the dearly departed was a sorcerer or kung fu master, more

Grandmaster Lau's Flying Ancestral Plaque

This particular ancestral plaque is dedicated to the drunken martial arts master known as Grandmaster Lau.

Someone Says: "I'm sorry Grandmaster Lau — now please stop biting me!"

Attributes: Bod 6, Chi 8, Mnd 4, Ref 9

Skills: Creature Powers 14, Martial Arts 14

Creature Schticks: Abysmal Spines (fangs), Flight, Tenacious Hold, Unliving (see p. 30)

Weapons: fangs (9)

Flying Ancestral Plaque (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "Mind your manners, or Grandfather will kick your ass."

Attributes: Bod 4, Chi 6, Mnd 2, Ref 7

Skills: Creature Powers 11, Martial Arts 11

Creature Schticks: Abysmal Spines (fangs), Flight, Tenacious Hold, Unliving (see p. 30)

Weapons: fangs (7)

Tenacious Hold

New Creature Schtick

You have difficulty letting go. To use this schtick, grab hold of an opponent by making a Martial Arts attack with a -2 penalty. If the attack hits, it does the usual damage, and you gain a hold. On your next action, you automatically hit again, doing the same damage as the previous original attack + 1. This continues on subsequent actions, with the damage increasing by an additional point for each additional attack, until the target's dead or you release your hold.

A held victim can try to escape a tenacious hold as a normal combat action by making a Martial Arts check

with a Difficulty equal to his oppressor's Creature Powers AV.

Attacking a creature that has a victim in a tenacious hold can be dangerous; if such an attack misses, a second attack (with no additional shot-cost) must be made against its victim.

A second schtick in Tenacious Hold reduces the initial attack's AV penalty to 0. It can't be purchased more than twice.

potent help is available: When the ancestor's home or descendants are threatened, the ancestor can channel chi energy into the plaque, bringing it to life and sending it to attack intruders.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Flying ancestral plaques dive down on enemies from above, trying to bite them on the head, face, or neck (kind of like the flying *Necronomicon* from *Army of Darkness*). Once it latches on to a victim, it usually doesn't let go until it is destroyed or its foe is lying on the ground in a quivering heap.



FLYING HEAD NETWORK

Origin: Biomass Reprocessing Center
Type: Winged heads with arcanotech inside
Allegiance: Architects of the Flesh

DESCRIPTION

At least as much time — and probably more — was put into the aesthetics of the flying heads of the Buro's flying head networks as was spent on the reconnaissance and communication functions they were requisitioned for. The extra time was well spent. Flying head networks cause pants-wetting terror in all but the most hardened veterans of the secret war.

Individual heads are just that: severed human heads, with gore and gristle dangling around a turret-mounted light gun that amounts to a Buro 9A. Each head has bat wings, a mouthful of needle-sharp teeth, and drips the green goo that fills the nutrient tanks in which they recharge and revitalize between deployments. Flying heads have relatively simple anti-gravity devices implanted in their necks and miniaturized cameras within their pupil-less eyes.

What's really terrifying, though, is that these flying heads are never encountered singly, but always as networks of dozens or even hundreds of heads working together. All of the heads in a given network are cloned from the same parent head, and what one sees, all remember.

"Grip"

One of the lone heads kept behind at Buro HQ to give the high-ups a window on front-line action, Grip — as he's been dubbed — is frequently and roundly mocked by the mid-level officers who work with him for his inability to manipulate physical objects. It's only a matter of time before irritation becomes homicidal mania. It's a short road for an abomination.

Somebody Says: "Yo, Grip, pass me the— oh, sorry! Ha, ha, ha!"

Attributes: Bod 5, Chi 1 (Mag 8), Mnd 7, Ref 10

Skills: Arcanowave Devices 11, Creature Powers 8, Guns 10

Arcanowave Schticks: Threat Evaluator, Wave Scanner

Creature Schticks: Flight

Weapons: bite (6), turret-gun (10/1/17+1)

THERE'S NO "BURO" IN "BUREAUCRACY"

The CDCA often creates new monsters by applying the "Let C" Principle — as in, "Let's see what hap-



pens when we stick this gadget into that monster!" The flying heads are an exception. BuroCommander Kale Dyson wrote the initial brief for a mobile surveillance network that incorporated the abomination shock-and-horror factor.

At first, Dyson encountered a lot of opposition from the CDCA scientists who were placed under his command. They preferred to work without supervision and were unused to military discipline. Dyson, in turn, found it difficult to work with scientists whose expertise in the still-new field of arcanotechnology was tenuous at best. But he pushed them hard, and with each new version — and as much as the lab-heads hated to admit it — the creatures got better. When Dyson was finally satisfied, the first flying head network was deployed in a military action whose enemy casualty rate was virtually unprecedented.

For his trouble, Dyson was rewarded with the leadership of a massive BTM/CDCA cross-services project with dozens of scientists under his command. Within a week, he'd been "accidentally" contaminated with arcanowave radiation that caused sentient boils to erupt all over his body and scream profanities at his superior officers. This, predictably, ended his career. Military officers hardly ever try to obtain authority over CDCA scientists anymore.

C³: COMMAND, COORDINATE, AND CREEPIFY

A flying head network's main purpose is battle-field surveillance and communications. The visual

Flying Head (Unnamed)

Somebody Says: "Heads up! — No, literally!"

Attributes: Bod 5, Chi 1 (Mag 8), Mnd 6, Ref 8

Skills: Arcanowave Devices 9, Creature Powers 8, Guns 8

Arcanowave Schticks: Threat Evaluator, Wave Scanner

Creature Schticks: Flight

Weapons: bite (6), turret-gun (10/1/17+1)

Flying Head Suicide Bomber (Unnamed)

Somebody Says: "Sure, it's ugly, but they're mostly harm! — **KERBLAM!**"

Attributes: Bod 5, Chi 1 (Mag 8), Mnd 6, Ref 8

Skills: Arcanowave Devices 9, Creature Powers 8, Guns 8

Arcanowave Schticks: Threat Evaluator, Wave Scanner

Creature Schticks: Flight (x2) (Move 7)

Weapons: bite (6), Buro 9A (10/1/17+1) built into neck, bomb ("big explosion" — see "Explosions," *Feng Shui* p. 140)

feeds from the camera eyes of all the heads in the network can be tapped at will by the network's (human) commander on the ground to give him instant access to any image any head can see. Also, since each head knows what the others know, they can help keep dispersed individuals and units in communication with each other, over any distance, even across junctures. The Buro brass especially like this feature, because by keeping a single head from each network in 2056 Geneva, they can get an unvarnished idea of the real situation on the ground anywhere there's a network operating.

A few special-design flying heads exist. These often possess extra or special armament. A few have been fitted with bombs for suicide runs, for example. Most, however, only use their weaponry in self-defense or times of truly hellish need. If a commander gets to the point where he's ordering a flying head network into battle, he's already dialing for reinforcements.



Origin: Indonesia, 1850 and contemporary junctures

Type: Flying dagger

Allegiance: None

DESCRIPTION

A flying keris is a foot-long, double-edged dagger with a wavy blade that gets asymmetrically wider as it gets closer to the hilt. The crossguard, known as a “ganja,” is pointed on one end and blunt on the other. Flying keris knives are often fashioned from a layered combination of iron and steel, known as “watered” or “Damascus” steel, and the hilts are often made to resemble human figures or demonic creatures.

SPIRIT KNIVES

According to the famous nineteenth century Thai novel *Kung Chang Khun Phan*, the forging of an enchanted keris dagger requires a vast array of materials including “iron from the spire of a relic shrine, coffin nails of those who had died violent deaths, metal of a black bronze lance, a copper keris and a broken sword, nails from city gates... black bronze, red gold, and silver.” Once the blade is fashioned, it is soaked in an alchemical solution, and is possessed of great power.

Supposedly, the keris knives used by gurus of the Indonesian martial art pentjak silat have the power to move or even fight on their own. This is not fanciful legend; these blades are possessed by powerful spirits and make dangerous adversaries. Usually a guru passes

his knife on to a student before he dies, but if the guru dies unexpectedly (in a fight, say), the magical knife becomes a free-willed creature.

ART OF EVASION

Flying keris knives attack without hesitation or fear. As living blades, their martial arts skills far surpass all but the most adept masters. Fortunately, they have a weakness that can be exploited — they love music (since pentjak silat is usually practiced to music), and can often be distracted by a well-played tune.

The Pramana Blade

The famous pentjak silat guru known only as Pramana, which means “wisdom,” used this rather plain-looking keris until his death at the hands of the Ascended. Despite his death, his magic blade lives on, and is attempting to avenge his death by killing every transformed animal in the world. It’s powerful enough that it might actually stand a chance.

Someone Says: “So this is the blade of the legendary Pramana...”

Attributes: Bod 10, Chi 10, Mnd 5, Ref 15

Skills: Creature Powers 15, Martial Arts 22

Creature Schticks: Armor (x2), Death Resistance, Flight, Inevitable Comeback, Unliving

Weaknesses: Fascination (Info/Music)

Weapons: blade (12)

Unliving

New Creature Schtick

A creature with this schtick is essentially an object. It does not need to eat, drink, breathe, or sleep. It is immune to poison, paralysis, disease, nausea (including the nauseating chunks version of the Foul Spew schtick), and any other effect that works on a living metabolism. Unfortunately, neither the Medicine skill nor natural healing can heal the creature. Instead, it must be repaired through use of an appropriate Info skill such as metal-working or weaponsmithing.

Flying Keris (Generic)

Someone Says: “Sentient flying knives? You’ve got to be kidd— Ouch! Aargh! Call them off!”

Attributes: Bod 5, Chi 5, Mnd 1, Ref 10

Skills: Creature Powers 12, Martial Arts 14

Creature Schticks: Armor, Flight, Unliving

Weaknesses: Fascination (Info/Music)

Weapons: blade (7)

Fascination

New Weakness

Those with Fascination are unduly preoccupied with some activity or area of knowledge. When exposed to it, they can be distracted from even pressing and dangerous matters.

Fascination is always associated with a skill (or multiple skills, for multiple schticks in Fascination). Whenever someone uses that skill in the presence of someone fas-

cinated by it, the latter must make a Willpower check against a Difficulty equal to the distraction's Action Result. If he fails, his emotions are soothed, and he can't take offensive actions for the rest of the sequence. If the object of fascination continues, a new check must be made each round. The same Action Result may or may not apply, at the GM's discretion.

When wielded by another, a flying keris may use its Martial Arts skill to help or hinder attacks and parries by adding or subtracting one-third (drop fractions) of

its AV from its wielder's combat checks. With help like that, even a non-combatant could get a big head about his combat prowess in no time at all.



Origin: Buddhist heavens, or the Netherworld
Type: Supernatural guardians of temples and homes
Allegiance: None

DESCRIPTION

Like most divine animals, foo dogs appear to be a combination of naturally occurring creatures. Though their appearances can vary, most have the head of a lion, the body of a deer, and the tail of a dog. Many have horns, scales, or other supernatural markings as well.

DWELLERS ON THE THRESHOLD

Foo dogs are also known as "fu dogs," "dogs of fo" (dogs of Buddha), *keiloon*, *karashishi* (or just *shishi*), and by many other names. Statues of these creatures are often placed in front of homes, gardens, and temples to act as guardians. The statues are always made in mated pairs, with the male dog resting a paw upon a globe (either the sun, moon, earth, or the sacred jewel known as the *tama*), while the female rests a paw upon a foo dog pup. Thus the male dog protects the world in general, while the female dog protects the family and home.

He Who Eats the Sun

He Who Eats the Sun used up his *tama* wish for the chance to eat the sun (he says it looks yummy). Every time he tries to eat it he burns his mouth and gives up, but he also causes an eclipse in the process. He is the mate of *She Who Roars Like Thunder*, and together they guard the entrance to San Francisco's Chinatown, also known as the Dragon-crested Gate.

Sample Dialogue: "I'm gnawing on sunshine, and it don't feel good!"

Attributes: Bod 10, Chi 0 (Mag 7, For 7), Mnd 5, Ref 7

Skills: Creature Powers 12, Info/Wuxia Movies 8, Martial Arts 11

Creature Schticks: Flight, Immunity to Fire (except the fire of the sun)

Transformed Dog Schticks: Bark, Bite

Transformed Tiger Schticks: Pounce

Unique Schticks: The *Tama* (but his wish has been used)

Weapons: claws (12), teeth (11)

She Who Roars Like Thunder

She Who Roars Like Thunder is a wise guardian who cares deeply about Chinese immigrants to the United States. She is the mate of He Who Eats the Sun, and together they guard the entrance to San Francisco's Chinatown.

Sample Dialogue: "Leave this place, or face my progeny!"

Attributes: Bod 7, Chi 1 (Mag 8, For 8), Mnd 7, Ref 7

Skills: Creature Powers 14, Info/Chinese Stir Fry 10, Martial Arts 12

Creature Schticks: Blast (sonic roar), Flight

Transformed Dog Schticks: Bark, Bite

Transformed Tiger Schticks: Mark Prey

Unique Schticks: Foo Dog Pup

Weapons: claws (9), teeth (8)

He Who Messes the Carpet

He Who Messes the Carpet is the eldest pup of He Who Eats the Sun and She Who Roars Like Thunder. He is a happy little fella, but is merciless when confronting evil.

Sample Dialogue: "Ruff, ruff!"

Attributes: Bod 5, Chi 1 (Mag 6, For 6), Mnd 3, Ref 6

Skills: Creature Powers 7, Martial Arts 7

Creature Schticks: Flight

Transformed Dog Schticks: Bark, Sniff

Weapons: claws (7), teeth (6)

The Tama

Unique Schtick

This schtick is only available to male foo dogs, and revolves around the powers of the tama, a powerful gem possessed by some such dogs, which is capable of bringing light to darkness and granting wishes.

The tama can illuminate an area with a 30-meter radius as brightly as full sunlight, and no sorcery schticks or fu powers can dampen its light. In addition, the possessor of the tama can make a wish, but the wish will only come true if it is made without regard to the self or the desires of the physical world. Each foo dog only gets one wish, so they are not used lightly.

If another creature attempts to take the tama from a foo dog, it simply disappears and returns to the spirit world.

Male Foo Dog (Generic)

Someone Says: "Foo dog? You sure that ain't a foo lion?!"

Attributes: Bod 8, Chi 0 (Mag 6, For 6), Mnd 4, Ref 6

Skills: Creature Powers 8, Martial Arts 8

Transformed Dog Schticks: Bark, Bite

Transformed Tiger Schticks: Pounce

Unique Schticks: The Tama

Weapons: claws (10), teeth (9)

Female Foo Dog (Generic)

Someone Says: "That's one angry bitch!"

Attributes: Bod 6, Chi 0 (Mag 7, For 7), Mnd 6, Ref 6

Skills: Creature Powers 11, Martial Arts 9

Transformed Dog Schticks: Bark, Bite

Transformed Tiger Schticks: Mark Prey

Unique Schticks: Foo Dog Pup

Weapons: claws (8), teeth (7)

Foo Dog Pup (Generic)

Someone Says: "Awww, they like you!"

Attributes: Bod 4, Chi 0 (Mag 5, For 5), Mnd 2, Ref 5

Skills: Creature Powers 6, Martial Arts 6

Transformed Dog Schticks: Bark

Weapons: claws (6), teeth (5)

If protecting a place in order to keep the good spirits in, they are depicted with closed mouths; conversely, if protecting a place to keep the evil spirits out, they are depicted with open mouths.

The real foo dogs represented by these statues are said to support the throne of the Buddha in the heavens, and if the evil spirits attacking a feng shui site are very powerful, it is possible for these statues to summon real foo dogs to defend it.

GUARDIANS OF HOME AND TEMPLE

Foo dog statues do not animate; instead, they summon up real foo dogs from the spirit world. This only happens if the statues flank a feng shui site, and even

Foo Dog Pup

Unique Schtick

This schtick is only available to female foo dogs. The dog has the power to summon up one or more of her pups to help defend an area. To summon pups, the foo dog must make a Creature Powers check with Difficulty 10 + the number of pups to be summoned, and also spend one Magic point per pup. These pups remain until "killed" (which just banishes them back to the spirit world) or until one hour expires, at which time they vanish. The female foo dog can have a maximum number of pups equal to her Magic rating.

then only if powerful supernatural creatures attack the site.

Foo dogs use transformed animal schticks, and can choose from Bark (Dog, see p. 65), Bite (Tiger), Mark Prey (Tiger), Pounce (Tiger), and Sniff (Dog). In addition, both male and female foo dogs each have their own unique schtick, and named individuals may also have creature schticks.

FOUR BURNING FISTS AND OTHER DEMONIC KUNG FU MASTERS

Origin: The Netherworld

Type: Demonic kung fu master

Allegiance: Seven Horns Clan, but works for Lotus sorcerers

DESCRIPTION

Although Four Burning Fists's entire body smolders with the scintillating burnt orange of banked coals, which suggests he could burst into flames at any second, only his eponymous four burning fists actually do blaze continually.

Four Burning Fists has a humanlike form, with his second pair of arms sprouting just below the first. A crown of horns sprout from his otherwise bald head, seven in all, each six inches long: three straight up from his crown, one extending from each side of his head, and two growing from his forehead. He stands seven feet tall.

Four Burning Fists has a demonic tail, but humanlike feet, with toes. He typically wears a simple gi for purposes of modesty. Although a demon, he is not bereft of civilized standards.

THE YELLOW BLOSSOM SCHOOL

Master Chu felt his visitor's warmth before he heard its footsteps. That, itself, was impressive. Master Chu turned slowly, knowing that whatever manner of

Four Burning Fists

Four Burning Fists is a demon of the old school, unfailingly polite even while kicking butt. It's his duty to dole death, but that's no reason to be rude.

Sample Dialogue: "I have been most honored to kick your ass, Great Master."

Attributes: Bod 8, Chi 8 (For 2), Mnd 7, Ref 6 (Agl 8)

Skills: Creature Powers 18, Info/Taoism 13, Info/Underworld 14, Martial Arts 16

Creature Schticks: Blast (fire), Burning Blood, Damage Immunity (bullets), Multiple Arms

Fu Schticks: Eyes of the Snake, Slither of the Snake, Strike of the Snake

Weapons: kick (10), punch (9), blast (10)

demon it was, it could have come for no wholesome purpose.

"If you have come to battle me," he said, "be aware that I am a Master of the Yellow Blossom School. I doubt our humble reputation has spread as far as the Underworld, and I would regret forcing you to bring it there by defeating you."

When Master Chu turned all the way around, he saw that two of the demon's four arms rested uncom-

fortably in slings, and its right eye was swollen shut. The beast raised its other two arms in appeasement.

"You underestimate your renown, Master Chu," it said. "The Yellow Blossom School is indeed known even in the Hell of the Upside Down Sinners. It is because of your mighty reputation that I have come."

Master Chu raised an eyebrow, an expression of astonishment so profound in one as centered as he that if any of his students had seen it, they would have fainted. "I presume you do not wish battle, then, or you would have come uninjured. If you wish to avail yourself of the Yellow Blossom School's healing arts, I am afraid we have insufficient knowledge of your anatomy to truly help you."

The demon shook his head. "Master Chu, I am Four Burning Fists, of the Seven Horns Clan. For a thousand centuries, we have performed our celestial duties. As tempters of humanity we have offered our power to men, helped them to grow mighty, then abandoned them in their hour of greatest need. It is our duty, our destiny, our pleasure. But these last few centuries, the combat techniques of men have outpaced the abilities granted us by the gods and devils. When the dark sorcerer Luo Zhan summoned me to destroy his enemies, the monks of the Eastern Wind temple, I was beaten and humbled. *This must not happen again.*"

The demon took a deep breath, and fell to its knees. "Master Chu, I ask you to train me in the arts of your kung fu."

Master Chu raised both eyebrows, an unprecedented gesture of astonishment. "The Yellow Blossom School is sworn to fight demons unfailingly wherever they arise. Why should I do this thing?"

"For three reasons, Master Chu. First, the natural order of things is for demons to tempt and test men. If they defeat us too lightly, they will esteem themselves too highly and destroy themselves with overconfidence.

"Second, you have always claimed that Yellow Blossom kung fu gives rise to unassailable purity of mind and spirit. By these very words, there is no risk in teaching it to me, because with such purity, I will be unable to misuse it. And third . . .

"I promise you, Master Chu, that I will one day ally myself with your greatest enemy, as is my clan's duty and destiny. And I promise that on the day of your enemy's greatest need, I will abandon him, as that is also my clan's duty and destiny.

"This bargain I offer, as leader of the Seven Horns Clan."

Demon Martial Artist (Unnamed)

Sample Dialogue: "Come, mortal! Learn why I am feared across the Hell Infested With Snakes and Worms!"

Attributes: Bod 8, Chi 8 (For 0), Mnd 4, Ref 6 (Agl 8, Spd 8)

Skills: Creature Powers 9, Martial Arts 9

Creature Schticks: Abysmal Spines, Regeneration

Fu Schticks: Claw of the Tiger, Tiger Stance

Weapons: kick (12), punch (11)

Multiple Arms

New Creature Schtick

You have an additional pair of arms and hands. This gives you an additional +2 bonus when you parry (which amounts to an active dodge — see *Feng Shui*, p. 133). Furthermore, performing a continuous action does not increase the shot costs of other actions you take; you can drive with two hands and shoot with two others, for example. Of course, you can't take both the parry bonus and the continuous action benefit at the same time with the same set of arms.

This schtick can be taken up to three times with cumulative effects. Past that, your arms just get in each others' way.

The difference between this schtick and Tentacles of Terror (see *Golden Comeback*, p. 96) is that this one usually describes creatures whose native state is to have many pairs of arms, while that one is for unique or strange creatures who mutate or acquire limbs.

Master Chu paused, silently, for five minutes. He made up his mind within the first 30 seconds, but he knew that it never hurt to keep others waiting. At last, he spoke.

"Very well," he said. "Return when your wounds are healed, and I will teach you. But bring clothes, please. I will teach a demon, but not a naked one."

BLACK BELT DEMONS

When Four Burning Fists returned to the Underworld, he trained other demons in his newfound skills, and over the years a small but dedicated group of de-

Demon Martial Artist

Don't be intimidated by my appearance. Be intimidated instead by my Ferocious Leap of Flame's Dance!

You were humbled in battle by one too many Shaolin monks and karate cops. Sure, you're a razor-clawed, armor-plated demon from the Underworld, but it never got you far against the guys in white pajamas who knew exactly how to hit you where it hurt and leave you whimpering in pain on the ground.

You couldn't beat the guys in pajamas, and if you can't beat 'em. . .



Juncture: 69 AD, Netherworld, Underworld

Attributes: Bod 5
Chi =8 (For 0)
Mnd 4
Ref 6

Add 3 to any one primary attribute. Add 2 to any two secondary attributes. Max for all primary and secondary attributes is 10.

Skills: Creature Powers +5 (=14)
Martial Arts +7 (=13)

Add 3 Skill Bonuses. The GM should reject any skills that don't make sense for a supernatural creature educated in Eastern philosophy and martial arts.

Schticks: 3 Creature Powers
2 Fu Schticks

Quick Schtick Pick: Abysmal Spines, Damage Immunity (unarmed combat), Regeneration, Claw of the Tiger, Tiger Stance

Limitation: You cannot be healed by the Medicine skill unless the character using it learned it in 69 AD.

Wealth Level: poor

mon martial artists has arisen. Few demons enlist because few believe they need training to handle puny mortals (even if some of those mortals can kick a hole in a six-inch steel plate). Even fewer have the discipline to master kung fu.

Four Burning Fists still follows his clan's tradition of allying itself to sorcerers, then betraying them in their hour of greatest need. This puts him in frequent contact with the Lotus.

HOLO-MONKEY

Origin: Kidlab Happydance, 2056

Type: Sentient faux fur

Allegiance: Architects of the Flesh

DESCRIPTION

A back monkey is a popular pet-cum-fashion accessory popular with tweens, teens, and even some socially stunted adults in big Pacific Rim cities in 2056. The species is a genetically engineered hybrid of dozens of different animals, roughly half of which are primates. Back monkeys come in a variety of colors and temperaments, and are so-named because once imprinted on their owners at the time of purchase, they travel with them everywhere, clinging to their backs.

When a secret warrior talks about a back monkey, though, he probably means a *holo-monkey*, the parasitic faux back monkeys created by Kidlab Happydance, an obscure little branch of the CDCA dedicated to making arcanotech for kids. Holo-monkeys are not back monkeys at all. Rather, each one is a weird glass cylinder filled with pseudo-sentient goo. Its protruding arms end in hypodermic needles of various types, which are embedded as needed into the backs of their hosts. Holo-monkeys take their moniker from the holograms they project, which disguise them as perky prosimian playmates that can do everything a real back monkey can do, and a lot more on top of that.

Why would Kidlab Happydance want to make something like that? Well...

MONKEY ON MY BACK

... the fact is adults generally trust kids. Sure, they can't fathom new generations' tastes in music and fashion, but they don't tend to ascribe serious duplicity to

Pinky

A cute-as-a-button pink monkey with purple bands and a serious knack for self-preservation, Pinky is a veteran of many operations and a dozen or more children (God rest their souls). Its current victim is Trevvor, an 11-year-old velocity enthusiast.

Sample Dialogue (Trevvor): "Hahaha! That's so funny that you would think I was sneaking into your secret lab! Hahaha!"

Attributes: Bod 6 (Mov 10), Chi 0, Mnd 4 (Cha 7), Ref 8 (Spd 10)

Skills: Deceit 8, Intrusion 12, Martial Arts 14, Sabotage 9

Weapons: bite (7), kick (8)

Holo-monkey (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "Cute monkey, kid. Now skedaddle."

Attributes: Bod 5 (Mov 9), Chi 0, Mnd 3 (Cha 7), Ref 7 (Spd 9)

Skills: Deceit 8, Intrusion 10, Martial Arts 8, Sabotage 7

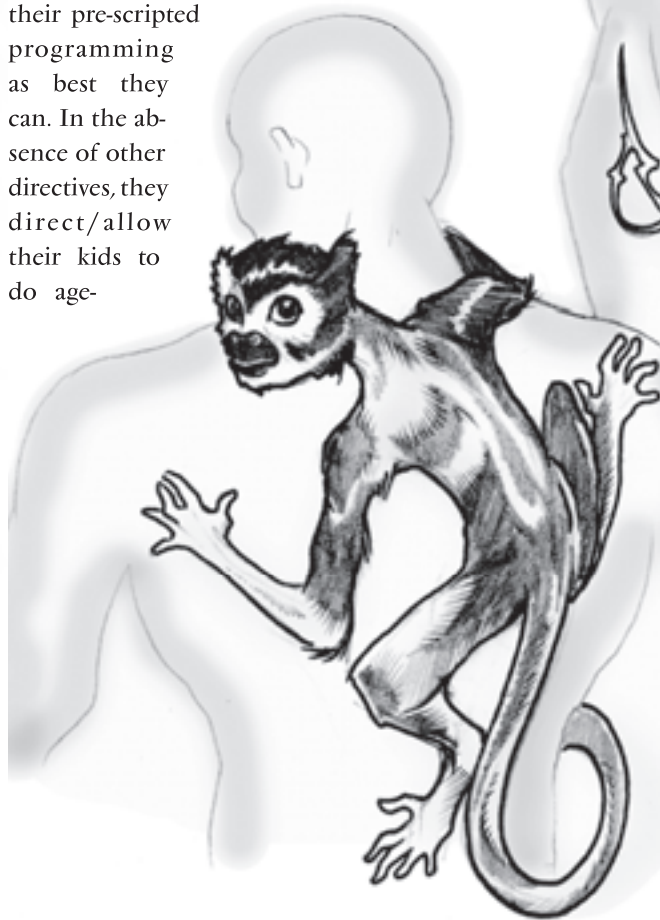
Weapons: kick (7)

the under-12 set. Which is exactly what makes kids the perfect operatives for a creepy world government bent on cross-time domination.

The holographic, faux back monkeys were developed to turn kids into virtual robots who can operate in plain sight, doing just about anything their CDCA masters need done. In addition to taking control of the children they cling to, holo-monkeys can use drugs and electric stimuli to spur their hosts to superhuman (to

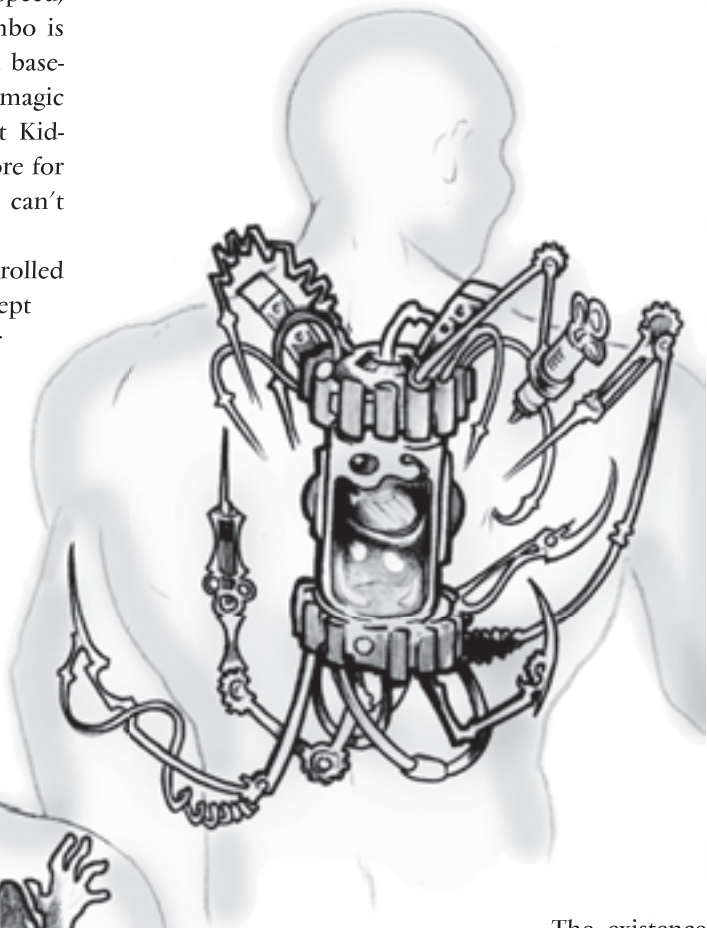
say nothing of super-child) feats of acrobatics, speed, and violence. Although each monkey/child combo is unique — a beautiful snowflake! — in most cases, baseline kid stats are tripled or more, thorough the magic of technology. (Or, *technolojoy*, as its known at Kidlab Happydance.) The statistics below are therefore for monkey-child combinations. The devices, alone, can't do much at all.

Kids attached to holo-monkeys can be controlled remotely by their handlers, and audio-video tabs kept on them at need, as long as they remain in 2056 or certain parts of the Netherworld near the Biomass Reprocessing Center. Outside those areas, or when their handlers are doing other things, holo-monkeys follow their pre-scripted programming as best they can. In the absence of other directives, they direct/allow their kids to do age-



appropriate activities, the better to blend in.

Arcanotech being what it is, the holo-monkey treatment eventually mutates its hosts. Although the AI and holograms can cover up the early manifestations, eventually the pair must be recalled to one of Happydance's facilities, the tech removed, and the kid disposed of.



The existence of holo-monkeys is not widely known in the CDCA, even among those with the top-secretest security clearances. The fine folk of Kidlab Happydance like it that way — the more people who are in on the secret, the less useful the secret weapon is.

IN SOCIALIST FUTURE, MONKEY SPANKS YOU

Kids under the sway of holo-monkeys are useful for just about any kind of black op you can imagine. They excel, and are most interesting, when they're working out in the open. (If they're going to be all ninja-style and come over the fence in the middle of the night, you might as well send a ninja.) A kid caught red-handed with big eyes and urgently crossed legs might actually get away with, "I was just looking for the bathroom."

"Holo-Monkey" continues on the next page.

Holo-monkeys' effectiveness rests on catching their victims (or, their victims' victims, if you count the poor, manipulated kid as a victim, too) off-guard. This can occur only when said victims have been lulled into a false sense of security due to harmless, normal back monkeys' pervasiveness. So back monkeys do their best work in 2056, in the Pacific Rim where they're in vogue, after they've been introduced to the PCs — ideally *ad nauseum* — as harmless pets. Ideally, spring the surprise after one of the cute little ragamuffins has already set some serious damage in motion. Planted some explosives, say, or photographed the secret plans and uploaded them to a Buro database.

Dealing with holo-monkeys presents a serious dilemma. Killing kids is a bad karma in the extreme, so the obvious tactic is to go for the monkey. But then

what do you do with the kid? Especially if he's been so thoroughly imprinted he can't see the mess of goo, syringes, and broken glass through his love for Uncle Gigglepuss. Is the kid hysterical? Homicidal? Every option's tasty, melodramatic grist.

Ever after the PCs know the score, the drama's far from over. Now, back monkeys breed fear and paranoia. You don't even have to include the dangerous, holographic kind in your adventures very often to get the players riled up. And it's not like the heroes can indiscriminately throttle every back monkey they see. They belong to kids, for the love of all that's holy! PCs who abuse legit monkeys in search of the bad apples are in for a world of sobbing kids, biting primates, and nasty looks from every upstanding citizen in eyeshot.

HUNGRY GHOST

Origin: Any juncture

Type: Miserable undead spirit

Allegiance: None

DESCRIPTION

Hungry ghosts vary greatly from one another, but usually appear as starving caricatures of the people they were in life. They are all constantly wracked with pain from never-ending hunger and thirst. Many are not able to eat and drink at all, so they have a shriveled, emaciated appearance, and often have potbellies from malnutrition. Most are unable to communicate, but those who can speak constantly wail and moan about their pitiable state and incessant hunger.

There are several types of hungry ghost, and each has its own distinguishing characteristic appearance or behavior:

Torch-mouthed Hungry Ghosts have painful, swollen mouths that actually emanate flame.

Needle-throated Hungry Ghosts have red, sore throats so narrow they can't eat or drink.

Hungry Ghosts with Foul-smelling Mouths reek of internal decay and infection.

Needle-haired Hungry Ghosts have bodies covered with sharp, wiry bristles.

Hungry Ghosts with Foul-smelling Hair

have long, dirty, wild, unkempt hair.

Hungry Ghosts with Large Ulcers are covered with open sores, and suffer from painful stomach ulcers.

Hungry Ghosts who Receive Discards eat food discarded after being used in ritual sacrifices.

Hungry Ghosts who Receive Lost Food eat food cast off by others.

WHEEL! OF! KARMA!

According to the principles of Buddhism, "hungry ghost" is one of the six states of existence in the cycle of reincarnation (the others are demon, animal, human, demigod, and deva). There are several classes of hungry ghosts — either two, three, nine, or thirty-six, depending on who you ask. (We choose nine; in addition to the eight types mentioned above, there are also "powerful ghosts" — mighty creatures like yakshas, pisacas, and rakshasas — which are not described by this

entry). While it's possible for Hell-beings to rise to the state of hungry ghost, most are people who were greedy or selfish in life, and must spend time as hungry ghosts to work off their bad karma.

RAVENOUS REVENANTS

While most hungry ghosts are harmless, those that secret warriors encounter prefer to vent their frustrations on the living. Despite being unable to satisfy their appetites, hungry ghosts have ripping fangs, gnashing claws, and deadly supernatural powers.

In stories, hungry ghosts work particularly well as counter-examples of virtue. The subtext to a hungry ghosts attack ought to be, "Do the right thing in life, or you're liable to come back looking like this!"

Burning Mouth

In life, Burning Mouth could never consume enough alcohol, but as a ghost the very touch of it burns his mouth. Burning Mouth seeks out dying alcoholics and taunts them with news of their upcoming fate. Sometimes, if he can't find anyone sufficiently near death, he uses Corruption to help someone along.

Sample Dialogue: "In three days your life ends, and you will be reborn among the hungry ghosts!"

Attributes: Bod 7, Chi 0 (Mag 8), Mnd 4, Ref 6

Skills: Creature Powers 12, Martial Arts 11

Creature Schticks: Blast (fiery breath), Corruption, Flight, Insubstantial (gold, silver, copper, tin, lead)

Weapons: bite (8), blast (10)

Torch-mouthed Hungry Ghost (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "A fire-breathing ghost? Are you sure?"

Attributes: Bod 5, Chi 0 (Mag 5), Mnd 2, Ref 5

Skills: Creature Powers 7, Martial Arts 7

Creature Schticks: Blast (fiery breath), Insubstantial (gold, silver, copper, tin, lead)

Weapons: bite (6), blast (7)

The Wondrous Victorious Power of Unlimited Awesome Self-existent Light

New Sorcery Combination

In many places, hungry ghost festivals are held annually to placate the local ghosts' appetites with sacrifices, but if one's trying to bite your face off you probably can't afford to wait until the next year. This spell combo, which combines Fertility and Summoning, has a Difficulty equal to a target hungry ghost's highest AV. If it succeeds, the ghost's hunger is satiated and it moves on to another incarnation.

Pus Bucket

New Creature Schtick

Any time someone lands a Martial Arts attack against you (i.e., inflicts damage), the attacker is sprayed with foul acidic pus. This is a free attack, costing no shots, and occurs immediately. The blood has AV 12 and base damage 8. Each additional schtick gives either +1 AV or +2 damage. (This is identical to Burning Blood; see *Thorns of the Lotus*, p. 102.)

Throat Binder

New Creature Schtick

You can cause an opponent's throat to swell up. This not only prevents eating, drinking, and speaking, but breathing as well. You need merely gesture at a target within three meters, spend a Magic point, and make a Creature Powers check with Difficulty equal to the victim's highest AV. If you succeed, the victim must make a check with his highest AV against a Difficulty equal to your just-made Creature Powers Action Result. If the victim succeeds, the Throat Binder power does not work. If the victim fails, his throat swells completely closed. He cannot eat, drink, or speak, and starts suffocating. This works just like drowning; see the "Damage Values Chart – Other Sources" on *Feng Shui*, p. 139. Unnamed characters drop after one sequence. The only way to break the effect is to incapacitate the creature that initiated it, which must obviously be done before the victim suffocates.

Horse's Hair

Horse's Hair is so named because her swollen throat has an opening no thicker than a hair from a horse's mane. In her previous life, she allowed her animals to die during a drought, hoarding the water for herself, even though she had more than she needed. Now she wanders the Netherworld, begging for water, and reacts violently against those who won't help her.

Sample Dialogue: "I'm so thirsty... Do you have any water? No? Then how about blood?!"

Attributes: Bod 4, Chi 0 (Mag 6), Mnd 4, Ref 6

Skills: Creature Powers 13, Martial Arts 10

Creature Schticks: Blood Drain (fortune drain), Flight, Insubstantial (gold, silver, copper, tin, lead), Throat Binder

Weapons: bite (5)

Needle-throated Hungry Ghost (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "If there's one thing I hate more than a ghost, it's a ghost with a sore throat!"

Attributes: Bod 6, Chi 0 (Mag 6), Mnd 2, Ref 6

Skills: Creature Powers 8, Martial Arts 8

Creature Schticks: Insubstantial (gold, silver, copper, tin, lead), Throat Binder

Weapons: bite (7)

Dung Mouth

Everything Dung Mouth eats turns to feces upon entering his mouth. This torments him greatly, and he takes every opportunity to enter the physical world and attack the living. He takes special joy in attacking and trying to devour those who, like himself, are overweight.

Sample Dialogue: "No thanks. I'm not hungry."

Attributes: Bod 7, Chi 0 (Mag 7), Mnd 3, Ref 7

Skills: Creature Powers 12, Martial Arts 11

Creature Schticks: Foul Spew (nauseating chunks), Insubstantial (gold, silver, copper, tin, lead), Rancid Breath, Regeneration

Weapons: bite (8), rancid breath (10)

Hungry Ghost with Foul-smelling Mouth (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "Whoa! What crawled in there and died?"

Attributes: Bod 7, Chi 0 (Mag 7), Mnd 3, Ref 7

Skills: Creature Powers 10, Martial Arts 9

Creature Schticks: Insubstantial (gold, silver, copper, tin, lead), Rancid Breath

Weapons: bite (8)

Hairy Back

Once Hairy Back rejoiced in drinking beer, watching sports, and taking part in other masculine activities. As a ghost, he's a hyper-masculine beast, unable to enjoy his favorite pastimes.

Sample Dialogue: "Go Giants! Yomiuri Giants!"

Attributes: Bod 12, Chi 0 (Mag 8), Mnd 3, Ref 6

Skills: Creature Powers 12, Info/Beer 7, Info/Sports 7, Martial Arts 10

Creature Schticks: Abysmal Spines (x2) (wiry hair), Brain Shredder, Insubstantial (gold, silver, copper, tin, lead)

Weapons: shoulder tackle (16), brain shredder (7)

Needle-haired Hungry Ghost (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "And I left my dog brush at home..."

Attributes: Bod 8, Chi 0 (Mag 8), Mnd 3, Ref 8

Skills: Creature Powers 9, Martial Arts 9

Creature Schticks: Abysmal Spines (wiry hair), Insusubstantial (gold, silver, copper, tin, lead)

Weapons: forearm smash (10)

Bad Hair Day

Bad Hair Day was a vain woman, obsessed with makeup, manicures, and physical beauty. As a hungry ghost, she looks like a hag, and her makeup runs down her face in streaks. Though not actually hungry, she is tortured by her lost beauty, and hunts and kills beautiful women out of spite.

Sample Dialogue: "My hair has no body or bounce. It is limp and lifeless. Perhaps your death will give it life!"

Attributes: Bod 7, Chi 1 (Mag 9), Mnd 6, Ref 11

Skills: Creature Powers 12, Info/Cosmetics 10, Martial Arts 15, Seduction 10

Creature Schticks: Insubstantial (gold, silver, copper, tin, lead), Tentacles (x4) (animated hair), Regeneration

Weapons: bite (8), tentacle (8)

Hungry Ghost with Foul-smelling Hair (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "Shower much?"

Attributes: Bod 7, Chi 0 (Mag 8), Mnd 4, Ref 7

Skills: Creature Powers 10, Martial Arts 8

Creature Schticks: Insubstantial (gold, silver, copper, tin, lead), Tentacles (x2) (animated hair)

Weapons: bite (8), tentacle (8)

Burning Sores

Burning Sores spent his days on the beach, enjoying the surf and sun. As a hungry ghost his body is waterlogged with salt water and his skin is sunburned so badly that his entire back is covered with open sores. He likes to haunt beaches, stalking sunbathers and surfers. When he catches them, he roasts them alive and devours them in a festive "pig roast."

Sample Dialogue: "Wanna see my tan line?"

Attributes: Bod 10, Chi 0 (Mag 8), Mnd 4, Ref 8

Skills: Creature Powers 15, Info/Surfing 8, Martial Arts 17

Creature Schticks: Foul Spew (slippery slime), Insubstantial (gold, silver, copper, tin, lead), Poison (skin), Pus Bucket (x2) (damage 10)

Weapons: bite (11), pus spray (10)

Hungry Ghost with Large Ulcers (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "Do you think it would go away if I gave it an antacid?"

Attributes: Bod 7, Chi 0 (Mag 5), Mnd 4, Ref 6

Skills: Creature Powers 9, Martial Arts 9

Creature Schticks: Insubstantial (gold, silver, copper, tin, lead), Pus Bucket

Weapons: bite (8), pus spray (8)

Eats Like a Ghoul

In his previous life, Eats Like a Ghoul was a homeless man who fed himself by sneaking into cemeteries and eating the food left as offerings to the dead. He was reborn as a hungry ghost and still haunts cemeteries, eating those who come to leave the offerings as well as the offerings themselves.

Sample Dialogue: "You know, people don't taste anything like chicken. They're more like really — smack! — greasy pork."

Attributes: Bod 11, Chi 0 (Mag 9), Mnd 5, Ref 11

Skills: Creature Powers 15, Martial Arts 13, Sorcery 16

Creature Schticks: Blood Drain* (AV gain: Martial Arts), Insubstantial (gold, silver, copper, tin, lead)

Sorcery Schticks: Movement, Weather

Weapons: bite (12)

* Cosmetically speaking, Eats Like a Ghoul eats flesh, rather than drinking blood.

Are You Going to Eat That

Are You Going to Eat That usually begs on street corners, but if passersby are not sufficiently generous, he has no problem tearing someone's throat out to get a tasty morsel.

Sample Dialogue: "Hey, buddy, are you going to eat that?"

Attributes: Bod 12, Chi 0 (Mag 10), Mnd 5, Ref 10

Skills: Creature Powers 15, Martial Arts 13, Sorcery 12

Creature Schticks: Blood Drain (AV gain: Martial Arts), Insubstantial (gold, silver, copper, tin, lead), Transformation (into a human beggar)

Sorcery Schticks: Domination, Movement, Weather

Weapons: bite (13)

Hungry Ghost Who Receives Discards / Hungry Ghost Who Receives Lost Food (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "Someone raided the snacks we left for our ancestors... but why?"

Attributes: Bod 7, Chi 0 (Mag 7), Mnd 5, Ref 6

Skills: Creature Powers 8, Martial Arts 8, Sorcery 8

Creature Schticks: Blood Drain (AV gain: Martial Arts), Insubstantial (gold, silver, copper, tin, lead)

Sorcery Schticks: Weather

Weapons: bite (8)



INDUSTRIAL DEMON

Origin: Underworld

Type: Hell's mechanized division

Allegiance: None

DESCRIPTION

Imagine a junkyard that hates you. A place that can stab you with rusted scrap metal, whip you with rusty razor wire, choke and grapple with oily hoses and lengths of chain from a dozen forgotten machines. Sometimes, an industrial demon looks like that — like a regular junkyard that can assault you with anything, from any direction, out of nowhere, when you last expect it.

But it gets worse — now imagine every sharp, pointy, rusty, bloody surface in the place operating in concert, formed together in a horrific, demon-shaped mass of machinery and malice. When it gets really pissed off and intends to do some serious damage, an industrial demon looks like *that*. Enough to make a Luddite out of anyone.

ONE MAN'S TRASH

Demons have possessed people and stuff since forever. But the dehumanizing Industrial Revolution was a whole new bag for object-possessing demons. An entirely new clan, giddy with the possibilities, took up the specialty.

Industrial demons turn up most frequently via summoning. They usually have to remain until the objects they've been bound into "are rendered unto dust," or whatever similar condition their summoner saddled them with. Since most industrial trash lasts a long time — ask the demons bound into abandoned nuclear reactors — they tend to persist on earth until dispatched violently or magically returned to the Underworld. Industrial demons can also arise spontaneously when a machine is put to some particularly perverse use.

Although some Lotus sorcerers delight in summoning industrial demons because they think it's poetic to turn modern garbage against modern enemies, most sorcerers prefer more traditional demonic manifestations. Thus, industrial demons are rare, compared to other types.

JUNKYARD WARS

Industrial demons have two basic modes of being. The first is dispersed throughout their environment. In this state, they are bodiless, using Movement to animate their surroundings. In the second state, they bind together massive quantities of stuff, merging it into a demonic shape that moves and attacks directly.

Six Incinerators

Six Incinerators infests an old factory in the contemporary juncture where incinerators were once made. When he manifests, his massive, 20-foot-tall body is composed, Voltron-like (arms, legs, torso, and head), of six massive units that spew fire.

Sample Dialogue: “burn... burnburn... burnBurnBURNBURN!”

Attributes: Bod 12, Chi 8 (Mag 11), Mnd 5, Ref 5

Skills: Creatures Powers 14, Martial Arts 14, Sorcery 15

Creature Schticks: Armor (x4), Disperse

Sorcery Schticks: Blast (animate environment), Movement

Weapons: blast (13), clobber (13), gout of incinerator flame (15†)

† As with “soaked in gasoline and set on fire” (see *Feng Shui*, p. 139), this damage is inflicted on any remotely flammable target in each subsequent sequence until the fire’s put out. Use the Creature Powers AV for this attack.

Summoned industrial demons usually have some task, often protective. When they arise through violence, they tend to be either indiscriminately homicidal or murderous in some way that corresponds to their environment, composition, or the circumstances of their binding. Industrial demons general-

Industrial Demon (Unnamed)

Unnamed industrial demons usually haunt smaller regions within larger areas — the individual sewing stations in a sweatshop, for example. When manifesting in physical form, they can move throughout the entire larger area.

Someone Says: “C’m on, let’s put litter in its place!”

Attributes: Bod 7, Chi 5 (Mag 8), Mnd 3, Ref 5

Skills: Creature Powers 9, Martial Arts 9, Sorcery 9

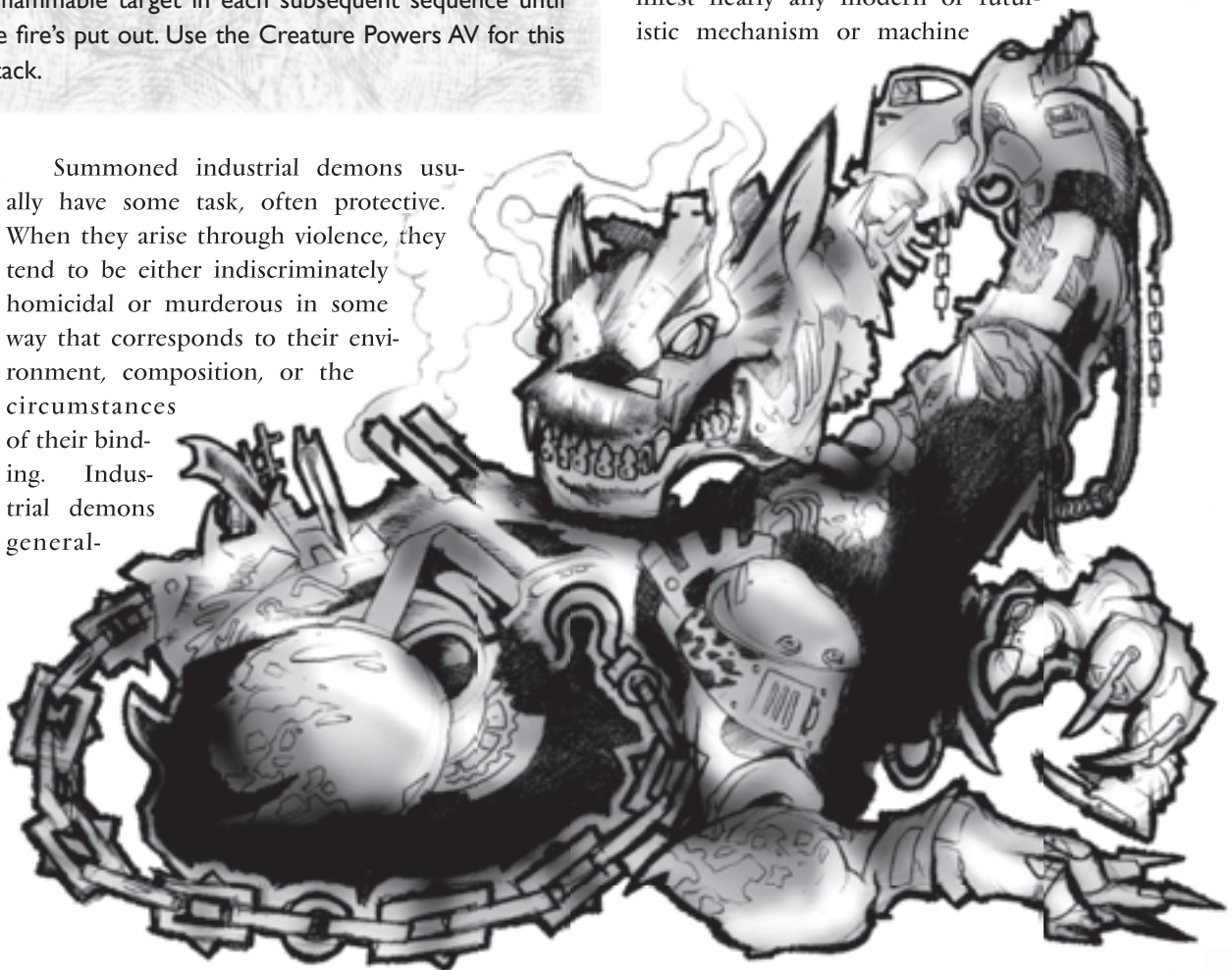
Creature Schticks: Disperse

Sorcery Schticks: Blast (animate environment), Movement

Weapons: blast (10), punch (8)

ly do not make nefarious bargains or plot and scheme. They’re not stupid, but they also don’t make plans past the violence at hand.

In addition to inhabiting junkyards, scrap heaps, and abandoned buildings, industrial demons can also infest nearly any modern or futuristic mechanism or machine



“Industrial Demon” continues on the next page.

Animate Environment

New Blast Special Effect

This new Blast special effect causes the environment around the target to come maliciously to life. Objects strike, trip, and carom off their targets, coming from every direction at once. Makes quite a mess.

environment where they can get a toehold. Consider — as a paltry few examples — sea-going vessels, dockyard cranes, and the colossal vehicles at strip mines.

Industrial demons are not impressed with circuitry. They lack the subtlety and know-how to manipulate computer equipment other than on a chucking-things-about, gross physical level.

Disperse

New Creature Schtick

You are bound to a location you cannot leave, but can disperse your body and disappear into that environment. Dispersing or re-forming your body is a 9-shot action.

While dispersed, you remain conscious of the area, able to perceive anything within it, but can't take physical action unless schticks (like Movement) give you special capabilities. You also cannot be harmed while dispersed, save by effects that attack your soul or essence directly, such as the Soul Twist creature schtick. Summoning/banishment is only useful against you if the caster can somehow see you, which is not normally possible when you're dispersed.



Origin: China, 69 AD

Type: Demon-blooded sorcerer

Allegiance: Eaters of the Lotus

DESCRIPTION

Lai Kuang currently holds the seat of "The Underworld," the most senior of the Petals of the Lotus, second only to Gao Zhang himself. (Being second in authority, of course, means that he's first in line to die should Gao Zhang ever suspect treachery in the ranks.)

At a glance, Lai Kuang seems anything but imposing. He's a thin, pale man with a wispy white moustache and hair so fine it's nearly transparent; like all senior Eaters of the Lotus, he's a eunuch. Unlike some, he removed his own genitals as a gesture of loyalty to Gao Zhang. His general appearance reminds many of a hairless cat: pale, bony, and with fingernails like long claws.

Still, those who've heard of his reputation in battle have learned to be wary. He has skill with demon summoning that perhaps no other sorcerer has ever possessed; even Gao Zhang is amazed at his abilities. In fact, rather than exert himself to rip open the veil between our world and the world of demons to summon them, Kuang must exert continual control to keep his

Lai Kuang

Sample Dialogue: "Fools! In killing me you only doom yourselves!"

Attributes: Bod 4, Chi 3 (Mag 9), Mnd 8, Ref 5

Skills: Info/Imperial Politics 14, Info/Lotus Politics 17, Info/Netherworld 13, Info/Underworld 19, Martial Arts 10, Sorcery 18

Sorcery Schticks: Blast (conjured weapons, fire, ice), Create Magical Artifact (see *Thorns of the Lotus*, p. 96), Divination, Movement, Summoning

Unique Schticks: Demonic Conduit

Weapons: staff (7), blast (11)

conduit to the Underworld sealed. Should he lose concentration, demons arrive unbidden and uncontrolled.

THE BARGAIN

Lai Kuang pressed the tip of the dagger against his elbow. He knew how fast he would bleed to death from

Demonic Conduit

Unique Schtick

Lai Kuang is the only known sorcerer to have successfully completed the ritual that made him into a living conduit to the Underworld. Though others have tried, all have failed, and fatally.

Being a demonic conduit allows Lai Kuang to use the Summoning/invocation without effort and without a token related to the creature being summoned. When using this schtick, he may decide to call forth either many unnamed demons, or one named demon. The precise nature and stats of demon(s) summoned is left to the GM's diabolical whim, but use the following guidelines:

- If unnamed, the demons' highest AV is equal to half of Lai Kuang's current Sorcery AV, and the number appearing is equal to the Outcome of a Difficulty 5 Sorcery check.
- If named, the demon's highest AV is the Outcome of a Difficulty 10 Sorcery check, but with a max of his current Sorcery AV.

The downside of the conduit is that it takes continual effort to control. Whenever Lai Kuang sustains Impairment, or whenever he has to roll a death check, he must immediately spend a Magic point and make a Difficulty 5 Sorcery check. (As normal, the Impairment is subtracted from his Action Result, though he does receive the benefit of the spent Magic point on this check, and may — as

always — spend additional Magic points if he wishes.)

- If he succeeds, no sweat, nothing happens.
- If he fails, a number of unnamed demons appear equal to the opposite of the check's negative Outcome (that is, more demons appear the worse he fails). Their highest AV should be half of Lai Kuang's current Sorcery AV.
- If he fails critically, a named demon appears instead. Its highest AV is equal to the check's negative Outcome, or the Outcome + 10 if the critical failure involved a roll of boxcars.

These unbidden creatures are not bound to Lai Kuang, and are as likely to attack him as to attack anyone else nearby.

If Lai Kuang *fails* a death check, a supernatural creature appears every minute until he dies or is restored to health. These have AVs equal to Lai Kuang's base Sorcery AV, are all named creatures, and attack anyone and anything they see.

If Lai Kuang ever fails a death check by 14 or more, a truly spectacular supernatural creature (named, obviously) is summoned into the world of mortals. The creature's highest AV is assigned without limit by the GM, who should make sure its capabilities give it a fighting chance to carry out its Big Plans for this puny little world.

a wound such as he was about to inflict, to the second. As he dug the blade into his flesh and sliced down his arm to the wrist, he knew that in two minutes he would be either the most powerful demonist in the world, or he would be dead.

The sting made him gasp; he began the incantation in a wheeze of pain. "Burning King, attend me. Mother of Corruption, cast your good eye upon me. Yen Lo Wang, King of the Dead, speak with me. I give unto you an offering. My blood forms the gate. My spirit forms the key. The sands form your window. Look upon my world, and hear my words." He looked down at the desert sand, already soaked with his lifeblood. Agony seared his consciousness.

The sand moved. The mix of viscous liquid and once-parched earth transformed itself into a face, and opened its eyes to reveal empty sockets of black flame.

"Impertinent worm," it spoke in a dozen voices, "What do you wish that we would grant? What do you offer that we cannot take?"

Kuang stared at the face — how many drops of his precious lifeblood did he waste this way? — unable to think over the rushing in his head. When he spoke, his tongue was a dead thing in his head.

"I seek the power all mortals seek, and I offer what no mortal has offered: a pathway to the world of life."

The face laughed, spraying him with his own blood. "We have been summoned time and a thousand again, mortal. *We refuse.*"

The world around Lai Kuang fizzed with motes of dead gray nothing, not an effect of the ritual, but a sign that lost blood would soon make him pass out. Anger lent him strength to continue speaking.

"Myopic fools! I offer no summoning!" His presumption would cost him dearly if he failed. Then again, if he failed, it already meant eternal torture in the Underworld. "I offer a *pathway*. I offer my body as a receptacle for your energies! Through me, you shall pass through to this world, to do as you wish. In exchange . . ." he lost concentration for a moment, distracted by the patter of his lifeblood onto the soaked earth. "In exchange, I would direct your manifestations against my enemies."

"We are fools?" The black flames flared in their dead sockets. "Not we, but *you*, have gambled so much with so little. *And your time is running out.*"

Lai Kuang slumped to his knees, reserving his energies to focus on the face. How long before he died? He'd lost track of time.

He heard buzzing, cacophonous nonsense, all the voices speaking at once.

His chin fell to his chest, his eyes drooping closed. Blackness descended. But then, very clearly, he heard:

"We accept your offer... and we shall see how you play the next round."

Black flame burned across the sand-face, racing up the blood that poured from his veins and into his arm.

He felt it sear through his bloodstream, to his heart, and then his blood gushed backwards, leaping back into his veins from the desert sand as the Lords of the Underworld sealed their bargain.

Seconds later even the wound was gone, save a thin welt across his arm, not a knife-scar but a thin burn mark.

Inside, Lai Kuang felt power, scarcely dammed by his will. At his command — or even without it — that power would flow. . . .

HOLDING HIMSELF HOSTAGE

Every *Feng Shui* campaign needs a powerful, sadistic eunuch sorcerer with sinister plans to dominate the world, and Lai Kuang is the perfect recurring villain for this role. Not only can his unique schtick introduce many of the other demons and monsters in *Glimpse of the Abyss* into play, he also works well as a recurring villain because his unique schtick gives the PCs reason to let him live once they've foiled his latest evil scheme.

Lai Kuang is entirely aware that if he dies, all hell (literally) will be unleashed. He's not shy about letting his enemies know it, essentially blackmailing those of heroic inclination into letting him go by pointing out that if the world is overrun with demonic hordes, they'll be responsible.



Origin: China, 69 AD

Type: Brain-draining fog

Allegiance: None, but sometimes used by the Lotus

DESCRIPTION

Larcenous mist is easy to describe, but difficult to distinguish, because it looks exactly like fog. Any time you wander through a fog, there's a chance you're actually wandering through larcenous mist, and you won't know it until... well, actually, you'll never know, because a larcenous mist's main property is to cause amnesia, so by the time you realize what's up, you don't remember. The Eaters of the Lotus love to use it as a trap for op-

ponents they consider too dangerous to send sorcerers against in a frontal attack.

THE STORY OF JIANG ZHUI AND THE JUG OF MIST

Describing the origins of the larcenous mist is a bit like the old joke about the Foreign Legion. You know: "I joined the Foreign Legion to forget." "Forget what?" "I don't know, I forgot." Yeah. It's an old joke, but it's a bit like that.

Nobody knows where larcenous mist first came from, or why. It might have been around for ages, with patches all over the place, and nobody noticed because they couldn't remember passing through. But the first person to find it and know about it was a Lotus sorcerer named Jiang Zhui, a corrupt Buddhist priest with a line in extortion. (It's a standard Lotus source of income. They send a sorcerer into a village to rid it of supernatural evils... for a fee. If a village denies having supernatural evils, the sorcerer gives them a quick flash of green flame and replies, "Then how many would you like?")

Jiang Zhui's work for the Lotus took him all over China. One day, while traveling between villages, he found himself entering a valley filled with fog. Ordinarily, he'd have thought nothing of it, but the day had been hot and sunny, and the fog should have dissipated in the morning heat. Suspecting magic, he sent one of his three assistants into the mist, with instructions to return and tell him what he had found.

Upon waiting twenty minutes, the assistant did not return. Finally, Zhui spotted him wandering out of the other end of the valley in defiance of his orders. Incensed, he ordered his second assistant to cross through the valley at speed and retrieve the first. Twenty minutes later, the second assistant wandered out of the valley as well.

Jiang Zhui was many things, but he was no fool. He tied a length of rope to his third assistant, tied the other end to a tree, and told him to walk as far as he could into the valley and then return. Five minutes later, the slack went out of the rope and it stayed taut. He pulled with all his strength to retrieve his assistant, who had no memory of the instructions, of Jiang Zhui, or indeed of his own name.

That was quite enough for Jiang Zhui. The mist had cost him three assistants, for it would take him months to re-train them to be of any use. He had command of the winds, and so he uncorked a jug, poured the water within it onto the ground, and chanted. The winds rose up, coming out of the far end of the valley and sweeping the mist before them. The mist fought like a living thing against the pressure of the wind, but in the end it was forced into the open jug Jiang Zhui held. With the press of a cork, he sealed it within.

Ever since, the Lotus has held the power of the larcenous mist. Every once in a while, they split it into two mists with a tearing wind, and feed each little mist a few peasant minds so that it grows fat. For a time,

The Smog in Parking Structure D

An archaeology professor at the University of Southern California brought a sealed jug back from an expedition to China, and somehow the larcenous mist inside was set loose in one of the parking structures on the USC campus. This explains a lot about some of the undergrads.

Someone Says: "Where did we park?... And what kind of car do I drive, anyway?"

Attributes: Bod 5*, Chi 3 (Mag 8), Mnd 3, Ref 10*

Skills: Creature Powers 15, Intrusion 13, Martial Arts 12

Creature Schticks: Damage Immunity (bullets, weapons, unarmed, falling, poisons, suffocation, vehicles), Flight

Unique Schticks: Superior Memory Drain

Weaknesses: Formless

Larcenous Mist (Generic)

Someone Says: "Hey, check it out, I'm packin' heat!... but why would I need a gun?"

Attributes: Bod 4*, Chi 2 (Mag 7), Mnd 2, Ref 9*

Skills: Creature Powers 12, Martial Arts 11

Creature Schticks: Damage Immunity (bullets, weapons, unarmed, falling, poisons, suffocation, vehicles), Flight

Unique Schticks: Superior Memory Drain

Weaknesses: Formless

Jiang Zhui and his assistants used the larcenous mist to threaten villages in their magical protection racket, but one day, a boy with a sling broke the jug as Jiang Zhui held it, and the larcenous mist ate his memories whole.

The moral of the story? Well, not every story has a moral. But if you must have a moral, here it is: Have your assistant hold the jug.

AMNESIA FOR EVERYONE

As noted, the Lotus usually use larcenous mist as a trap for opponents they don't want to risk facing in person. However, a fog that removes memories really does have a million uses. You can have a lot of fun with amnesia in a campaign, forcing the PCs to rediscover

Formless

New Weakness

You have no shape or structure. This prevents you from using your physical statistics for anything other than to resist effects that would move you, such as wind. You can't attack, lift items, or do anything of the sort.

their own allies and enemies, all the while fighting off various dangers. In fact, this is an excellent way to start a campaign off — give the PCs character sheets, tell them they've just woken up in a misty wood, and leave the rest for them to discover.

Characters with control over the wind (through the Weather sorcery schtick, for example), can force the mist into a container, which can be sent anywhere. Only a few Lotus sorcerers have seen the true potential of this in the modern world, thankfully. Those few who've received a FedEx'ed jar of memory-removing fog aren't quite so thankful.

Powerful sorcerers with precise control of the wind can direct the mist as an attack, or even destroy it by ripping it apart on a lattice of crosswinds. However, heroes usually battle larcenous mist by using fire to dispel it or cold to condense it to the point where it can no longer move.

Superior Memory Drain

Unique Schtick

The larcenous mist's memory drain works like normal the Blood Drain (memory drain) creature power (see *Feng Shui*, p. 102), save that the larcenous mist absorbs memories more thoroughly and permanently than most supernatural creatures. When it makes a successful attack with Blood Drain, it removes the most recent five years of memories and stores them permanently within its fog. The attack does not affect skills or powers, so a twenty-year-old who's been drained three times still acts like his adult self — he just can't remember anything that happened after he was five.

Memories stolen by a larcenous mist are gone permanently, unless the mist is killed, in which case all the memories it took are returned to their original owners. (Some powerful sorcerers claim to be able to restore memories taken by a larcenous mist, but all of them — so far — have turned out to be frauds.) If a mist can access the memories it steals, none so far has seemed to act on them.



MONKEY SPIRIT

Origin: *The Netherworld*

Type: *Trickster spirit*

Allegiance: *None*

DESCRIPTION

Monkey spirits, also known as *houshen*, look like humanoid monkeys. They can walk upright, talk, wear clothes, and the like, but they're still monkeys and like to do monkey things like jump around pointlessly, screech loudly, throw poo at their enemies, and so on.

MORE FUN THAN...

Monkey spirits (and pig demons, see p. 51) are loosely derived from the Chinese book *Journey to the West*, written by Wu Cheng-en in the sixteenth century, which tells the story of the journey of a Buddhist monk to India in order to retrieve sacred Buddhist scrolls and bring them back to China for translation. *Journey to the West* is in turn loosely based on the real-life journey of the monk Xuanzang in the seventh century. Following all this? If not, just find episodes of the old Japanese TV show *Monkey!* (also known as *Monkey Magic*), and all will become clear. (Except for them making the monk a woman, that is).

In *Journey*, there's only one monkey — but that's no fun at all, so the *Feng Shui* world has many monkey spirits, and they're all raring to get into trouble.

A BARREL FULL OF MONKEYS

Monkey spirits are curious, violent, impulsive, arrogant alcoholics. Despite all this, they are basically good-

natured, and can be valuable (if unreliable) allies in the battle against evil. They especially hate authoritarian factions like... well, like everybody except the Dragons and the Jammers.

Stone Monkey

Stone Monkey, the Monkey King, is the greatest of the monkey spirits. He was born from a stone on the top of a mountain, and is blessed with considerable magical powers. The Monkey King has been in and out of trouble his entire life, battling dragons, achieving immortality, and even getting trapped underneath a mountain for five hundred years. Still, he is a hero at heart.

Sample Dialogue: "I am Monkey, the great sage, equal of heaven, and I... I'm sorry, what were we talking about?"

Attributes: Bod 8, Chi 12, Mnd 5, Ref 15

Skills: Intrusion 15, Martial Arts 16

Creature Schticks: Armor (x2), Flight

Fu Schticks: Drunken Stance, Drunken Fist, Wily Stupor, Aberrant Spasm, Spasmodic Leap

Transformed Monkey Schticks: Bounce, Capers, Diversion, Throw

Unique Schticks: Magic Wishing Staff

Weapons: magic wishing staff (11)

Magic Wishing Staff

Unique Schtick

A magic wishing staff is a staff capable of changing its size, shrinking down to a few centimeters in length or growing to be up to ten meters long. A monkey spirit wielding one can use it to attack opponents within ten meters. It's also good for climbing, crossing chasms, and the like.

Monkey Spirit (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "No more monkeys jumping on the bed!"

Attributes: Bod 6, Chi 8, Mnd 3, Ref 7

Skills: Intrusion 9, Martial Arts 9

Transformed Monkey Schticks: Bounce, Capers, Diversion, Throw

Unique Schticks: Magic Wishing Staff

Weapons: magic wishing staff (9)



Origin: China, India, Tibet, and Southeast Asia, 69 AD

Type: Divine animal

Allegiance: None

DESCRIPTION

A naga is a divine animal with the body of a snake, the hood of a cobra, and the face of a human. Their bodies are massive, often as thick as a man's waist and ten meters long or more. Coloration varies between individuals, as does facial appearance. Nagas have gills, and despite their massive bulk, can move through water with surprising speed and grace.

RAIDERS OF THE LOST KNOWLEDGE

Nagas are divine water serpents who serve as guardians of treasure. Most live in underwater palaces and guard scrolls containing forbidden Buddhist lore, but others dwell in shipwrecks, in isolated island coves, or below the docks at busy seaside ports. Nagas are not necessarily evil (though many are), but are always devoted to guarding the object or objects given to them by whatever Bodhisattva, demigod, or other master they serve.

Guardian

New Creature Schtick

You can attune yourself to a person or inanimate object in order to protect him or it. The process of attuning requires 3 shots, and you can only have one attunement at a time per schtick in Guardian. An unwilling subject can resist attunement by making a Fortune check with a Difficulty equal to your Creature Powers AV.

If anyone attempts to attack or grab the attuned-to person or object and you're even remotely nearby (GMs should interpret this very permissively), you can delay your next action by one shot — as long as you have actions left this sequence — to try to prevent it. Make a Martial Arts check with a Difficulty of the attacker's Martial Arts AV. If you succeed, the attack is nullified in its entirety. If you fail, the attack is resolved normally and you lose your shot anyway.

AQUATIC TEMPLE OF DOOM

Nagas attack anyone who dares approach their treasures. Sometimes, though, they have specific instructions to let some prophesied individual take that which they guard, and they always let these individuals pass unharmed. Just as often, though, a prospective knowledge-seeker must banish or slay the creature to gain access to its secret horde.

The snake men (see *Feng Shui*, p. 171) once worshipped the nagas, and some may still. A naga served by a horde of serpent people, hidden away in an ancient underwater temple, could be a very dangerous foe.

Virupaksha

Virupaksha is the so-called Naga King, for he is the oldest and possibly the wisest of his kind.

Sample Dialogue: "Mankind is not ready to learn the truth of the secret war. If you wish to take the Scroll of Lost Histories, you will need to get past me."

Attributes: Bod 14, Chi 0 (Mag 15), Mnd 12, Ref 10

Skills: Creature Powers 21, Info/Hinduism 16, Info/Buddhism 16, Martial Arts 14, Sorcery 21

Creature Schticks: Aquatic, Guardian, Poison (fangs)

Sorcery Schticks: Blast (chi), Fertility, Movement, Summoning, Weather

Weapons: blast (17), fangs (15), poison (10)

Naga (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "Snakes! Why did it have to be snakes?"

Attributes: Bod 7, Chi 0 (Mag 7), Mnd 6, Ref 6

Skills: Creature Powers 10, Martial Arts 9, Sorcery 10

Creature Schticks: Aquatic, Guardian, Poison (fangs)

Magic Schticks: Weather

Weapons: blast (7), fangs (8), poison (10)



Origin: *The Netherworld*
Type: *Voracious randy demon*
Allegiance: *None*

DESCRIPTION

Pig demons, also known as *zhugui*, are humanoid in appearance, with rough skin, pointed ears, and an obnoxious-looking snout. They talk, walk upright, wear clothes, and the like, but remain pigs and like to do piggy things like grunt loudly, wallow in mud, eat without using their hands, and so on.

WALLOWING IN THE MUD

Pig demons are the reincarnations of those who have offended the divine order through lecherous behavior. When they die they are reborn as pig-monsters and sent to devour their family, friends, and just about anyone else they come across. Pig demons are just as lecherous as they were in their previous life, but their hideous appearance pretty much guarantees they won't see much action in that department. As one might guess, nearly all pig demons are male.

Devourer

New Creature Schtick

You can heal yourself by eating tremendous amounts of food. The amount of damage healed is equal to the Action Result of a Creature Powers check, but you must have access to one kilogram of food per point of damage healed. This ability follows all the usual rules for healing, meaning that only one check can be made for each scene in which you're injured. Additional schticks spent on this ability reduce the amount of food needed: two schticks reduce it to a half-kilogram per point of damage healed, and three schticks (the maximum) to a quarter-kilogram per point.

EATING OUT OF A TROUGH

Pig demons are ravenous, randy combatants. They attack without regard for their personal safety, though that's usually a safe bet, since they're difficult to harm and can do a tremendous amount of damage. They retain the free will they had as humans, and some even overcome their evil natures and become allies in the cause of good.

Piggy

Piggy was once a general of the heavens, but was banished to the earth after making obscene comments about the fairy Moon Princess, the Jade Emperor's daughter. Reincarnated as a pig demon, he devoured his whole family, and now attempts to redeem himself through his travels with his friends Stone Monkey, the monk Xuanzang, and an evil water spirit known as a kappa. Piggy tries his best to be a hero, but his lusts often get the best of him.

Sample Dialogue: "Hey baby, how much are you?"

Attributes: Bod 14, Chi 0 (Fu 7, Mag 7), Mnd 3, Ref 5

Skills: Creature Powers 14, Info/Dirty Jokes 6, Info/Food 4, Martial Arts 11

Creature Schticks: Armor, Devourer, Inevitable Comeback, Regeneration

Fu Schticks: Armored in Life, Clothed in Life, Inner Strength, Natural Order

Weapons: kick (16), punch (15), teeth (15)

Pig Demon (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "Bacon, anyone?"

Attributes: Bod 12, Chi 0 (Fu 6, Mag 6), Mnd 1, Ref 4

Skills: Creature Powers 9, Martial Arts 7

Creature Schticks: Devourer, Regeneration

Fu Schticks: Armored in Life, Clothed in Life

Weapons: kick (14), punch (13), teeth (13)

RECLAMATION

Origin: Mexico Natural Preservation Laboratories, 2056

Type: Extinct animals with latent potential

Allegiance: None

DESCRIPTION

Anyone who's visited a Buro Protective Wildlife Habitation Zone (PWHZ, or "zoo") has probably seen a reclamation, whether she knows it or not. The dodos, quaggas, California condors, great pandas, Bengal tigers, and lots of others on display in 2056 were extinct at one point or another, but have been brought back for the entertainment and education of a happy populace through the magic of arcanotech. In fact, natives of 2056 would have to be students of history or biology – or both – to distinguish reclamations from the real deal, or even realize those species were gone once.

Unfortunately, the super-dominant genes that make reclamations' existence possible have a worrisome tendency to revert under pressure. So go ahead and pet the kitty... but please don't rile it up with your laser pointer.

BRING BACK YOUR DEAD

After the Buro's abomination pipeline had been going for a few years, a few bleeding hearts in the military machine decided they wanted to make a Real Difference and demonstrate the wonder and potential of arcanotechnology in a useful, non-threatening, awe-inspiring fashion.

For decades, people had lamented the mass extinctions of the early 21st century. Genetic samples of extinct species existed (or could be procured by juncture-hopping), and in a few cases very small living populations even remained, but both represented insufficient genetic breadth to bring back whole populations, even if individual animals could be cloned. The animals needed viable breeding quantities, and those just didn't exist.

Enter arcanotechnology. CDCA scientists used arcanotech to infuse creatures with "superdominant" genetic material. These "SD" genomes were capable of modifying incompatible genetic material to match their own characteristics. The result was creatures capable of interbreeding with other animals and produc-

Sasha

Sasha, a reclaimed Bengal tiger, has had no reason to manifest any of her latent traits yet. She's got plenty of food, and nothing's encroached on her territory at the zoo.

Someone Says: "Here, kitty-kitty..."

Attributes: Bod 8, Chi 1 (Mag 8), Mnd 3, Ref 10

Skills: Creature Powers 15, Leadership 6, Martial Arts 12

Creature Schticks: Latent Schtick: Flight, Latent Schtick: Tentacles (x3), Latent Schtick: Regeneration

Weapons: claw (9), bite (10)

Giant Panda Reclamation (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "What a majestic, peaceful animal! Can I pet it?"

Attributes: Bod 7, Chi 1 (Mag 8), Mnd 2, Ref 9

Skills: Creature Powers 9, Martial Arts 9

Creature Schticks: Latent Schtick: Abysmal Spines, Latent Schtick: Armor, Latent Schtick: Conditional Escalation (Bod, when suffering a 10+ Wound attack)

Weapons: claw (8), bite (9)

ing offspring true to their own species. A cloned dodo infused with superdominant genes could mate with a chicken (or alligator, or cow, or *anything*) to make little dodos, each with lemony fresh dodo genes from which a truly broad population could eventually grow. These new creatures, dubbed reclamations, were shipped out to zoos everywhere. Everyone was amazed and astounded. ("Oooh! Ahhh. . .")

But what the amazed and astounded everyone didn't know was that, under the right (or "wrong") circumstances, reclamations can spontaneously revert. In New Des Moines, a stream-wading quagga suddenly sprouted the octopus tentacles nestled four generations back in its genes. Similar incidents have occurred around the world.

What causes these reversions? Normal reclamation genes “believe” themselves to be whatever they’ve been bred to be. But undue stress on the genetic imperatives of any animal — lack of food, predator danger, a dearth of mating partners — can cause these genes to suddenly and spontaneously reach back into their fluid history and pull out useful traits. A hungry animal might grow massive claws to bring down tasty prey. A frightened animal might spontaneously spit venom at startled observers. An animal in heat... well, you get the idea. And what’s worse, some reclamations have some seriously weird abomination-type DNA in their past, so the possibilities for reversion are often unnatural and horrifying well past what’s observed in the animal kingdom.

But since what you don’t know won’t hurt you (it’s the unofficial motto of the CDCA, so it must be true!), reclamations continue to live blissfully in PWHZs across 2056. And as long as they don’t get too stressed out, everything’s fine.

(So please, scrappy kid, don’t tap the glass.)

SWISS ARMY MONSTERS

Reclamations are great monsters because of their tremendous variety. They can do anything you need or want on the spur of the moment, just by reaching up the family tree.

Although they’re not great adventure drivers on their own — they don’t generally want anything bad enough that heroes are needed to stop them — they make great (read: surprising and dangerous) scenery for fights that spill into zoos, game preserves, or the homes of wealthy and eccentric collectors.



Latent Schtick

New Creature Schtick

Some other creature power you have is latent. You can’t use it, and don’t display its characteristics at the moment, but at some point down the road it will be revealed and you’ll have normal access to its capabilities.

Intelligent creatures that are aware of their latent schticks can attempt to activate them by making a Kung Fu check, Difficulty 12. Most creatures with latent schticks, however, are not aware of the fact. Such creatures instead make Will checks to *avoid* manifestation under the following conditions, with the following Difficulties:

Situation	Difficulty
Threat of harm	7
Mating opportunity frustrated	7
Threat of starvation	9*
Threat of death	12

* Additional checks are made once per day the creature cannot find food, with the Difficulty getting 1 point higher each time.

Checks are only made when the latent schtick in question would be useful in resolving the situation in question. Growing gills would resolve “threat of harm” if the creature were drowning, but be much less useful when faced with an exploding grenade.

This schtick is free. You may take it at no additional cost anytime you normally acquire a creature power.



Origin: India and China, 2056
Type: Ghoulish cybernetic demon
Allegiance: Architects of the Flesh

DESCRIPTION

A rotting robot looks like a humanoid robot covered with a layer of rotting flesh. Shiny metal gleams from where its bones should be, and long strands of ARB augment its decaying muscles. Rotting robots also have dark blue pointed teeth, long filthy claws, and stink like a graveyard.

FACE OFF IN THE CORNER

Rotting robots are abominations based on a type of supernatural creature known as a *pisaca*, or vampire demon. A *pisaca* is a demon that devours both the living and the dead, and spreads various diseases like leprosy.

Necrosis Unit

New Arcanowave Schtick

A necrosis unit is a box made of ARB and attached to an AI/O port. When active, it saturates the user's flesh with millions of magically enhanced, flesh-eating bacteria. Although the unit keeps the host from rotting away too quickly, other beings coming into physical contact with the bacteria melt into goo in the space of a few days. Any flesh-to-flesh contact — shaking hands, unarmed Martial Arts attacks, and so on — will do.

Those exposed must make a Constitution check of a Difficulty equal to the creature's Creature Powers AV, or become infected. The infected immediately sustain Wound Points equal to the amount by which they failed the check. Additional checks with the same Difficulty must then be made daily, with damage occurring the same way each day, until a check succeeds, in which case the infection ends and no additional damage is taken. If a victim receives medical treatment (a Heal/cure diseases or Medicine check, Difficulty 10), he can add the Outcome of that check to his next Constitution check.

If two schticks are spent on this ability, subsequent checks are made every hour. If three schticks are spent on this ability (the maximum), checks are made every minute.

The first couple of pisacas captured by the Architects simply rotted away, so the Buro scientists developed the clever idea of grafting the demon's decaying body onto a robotic frame. Now they use rotting robots to eliminate particularly troublesome foes in previous junctures.

KEEP THE TIP

Rotting robots are not especially fast or smart, but they are methodical, powerful, and very difficult to harm (think *The Terminator*). As assassins, they're un-subtle, using guns from a distance and relying on their necrosis units in close combat.

George Romero

This rotting robot has just enough sense to name itself after the director of Night of the Living Dead. George has been sent back in time to eliminate several pesky Ascended, and has made several forays against the Jammers, but so far without success.

Sample Dialogue: "Eat brains!"

Attributes: Bod 10, Chi 0 (Mag 8), Mnd 1, Ref 6

Skills: Arcanowave Device 14, Creature Powers 14, Guns 11, Intrusion 8, Martial Arts 11

Arcanowave Schticks: Juicer, Necrosis Unit, Neural Stimulator

Creature Schticks: Blood Drain (fortune gain), Corruption

Weapons: Buro Blade of Truth (10/3/30)

Rotting Robot (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "Yeah, I guess cyber-zombies were only a matter of time."

Attributes: Bod 8, Chi 0 (Mag 4), Mnd 0, Ref 5

Skills: Arcanowave Device 8, Creature Powers 8, Guns 8, Intrusion 7, Martial Arts 8

Arcanowave Schticks: Necrosis Unit

Creature Schticks: Blood Drain (fortune gain)

Weapons: Buro Blade of Truth (10/3/30)

SCUTTLEHEAD

Origin: South China Sea, 67 AD

Type: Swarming, ravenous demon crab

Allegiance: None, but sometimes summoned by Lotus sorcerers

DESCRIPTION

A scuttlehead resembles a head-sized, green-and-black crab with hooked legs and a snarling, hellish face on its back that spits and hisses when the creature's riled up. These demonic creatures travel in swarms, dwelling in the warm waters off the Chinese coast, where they seek out wooden ships to nest in and — thereby — destroy.

LOCUSTS OF THE SEA

Chinese seaman and poet Zhou Luo wrote in 67 AD that scuttleheads were summoned up from one of the hells by a eunuch sorcerer determined to sink his ship and prevent the secret message he was carrying from "reaching the tomorrows." It's possible that every scuttlehead attack reported in the years since has been the work of the same batch, still roaming the seas, hungry for hulls.

Scuttleheads swarm up over the sides of a boat to devour its crew. Sometimes they lay gooey wads of eggs in the smallest nooks onboard before returning to the sea. As alien creatures, scuttleheads have no natural predators, nor do they need to reproduce, being immortal unless physically destroyed. They breed only to replace lost brethren.

The Harbor Scourge

This swarm of scuttleheads found its way to harbor, where it has overtaken the dozens of junks tied up there, reproducing and driving the local denizens from the sea. It has separated into several sub-swarms, which can attack by surprise from different directions, combining and re-spawning to horrific effect against attempts to combat them.

Someone Says: "Don't worry, I can see them moving further out. If we hurry, we— aaarrgggh!"

Attributes: Bod 2 (Move 5, Tgh 4), Chi 0 (Mag 5), Mnd 1, Ref 7 (Spd 8)

Skills: Creature Powers 18 (per sub-swarm), Martial Arts 6

Creature Schticks: Swarming Mass

Weapons: claws (4)

Scuttlehead Swarm (Generic)

Someone Says: "You want some of this? Huh? You too? You want some of this, too? Here you go! And here's some for you! And you! And— aaarrgggh!"

Attributes: Bod 2 (Move 5, Tgh 4), Chi 0 (Mag 5), Mnd 1, Ref 7 (Spd 8)

Skills: Creature Powers 12, Martial Arts 6

Creature Schticks: Swarming Mass

Weapons: claws (4)

Swarming Mass

New Creature Schtick

Using this schtick, a mass of tiny clawing or biting creatures behaves communally. It can attack every shot, using its Creature Powers AV. When dodging, it uses Martial Arts. A single swarm can attack several targets near each other at its full AV. If such targets split up, the swarm generally splits, too, with each spawned swarm taking along half (or some other fraction, at the GM's option) of the swarm's remaining Creature Powers AV. All other

statistics remain the same for both. Spawned swarms can later re-merge, re-combining their AVs.

Once a swarm gets close enough to attack, it's too late to get away. The swarm clings to the target and moves with him, continuing to attack. To escape, the swarm must be killed or driven off.

A swarm doesn't take damage like a named or unnamed character does. Instead, every time a swarm is hit

"Swarming Mass" continues.

Swarming Mass (cont.)

by an attack dangerous enough to dish out Wound Points, the swarm's Creature Powers AV drops by one instead. For narrative purposes, assume that each Wound Point inflicted amounts to roughly one swarm-creature killed. A swarm subjected to damage in excess of its Creature Powers AV + Toughness all at once (from, say, an explosion) has its AV immediately reduced by half. A swarm keeps fighting until its Creature Powers AV is completely nullified, or it flees.

Although Group Attack (see p. 10) and Swarming Mass describe somewhat similar situations and capabilities, their effects are distinct, and they should not be confused. Think of Group Attack first when group members are at least moderately intelligent, are trained to fight as a group, and/or are readily distinct from each other. Swarming Mass is more appropriate when the individuals are nigh mindless, and/or so numerous as to be indistinct from each other.

It's not clear whether face crabs (see *Elevator to the Netherworld*, p. 6) and scuttleheads are the same creature, offshoots of a common ancestor, or unrelated examples of some twisted principle of parallel evolution. Frankly, most secret warriors have more interesting things to worry about.

HELLISH SWARMS

A scuttlehead swarm isn't a big threat to characters who keep their distance, but large swarms can be dangerous up close. The Swarming Mass creature schtick gives you a monster that even heroic characters may want to run from. Use them to keep people indoors, or have one follow your plague-ridden demon wherever it goes.



Origin: *Forgotten juncture of the Four Monarchs*

Type: *Single-minded huntresses*

Allegiance: *None*

DESCRIPTION

Individual fighters of the Shiva Squadron are eight-armed, Indian warrior-women cast in the mold of Durga, the warrior goddess of Hindu mythology. She was tasked with defeating the demon Mahishasura, who — it was said — could be conquered by neither man nor god.

Other than having eight arms in four pairs, the members of the Shiva Squadron — “shivas,” individually — appear to be relatively normal Indian women. They dress martially in contemporary style, favoring utilitarian jumpsuits to which their many weapons and tools can be speedily attached and removed. They are, without exception, graceful and well-muscled — unfit shivas don't last long.

LET VISHNU SORT 'EM OUT

The Shiva Squadron is a dis-timed military unit from the version of the contemporary juncture where the Four Monarchs ruled. They were — and remain — dedicated to seeking out and destroying demons from the Underworld wherever and whenever they may be found. The shivas carry out their mission without mercy or compromise, and if you're fighting a demon, they're just who you want on your side.

Before the critical shift wiped out their home juncture, the Shiva Squadron was loosely allied with the forces of Li Ting, King of the Fire Pagoda. At that time, there were many more shivas, but most were not inner-walkers, so were laterally reincarnated into irrelevance when history was revamped.

Even after their dis-timing, the Shiva Squadron didn't concern itself with the secret war... until they found out about the Ascended. The existence of a class of creatures with dual human and animal nature sat uncomfortably with them, because Mahishasura's father, Rambha, had been in love with a water buffalo, and Mahishasura had been born from that union, with the ability to change between the two forms at will. Had they been fighting the wrong enemy all this time? After reflection and meditation, the shivas decided that, henceforth, they would hunt both demons and transformed animals with equal vigor.

The Shiva Squadron operates from a secret base somewhere in the Netherworld. Their number is unknown, though many are aware they are ever-dwindling, as no more shivas can be born outside the sacred, high-magic temple of their juncture of origin. The nature of the Shiva Squadron's leadership structure — if they have one — is also unknown. In groups, shivas work seamlessly even without an apparent chain of command.

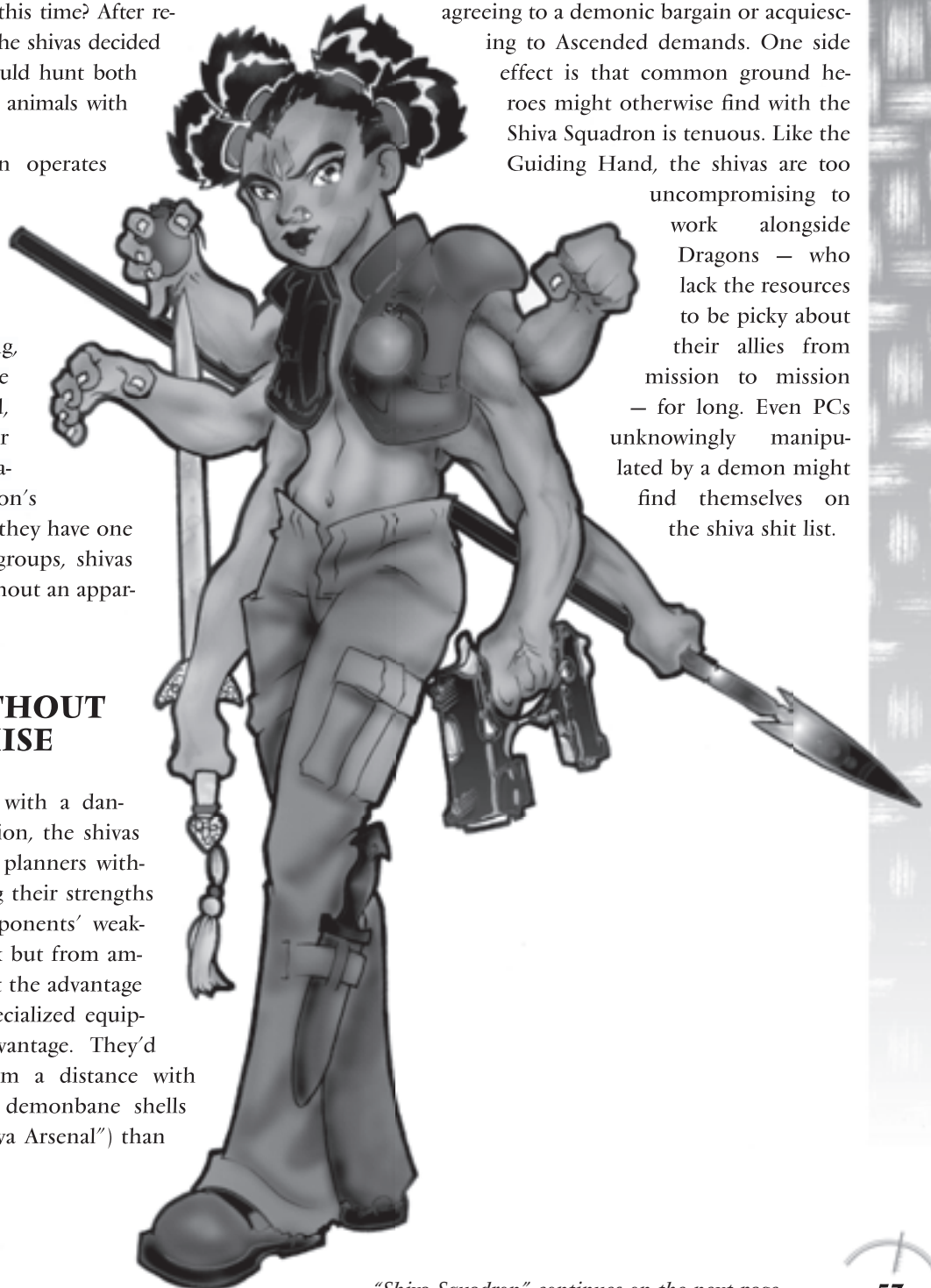
HUNTERS WITHOUT COMPROMISE

A dwindling group with a dangerous and solemn mission, the shivas are cautious but deadly, planners without peer, always bringing their strengths to bear against their opponents' weaknesses. They rarely attack but from ambush, never fight without the advantage of numbers, and use specialized equipment to maximum advantage. They'd much rather attack from a distance with explosives, rockets, and demonbane shells (see the insert, "The Shiva Arsenal") than

expose themselves to direct combat. Where possible, the Shiva Squadron proposes alliances with outsiders against common enemies, manipulating their allies to bear the brunt of the casualties.

In addition to attacking demons and transformed animals directly, the shivas conspicuously antagonize those who ally with either, even temporarily. The strategy is to make everyone think twice before agreeing to a demonic bargain or acquiescing to Ascended demands. One side effect is that common ground heroes might otherwise find with the Shiva Squadron is tenuous. Like the Guiding Hand, the shivas are too uncompromising to

work alongside Dragons — who lack the resources to be picky about their allies from mission to mission — for long. Even PCs unknowingly manipulated by a demon might find themselves on the shiva shit list.



"Shiva Squadron" continues on the next page.

Indrani Cour

A veteran of countless missions, Indrani — who usually works solo — is adept at obfuscation and misdirection, manipulating dupes to shoulder her risks and further her objectives.

Sample Dialogue: “Trying to manipulate you? Heavens forfend. It would be difficult for me to speak the truth any more plainly.”

Attributes: Bod 8, Chi 9 (Fu 8), Mnd 6 (Cha 9, Per 9), Ref 8

Skills: Deceit 12, Guns 15, Info/Ascended 7, Info/Demons 11, Intrusion 15, Martial Arts 14

Creature Schticks: Multiple Arms (x3) (see p. 34)

Fu Schticks: Friend of Darkness, Dark's Soft Whisper, The Fox's Retreat, Eyes of the Fox

Gun Schticks: Both Guns Blazing (x5)*

Sword Schticks: Both Swords Slashing (x3)†

Weapons: Intratec Tec-9 (10/3/32+1) (x4), Bowie knife (10), tulwar (12) (x4)

Equipment: demon box (containing seven demons), demonbane plastic explosive

* Rather than increasing her Guns AV bonus, the fourth and fifth schticks allow Indrani to fire a third and fourth gun, respectively. Any character with Multiple Arms and Both Guns Blazing can do this. The Both Guns Blazing formula (see *Feng Shui*, p. 62) becomes [total damage of all guns – (opponent's Toughness x number of guns) + Outcome = Wound Points suffered].

† Indrani can use four swords at once. (See *Golden Comeback*, p. 60, for information about how Both Guns Blazing and other Guns schticks can be used with swords.) As with Both Guns Blazing, her second and third schticks, combined with Multiple Arms, allow her to use a third and fourth sword simultaneously. The damage formula is as above (although with swords, note that Indrani suffers the normal –2 AV penalty, since she hasn't got enough schticks with swords to buy off the penalty).

Shiva (Unnamed)

Sample Dialogue: “Smell that? That's hellfire.”

Attributes: Bod 6, Chi 0, Mnd 5, Ref 7

Skills: Guns 10, Info/Ascended 6, Info/Demons 10, Intrusion 10, Martial Arts 10

Creature Schticks: Multiple Arms (x3) (see p. 34)

Weapons: M16 (13*/5/30), spear (10)

The Shiva Arsenal

The Shiva Squadron has access to a couple special pieces of equipment. The limited quantities they have are irreplaceable, the magic and knowledge to create more lost with their home juncture. As these are used or destroyed, they're gone forever.

Demonbane Shells: These powerful explosives are like neutron bombs, but for demons and everything else tainted by the Underworld. (They even rip the possessed to shreds. Good times.) Demonbane shells are, specifically, mortar rounds containing this kind of explosive material, but the shivas have stockpiles of demonbane grenades, RPGs, and even plastic explosive. The stats are just like for any other explosive, but the damage affects demons and the tainted only. They're no more harmful to anything else than a stiff wind.

Demon Boxes: Remember *Hellraiser*? The demon boxes look kind of like that: lacquered puzzle-boxes with all kinds of moving pieces. Now, remember *Ghostbusters*? The boxes work a lot like that: immobilize a demon, open the box, and the demon gets sucked in and imprisoned. The difference between the demon boxes and the *Ghostbusters* system is that there's no ecto-containment unit to put the demons in back at HQ, so they've got to be stored in the demon boxes basically forever. Luckily, each box can hold more than one demon at a time. However, each imprisoned demon can make a single Creature Powers or Sorcery roll — immediately when imprisoned or later on, at the demon's choice, but only one roll per customer — to destroy the box from the inside. The Difficulty is (30 – the number of demons in the box). When the box goes, all the demons come back out. The shivas have a half-dozen or so boxes left, and they're filling up fast.



Origin: Underworld / CDCA Research
& Development Facility #1, 2056

Type: Cobra + gigantic + tank + legs

Allegiance: Architects of the Flesh

DESCRIPTION

The fearsome products of the SICCASP (Serpentine Interdimensional Creature Augmentation and Assault Suit Project) are giant, 20-foot demonic cobras encased in walking tank bodies they control via arcanowave implants. Their front two legs are massive guns, usually Hellharrowers, Helix Guns, or Madame Curie Microwave Laser Cannons. Pound for pound, they're some of the most frightening weapons the secret war has ever seen.

UNLESS KANSAS IS HELL, WE'RE NOT THERE ANYMORE

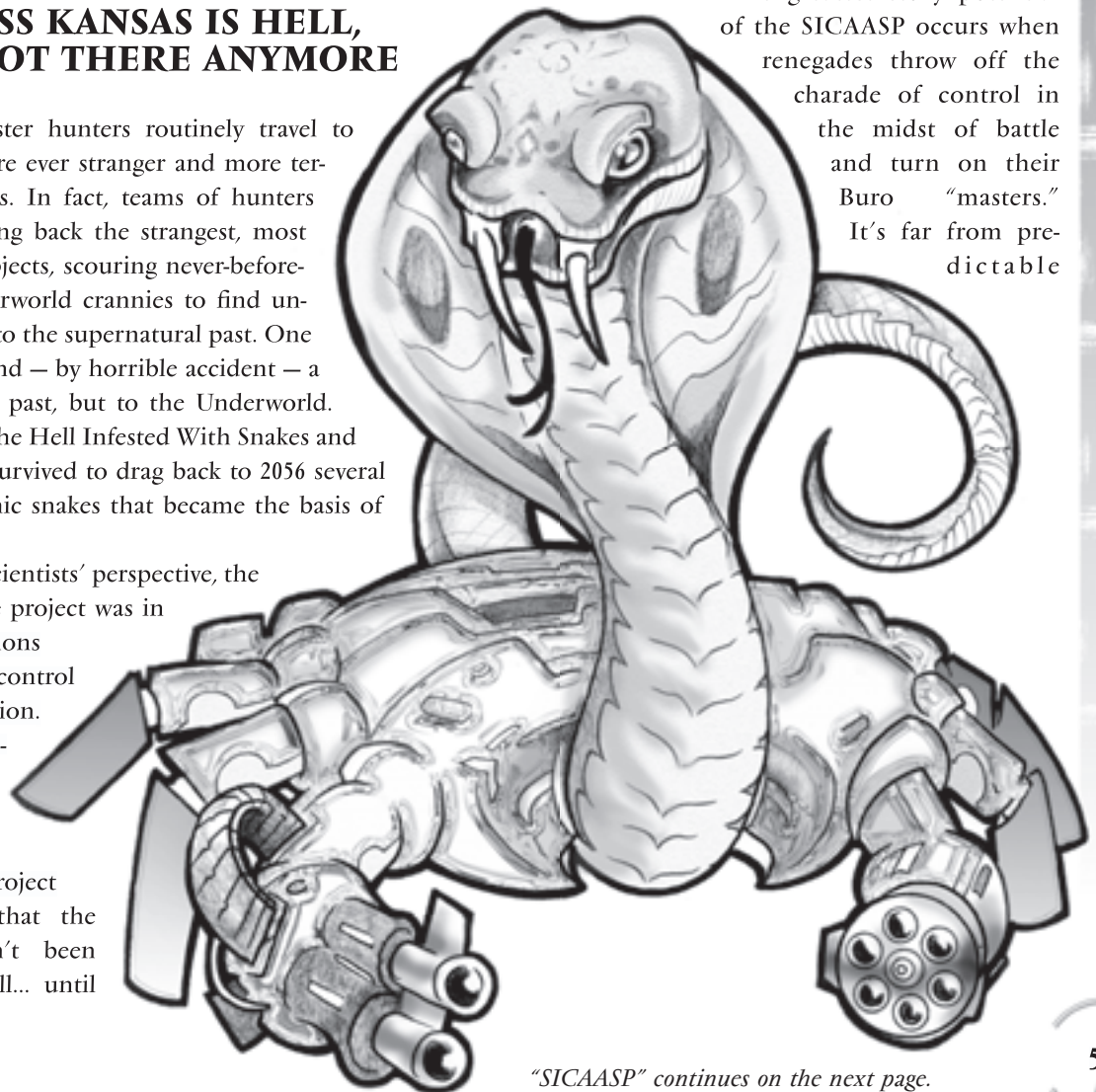
Buro monster hunters routinely travel to 69 AD to capture ever stranger and more terrifying creatures. In fact, teams of hunters compete to bring back the strangest, most horrific test subjects, scouring never-before-explored Netherworld crannies to find unexploited gates to the supernatural past. One such group found — by horrible accident — a gate not to the past, but to the Underworld. Specifically, to the Hell Infested With Snakes and Worms. Some survived to drag back to 2056 several colossal, demonic snakes that became the basis of the SICAASP.

From the scientists' perspective, the difficulty of the project was in subjecting demons to arcanowave control and manipulation. Even once dominated, they remained willful. One nay-saying project lead claimed that the creatures hadn't been controlled at all... until

one of them ate him, which made his objections easy to ignore. The truth: he was right. The snakes aren't affected one whit by the devices that supposedly place them under the direct control of BuroMil commanders. For now, the snakes go along willingly, the better to cause some serious chaos and disaster down the road.

HERE A SNAKE, THERE A SNAKE, EVERYWHERE A SNAKE-SNAKE

The greatest story potential of the SICAASP occurs when renegades throw off the charade of control in the midst of battle and turn on their Buro "masters." It's far from predictable



"SICAASP" continues on the next page.

BERNARD

A relatively standard, assembly-line SICAASP, dubbed BERNARD (Big Evil Reptile, uNcooperative And Really Dangerous) by the logistics team responsible for deploying him.

Someone Says: “On a plane? Yes, for the love of God! Send it anywhere but here!”

Attributes: Bod 15, Chi 0 (Mag 8), Mnd 6, Ref 6

Skills: Arcanowave Device 12, Creature Powers 14, Martial Arts 14, Guns 12

Arcanowave Schticks: Feedback Enhancer, Helix Ripper, Spirit Shield Generator, Threat Evaluator, Wave Scanner

Creature Schticks: Abysmal Fangs (x3), Death Resistance, Poison (x2, fangs)

Weapons: fangs (22), Helix Ripper (15**/7/-), Madame Curie Microwave Laser Cannon (15/8/-) (see *Seed of the New Flesh*, p. 54), poison (12)

what this might mean for PCs involved in the fight, because when you’re dealing with demons it’s not clear that the “enemy’s enemy” maxim holds true. Whatever the outcome, a renegade tank-serpent certainly makes a fight more interesting, and more than one multiplies the fun; will they work together, or fight among themselves?

SICAASP (Generic)

Someone Says: “Snakes! Why did it have to be snakes again?”

Attributes: Bod 14, Chi 0 (Mag 8), Mnd 6, Ref 6

Skills: Arcanowave Device 12, Creature Powers 13, Martial Arts 13, Guns 12

Arcanowave Schticks: Feedback Enhancer, Helix Ripper, Spirit Shield Generator, Threat Evaluator, Wave Scanner

Creature Schticks: Abysmal Fangs (x3), Death Resistance, Poison (fangs)

Weapons: fangs (21), Helix Ripper (15**/7/-), Hellhar-rower (14**/8/20), poison (10)

The sheer bluntness of a SICAASP attack makes it the perfect distraction for ambushes, sneak attacks, breaking-and-entering, and other dirty tricks. The heroes may be so jazzed to fight such awesome killing machines that they’ll rush to engage, and leave the back door wide open. Take advantage of that.

It’s left to each GM’s malevolent whim whether the serpents of the SICAASP answer to higher demonic authorities, or are up to their own individual destructive devices. The answer could be a little of both, depending on the individual.



Origin: *The Netherworld*

Type: Nuns

Allegiance: None

DESCRIPTION

No Sister of Mercy has ever been seen in any dress but the garb of their order: floor-length, black-on-black habits and wimples. All carry a wide variety of excessive ordnance, both plain and concealed, and all are well trained in its use.

Sisters of Mercy leave their abbey, which lies deep within the Netherworld, only when sent on spiritual pilgrimages by their Mother Superior. Almost without exception, these are missions of mercy to release from this mortal coil those who desperately deserve the re-

spite of death — whether the deserving want that release or not.

THE FIRST PRECEPT

Life is suffering.

This First Precept of the Sisters of Mercy is beaten — literally — into every Little Sister indoctrinated into the order. For the Sisters, it follows from this principle that those who live cannot escape suffering; the only release the Creator grants from suffering is death. The

Sister Eluria

Sister Eluria's skin — not that anyone outside the Order ever sees it — is dense with scars from the abuse she endured as a Little Sister, coming to grips with the First Precept. She's one of the most dedicated Sisters in memory, fervent in her death-wish but filled with self-loathing at the strength of her own will to live.

Sample Dialogue: "Pass the ammunition, my sisters, and postpone not this child's sweet release!"

Attributes: Bod 6, Chi 2 (Mag 8), Mnd 7, Ref 8

Skills: Guns 15, Info/Creed of the Sisters of Mercy 14

Gun Schticks: Carnival of Carnage (x2), Eagle Eye, Lightning Reload

Weapons: Desert Eagle .50 Magnum (12/3/9+1), M16 (13*/5/30), bandolier of grenades

Sister of Mercy (Unnamed)

Sample Dialogue: "Praise be! The end of your suffering is at hand!"

Attributes: Bod 5, Chi 2 (Mag 7), Mnd 6, Ref 7

Skills: Guns 9, Info/Creed of Sisters of Mercy 13

Weapons: Desert Eagle .357 Magnum (11/3/10+1), M16 (13*/5/30)

Sisters of Mercy, therefore, move through the junctures delivering unto an agonized humanity the sweet balm of death. Thus it has been since the beginning of the order, and thus shall it always be.

The Sisters, however, are not indiscriminate psychopaths. Their Mother Superior is blessed by communion with the order's Higher Power, which moves through her to scribe the Rolls of Mercy, the list of those whom the Sisters must deliver from their wretchedness.

Each Sister prays that her own name will someday find its way onto the Rolls, so that she, too, may reach the release of death. Failing that, though, each Sister fights with the abandon of fearless righteousness, because each one is desperately looking forward to her own death.

And thus is mercy spread through the junctures.
Amen.

Who's This Creator, Anyway?

There are basically four possibilities as to what's going on with the Sisters of Mercy. Choose one, or mix and match.

1. The Sisters are Right

It could be that life really is suffering (honestly, would this surprise you?) and that the Creator of the universe is a deeply swell being who employs the Sisters as instruments of His Mercy. In this case, most of the people on the Rolls probably really would be better off dead. (Not that they typically agree.)

2. Infernal Deception

Maybe a demon, or clan of demons, is behind the Mother Superior's Roll-scribbling. It's the kind of thing a demon would do. In this event, the people on the Rolls probably comprise a cross-section of innocents, enemies of the Underworld, and expressions of demonic irony.

3. Pawns in the Secret War

It could be that one of the secret war's factions is the motivating force behind the Sisters' killings. The Mother Superior might be a dupe, or a dedicated secret warrior herself. If this is true, the Sisters' assassinations probably target that faction's enemies most of the time, with other, random targets thrown in every once in a while to disguise the pattern.

4. "Divine Inspiration, My Habit"

The Mother Superior might simply be nuts, marking people for death by opening up the figurative four-juncture phone book and pointing at random names. Stranger things have happened in the secret war, and more will happen tomorrow.

ANGELS OF DEATH

Lots of people whose names find their way onto the Rolls of Mercy aren't so keen on dying. Some run, others fight back. The Sisters don't hold it against them; their doctrine asserts that the instinct of self-preservation is a curse from the Creator that prevents humanity from embracing divine mercy too easily.

Sisters of Mercy prefer the overwhelming, frontal attack, for obvious reasons.

SKIN PAINTER

Origin: *Netherworld, 69 AD*

Type: *Skin-stealing, shapechanging demon*

Allegiance: *None*

DESCRIPTION

In its true form, a skin painter is a two-meter-tall devil with green scaly skin, horns, and saw-edged teeth. When wearing a skin it can look like anything from a filthy beggar to a beautiful woman to a young child.

STOLEN SKIN

Skin painters are lazy demons, and in order to avoid work, they live off the labor of others. They accomplish this by killing some helpless-looking person, skinning the corpse, and wearing the skin as a disguise. The painter then finds some generous soul to take it in and proceeds to freeload. The skin only stays fresh for a few days before it begins to rot, so the skin painter must remove the skin each day and spend a few minutes touching it up with paints and makeup to maintain its disguise.

FLY WHISKS, WOODEN SWORDS

Skin painters prefer guile to combat, but they almost always slay their benefactors when they're

discovered. They only have two significant weaknesses: first, they're vulnerable to wooden swords, and second, they dislike flywhisks. These whisks do not harm or repel them, but they do make them noticeably uncomfortable, and provide a way of identifying one.

Li Qing

Li Qing appears to be a beautiful woman, and claims her parents sold her into concubinage when she was just a child. The wife of her master was envious of her beauty and beat her mercilessly, and she eventually grew disgusted with her treatment and ran away. This is all a lie — she's just a lazy demon looking for a sugar daddy.

Sample Dialogue: "I have no place to stay. A runaway has no home."

Attributes: Bod 8, Chi 1 (Mag 9), Mnd 10, Ref 7

Skills: Creature Powers 12, Info/Painting 12, Intrusion 10, Martial Arts 9, Seduction 14, Sorcery 13

Creature Schticks: Immune to Hand Weapons (except magic weapons and wooden swords), Skin-stealing, Soul Twist

Sorcery Schticks: Blast (fire), Influence

Weapons: blast (11), soul twist (7), teeth (9)

Skin-stealing

New Creature Schtick

You can kill a human and wear its skin like a suit. You must spend at least one hour preparing a skin to wear, and must spend ten minutes each day freshening it with paints and preservatives. You can wear the skin of any human regardless of size, age, or gender.

If a skin is properly maintained, the disguise is perfect except to close physical inspection, which reveals it to be cold and dead. If the disguise is not properly maintained on a given day, however, make a Difficulty 5 Fortune check once in each scene. On a failure, it rots away and falls off in the course of the scene, revealing your true form.

Skin Painter (Generic)

Someone Says: "Hey lady, are you feeling all right? You're all clammy."

Attributes: Bod 7, Chi 0 (Mag 7), Mnd 7, Ref 5

Skills: Creature Powers 9, Info/Painting 8, Intrusion 6, Martial Arts 7, Seduction 10

Creature Schticks: Immune to Hand Weapons (except magic weapons and wooden swords), Skin-stealing, Soul Twist

Weapons: blast (9), soul twist (7), teeth (8)

SORCERER-BOT

Origin: 69 by way of 2056

Type: Attack robots with good heads on their shoulders

Allegiance: Architects of the Flesh (mostly)

DESCRIPTION

Imagine the undead head of a withered Chinese sorcerer — big eyebrows, big mustache — on a sleek, artificial body. These bodies, naked as often as not and sexless in any case, are made out of eerie, pale plastic with Chinese characters painted on them.

In a fight, the head usually howls out epithets and incantations while the body does its thing (kick ass with extreme prejudice) in almost complete silence, a model of bio-mechanical efficiency.

Creepy is as creepy does.



Han Lo 3

Han Lo's head has survived his robotic body's destruction twice, now. This hasn't put him in a very good mood.

Sample Dialogue: "Cease this pitiable delay of your assured end! Die, fool!"

Attributes: Bod 8, Chi 0 (Mag 8), Mnd 5 (Int 6, Wil 8), Ref 9

Skills: Martial Arts 15, Sorcery 15

Fu Schticks: Crane Stance, Hands Without Shadow, Dim Mak, Lightning Fist, Path of the Selective Master (spear), Willow Step, Walk of a Thousand Steps, Natural Order

Sorcery Schticks: Blast (chi, disintegration, lightning), Divination, Movement

Weapons: blast (10), kick (10), spear (15)

Sorcerer-bot (Generic)

Sample Dialogue: "Death will find you, by whichever route!"

Attributes: Bod 6, Chi 0 (Mag 5), Mnd 5, Ref 7

Skills: Martial Arts 11, Sorcery 12

Fu Schticks: Crane Stance, Path of the Selective Master (sword), Willow Step

Sorcery Schticks: Blast (Conjured Weapons), Divination, Movement

Weapons: blast (7), kick (8), sword (13)

YOU GOT YOUR CHOCOLATE IN MY PEANUT BUTTER

The original plan wasn't a bad one. The Architects wanted to know more about sorcery, so they went to China, dug around in graveyards until they found some centuries-dead sorcerer skulls, and used that genetic material to re-grow ancient sorcerer heads. They put the heads in tanks of goo and asked them about magic.

"Sorcerer-bot" continues on the next page.

The thing about the original plan was that it lacked *vision*. But it wasn't too long before an eager beaver from robotics decided to put one of the re-grown heads on a body pre-programmed to kick ass. Add a few mystical inscriptions — they help the sorcerer focus his chi to use fu powers — and the Buro got the sorcerer-bot, 2056 edition.

In terms of outlook, sorcerer-bots vary. Some have been talked into serving the Buro, others have been bribed. Still others killed themselves rather than submit, and some of those decided to submit after all, after their heads were re-grown and put on new robo-bodies. One or two sorcerer-bots may even have escaped the labs where they were “born” and now wander the Earth, *Kung Fu*-style, seeking vengeance against all and whomever.

YOU GOT YOUR PEANUT BUTTER IN MY CHOCOLATE

Sorcerer-bots are your basic utility enemies, capable of dishing out both physical and magical pain in more or less equal quantities. This dual nature also makes them less susceptible to either kind of mojo than lots of other foes. In addition to being good in a fight, sorcerer-bots' Divination also helps them track down even the most obstinately hidden enemies.

Sorcerer bots are a little unusual among allies of the Buro in that they retain their free will, often continue to generally loathe the future, but more or less toe the party line. Make that a factor in stories that use sorcerer-bots, if you can.



DESCRIPTION

A spirit dog in its true form looks like a medium-sized yellow canine. Its eyes are glassy, it smells of rot, and it is frequently covered with open sores or other signs of decay. In order to hide its undead nature, the creature dyes its fur strange colors, sports fake horns, and uses other cheap costuming tricks to look like a demon. These disguises don't hold up under close scrutiny, but may fool someone from a distance or in dim light.

DEMONIC DECEPTION

Spirit dogs are created when a dog dies at the hands of cruel men in a place with negative feng shui. The creature returns from the dead in order to exact revenge upon humanity.

Origin: First described in the “Spellbinder” texts (modern Hubei Province, China, 217 BC), but can be found in the 69 and 1850 junctures

Type: Randy undead canine disguised as a demon

Allegiance: None

Chaoxing

A spoiled zombie dog looking for a good time.

Sample Dialogue: “I swear I’m really a demon, and I’m not compensating for anything!”

Attributes: Bod 6 (Mov 9), Chi 8 (For 5), Mnd 6 (Per 9), Ref 7

Skills: Martial Arts 14, Intrusion 11

Creature Schticks: Immune to Hand Weapons (except magical weapons and those made from mulberry wood)

Transformed Dog Schticks: Bark, Hump, Mark Prey, Sniff

Weapons: bite (7)

STEAMED DOG

Despite being undead monsters, spirit dogs use some transformed animal powers. They have their own package of powers, which is also available to new transformed animal characters.

Dog

New Transformed Animal Package

Attribute Modifiers:

Move +3, Fortune +3, Perception +3

Bark

Chi: 1 / Shots: 1

You can bark at enemies to scare them off. Make a Martial Arts check with an opponent's Willpower as the Difficulty. The Outcome is the Difficulty of the Willpower check the victim must make to attack you this sequence.

Mark Prey

Chi: 3 / Shots: 3

This schtick is identical to the transformed tiger's Mark Prey schtick on Feng Shui p. 114.

Hump

Chi: 5 / Shots: 3

You can hump an opponent's leg as a Martial Arts attack. This not only makes you feel really good (it heals 1 point of damage), but also repulses your enemy, leaving him stunned and unable to act for one shot. For each extra schtick you spend on this power (max 3), the incapacitation lasts for an additional shot.

Sniff

Chi: 2 / Shots: 1

You can smell an opponent's schticks. Make a Martial Arts check using the opponent's Chi rating as the Difficulty. On a success, you learn the identity of one of your opponent's schticks (chosen by your opponent). Each time you use this ability on the same foe, you learn the identity of a different schtick.

Spirit Dog (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "Well, at least it's been fixed."

Attributes: Bod 5 (Mov 8), Chi 7 (For 4), Mnd 5 (Per 8), Ref 5

Skills: Martial Arts 9, Intrusion 8

Creature Schticks: Immune to Hand Weapons (except magical weapons and those made from mulberry wood)

Transformed Dog Schticks: Hump

Weapons: bite (6)

THIRTY-SIX THOUSAND GODS

Origin: Everywhere

Type: Minor gods inhabiting all people and things

Allegiance: None

DESCRIPTION

The thirty-six thousand gods are tiny creatures, no larger than a man's thumb, who are naturally gaseous and transparent, making them as insubstantial as a puff of wind.

DIVINE HYGIENE

The thirty-six thousand gods are minor spirits, and dwell inside all living things. According to the Taoist school of Divine Hygiene (of 2056, obviously), the pres-

God of the Leftmost Eyelash of Zu's Right Eye

Somehow, one of the gods belonging to the martial arts master Zu attained a unique personality. Summoning this god inflicts 2 damage instead of the usual 1 point.

Sample Dialogue: "Tremble before me, for I am the god of the leftmost eyelash of Zu's right eye!"

Attributes: Bod 4, Chi 6, Mnd 2, Ref 11

Skills: Creature Powers 11, Martial Arts 16

Creature Schticks: Flight, Insubstantial (glass, nylon, paper, plastic, rubber), Transparency

Weapons: battering wind (5)

Inner Alchemy

New Fu Power

Chi: X / **Shots:** 1

This power allows you to call forth the thirty-six thousand gods within you. For each god called forth (and you may summon as many simultaneously as you like), you take 1 damage (not reduced by Toughness) and use 1 Chi point. The gods obey any command you give them, and can remain outside your body for up to one minute. After that duration (or sooner, if they are “killed”) they return to your body. If one of your gods is banished with Summoning/banishment, you are permanently weakened, losing a point from your Martial Arts skill. Only named characters can learn Inner Alchemy. *Prerequisite:* Lightning Fist

Transparency

New Creature Schtick

A creature with this schtick can make itself transparent at will. For each schtick spent on this ability, ranged attacks against the creature suffer a -1 AV penalty, and attempts to detect the creature suffer a -2 penalty.

ence of these gods gives creatures life. As the years pass, the gods slowly leave the body, and eventually the creature dies. The departure of the gods from the body can be slowed by observing a special diet (abstaining from

Thirty-Six Thousand Gods (Unnamed)

Someone Says: “Hey, that tickles!”

Attributes: Bod 2, Chi 5, Mnd 1, Ref 10

Skills: Creature Powers 9, Martial Arts 10

Creature Schticks: Flight, Insubstantial (glass, nylon, paper, plastic, rubber), Transparency

Weapons: battering wind (3)

meat, wine, and grain), and through special meditative exercises known as “Inner Alchemy.” Skilled practitioners of kung fu can, at great risk to themselves, call forth these inner gods and send them to battle their enemies.

SPIRITS INSIDE

Calling forth the thirty-six thousand gods requires a secret fu power only available to named characters who have completed the Path of the Hands of Light. This schtick, Inner Alchemy, allows the master to summon forth the gods from his body. The gods can do anything requiring brute force, including attack foes, set off traps, slam shut doors, and similar tasks that do not require any kind of manipulation (in short, if it requires hands, they can’t do it). Though the gods can understand the master, they cannot talk or otherwise communicate.



Origin: Liberty City, 2056

Type: Hip-hop street warriors

Allegiance: None

DESCRIPTION

Thumpers are cybernetically enhanced gang-bangers, ravers, and artists from 2056. Their bodies have been overhauled to make them walking sound systems complete with massive speakers, onboard circuitry and data storage, bones augmented to conduct bass right into the earth (and anything else the

thumper touches), and a body-wide antenna system for picking up every kind of wireless broadcast known to 2056 technology.

The volume of noise a single thumper can create is staggering. Easily enough to deafen, even from momentary exposure. Shatter glass? No problem. Given their bone augmentation, they can crack concrete and bring down buildings, if they stand in the right place.

Thumper

If you're so badass, why can't I hear your soundtrack?

You were always single-minded about music, and you started implanting audio gear as soon as you could scrape together the money. After thumper rigs became illegal it was a little more challenging to get the latest mods installed, but that didn't stop you.

Your musical tastes are eclectic, but everything you 'cast communicates something about you, and does it a lot more directly than all the mouth-jabber you hear from the fleas — thumper slang for the un-rigged — day in, day out. You can't imagine life without your rig; you'd rather lose your eyesight, your right arm, or both. (It would be a real pain to replace the equalizing equipment in your right arm, but still....)



If music is the language of the soul, what better use for your body?

Juncture: 2056

Attributes: Bod 5
Chi 0 (Fu =6)
Mnd 5
Ref 5

Add 3 to any one primary attribute. Add 2 to any other primary attribute. Add 1 to any secondary attribute.

Skills: Fix-it +3 (8) [Max 13]
Guns +3 (8) [Max 13]
Info/Music +10 (15)
Intimidation +3 (8)
Martial Arts +4 (9) [Max 13]
Sabotage +3 (8)

Add 6 Skill Bonuses to these skills and/or additional skills of your choice.

Schticks: 2 fu schticks

Weapons: 2 weapons from 2056

Quick Schtick Pick:

Fu schticks: DownBeat, SoundQuake

Weapons: Buro 9, length of pipe

Wealth Level: poor

That's all pedestrian disruption, though. The really interesting thing is this: Putting all that sound equipment in a *person* means that thumpers with good chi who grok the secret war can actually disrupt feng shui sites, temporarily "deafening" their flow.

I, POD

The earliest thumpers were visionary artists of the 2020s and '30s who saw developments in cybernetics as a route to oneness with the tunes. They created some seriously sweet music. Then audio augmentation became a fashion trend. For a while, everybody who was into music — its creation or appreciation — had a speaker or two implanted somewhere, making them as ubiquitous as tattoos. In fact, when tattoos fell out of fashion, lots of people had speakers put in where their ink used to be.

By the time 2056 rolled around, though, full-on thumper augmentation was the domain of punks and thugs. Although there are still a few OT's creating great music, society as a whole now views the movement with fear and anxiety. This is due to Bonengel's eventual realization that thumpers were capable of suppressing chi, at which point he turned his massive personal power against them faster than you can whine about the Man keeping you down.

In 2056, some thumpers hang in homogeneous gangs, while others are solo operators, or members of un-enhanced gangs. Most are militant individualists. Few are aware of the secret war and the anti-chi power they possess. If someone started cluing them in *en masse*, they could cause some real — if temporary — damage.

WALL OF SOUND

Use thumpers as an unusual, chi-relevant riff on gangbangers and musicians. That means they're generally motivated by territorial or aesthetic concerns. To the extent that the heroes support or antagonize those agenda, thumpers react accordingly.

Thumpers and Jammers are natural allies who, nevertheless, have trouble seeing eye to eye. Most thumpers think most Jammers are philistines, and most Jammers think most thumpers are wasting their lives. That said,

Courante

Courante is old-school, one of the original thumpers, more music-literate than most. He somehow managed to survive his reckless youth, and has started thinking about his legacy. He'd be a great recruit for the Dragons.

Sample Dialogue: "Listen up, consumer... and listen good."

Attributes: Bod 5, Chi 0 (Fu 7), Mnd 8, Ref 7

Skills: Fix-it 12, Guns 12, Info/Music 19, Intimidation 8, Martial Arts 15, Sabotage 11

Fu Schticks: DownBeat, SoundQuake, EarDrum, Flow-Jam, Bite of the Dragon, Creative Thunder, Clothed in Life

Unique Schticks: Thumper Rig

Weapons: Buro Avenger (1 1/2/6), length of chain (7)

Thumper (Unnamed)

Sample Dialogue: "Step aside, flea. Right of way goes to the biggest sound."

Attributes: Bod 5, Chi 0 (Fu 5), Mnd 4, Ref 6

Skills: Info/Music 12, Intimidation 6, Martial Arts 8

Fu Schticks: DownBeat, SoundQuake

Unique Schticks: Thumper Rig

Weapons: baseball bat (8)

Thumper Rig

Unique Schtick

You've had extensive cybernetic surgery to implant you with enough audio gear to choke a SICAASP (q.v., baby — that's a lot of hardware). You can broadcast any music you choose — spontaneously generated or pre-recorded — either audibly (and deafeningly) or via any number of 2056 wireless protocols. This schtick is required to learn the fu powers in the Path of Visible Resonance.

the Jammers think that using noise to destroy things is pretty spectacular, and are totally down with using sound to disrupt chi, even if it can't be suppressed forever.

Thumpers are extremely rare outside 2056.

Path of Visible Resonance

New Fu Power Path

The fu powers in this path are available only to characters with the Thumper Rig unique schtick.

DownBeat

Chi: 1 / Shots: 1

Make a Martial Arts check; if successful, up to three opponents standing near each other and within ten meters of you are deafened until the end of the fight, and suffer 1 point of Impairment until then because of it. *Pre-requisite: Thumper Rig schtick; Path: SoundQuake*

SoundQuake

Chi: X / Shots: X

Spend X shots increasing volume at just the right rate, and finding just the right spot to stand and put your hands, then make a Sabotage check with Difficulty X. X is the number of cubic meters of stuff — stone, concrete, buildings, vehicles, and so on — that you reduce to rubble. The chi is used whether the check is successful or not. You can't do this to living things. *Pre-requisite: Thumper Rig schtick, DownBeat; Path: EarDrum*

EarDrum

Chi: 3 / Shots: 3

Make a Martial Arts check; if successful, a single opponent within arm's reach is permanently deafened. He suffers 1

point of Impairment until he becomes used to it through a humorous or poignant montage of scenes of acclimation. Permanent deafness can be healed with a Difficulty 10 use of the Heal Sorcery schtick or the Medicine skill using 2056 technology, or a Difficulty 12 use of contemporary tech. *Pre-requisite: Thumper Rig schtick, SoundQuake; Path: FlowJam*

FlowJam

Chi: 6 / Shots: continuous

By attuning your chi to your music, you can create dissonance in the chi of a feng shui site you occupy. As long as you continue to focus your attention on the effort, anyone attuned to the site suffers 1 point of Impairment, and gains no experience benefit from the site. This effort is cumulative for disruptions at multiple sites. To continue for long periods of time, you must make a Difficulty X Constitution check each hour, and each time you're distracted; X is the number of hours you've been going. If a distraction wounds you, add the damage you suffer to X as well. Once your concentration is finally broken, you cannot use this power again for X hours. Obviously, the long-term damage is limited without many thumpers working together across many sites, but the uniqueness of this threat could put the fear of God into the chi overlords of any juncture. *Pre-requisite: Thumper Rig schtick, EarDrum; Path: None*



Origin: China, 69 AD

Type: Elemental demon of metal

Allegiance: Eaters of the Lotus

DESCRIPTION

A ti kan often resembles a warrior armored in the Eastern style, although as ti kan are actually intangible spirits of metalworking that animate technological objects, there's no reason they can't manifest inside European plate armor — or pretty much anything else — just as easily. They do, however, seem

to like suits of armor, both for their durability and anthropomorphism.

When ti kan inhabiting armor speak — which is rarely — they do so by flexing their "bodies" in subtle, profound, and strange ways, making creaky reverberations they shape into echoic, distorted words. The net result is like being at the top of the Grand Canyon while someone at the bottom talks. Ti kan inhabiting other

kan.exe

This ti kan has learned to infiltrate computer systems in the contemporary juncture. Although the experts swear it's a virus like any other, this bug actually is a malevolent demon... just like thousands of computer users have secretly suspected all along.

Someone Says: "I know better than to open attachments from strangers! I'm telling you, it opened itself!"

Attributes: Bod 5, Chi 1 (Mag 8), Mnd 8, Ref 8

Skills: Creature Powers 16, Intrusion 11, Martial Arts 12

Creature Schticks: Damage Immunity (bullets, hand-to-hand weapons, unarmed attacks), Insubstantial (no exceptions), Tech Borrow

Ti Kan (Unnamed)

A typical ti kan inhabiting a suit of armor.

Sample Dialogue: "Lay down your abominable technology, that it may be destroyed."

Attributes: Bod 4, Chi 0 (Mag 7), Mnd 7, Ref 7

Skills: Creature Powers 8, Intrusion 7, Martial Arts 8

Creature Schticks: Damage Immunity (bullets, hand-to-hand weapons, unarmed attacks), Insubstantial (no exceptions), Tech Borrow

Weapons: punch (5)

items of technology often manipulate those things' inherent capabilities to "speak," communicating through computer speakers, for example.

GROWING PAINS

In the time before the First Emperor, ti kan had much simpler lives. They were forge spirits, gods of metalworking and blacksmithing who taught men to craft tools. In some ways, they created humanity; certainly, they created human society. In addition to teaching, a ti kan could bless a skilled smith's work by entering it, granting it sharpness and hardness over years and centuries.

The Industrial Revolution changed all that. Machines replaced blacksmiths and foundries replaced forges. The ti kan saw this change, saw machines making other machines, and saw that although humanity was using their gift more than ever, they used it without gratitude or understanding of the role of the ti kan. They grew angry.

Tech Borrow

Unique Schtick

Tech Borrow is a modified version of Body Borrow (see *Thorns of the Lotus*, p. 102), with the following differences from the basic schtick:

- When attempting to possess an object without Willpower (i.e., the vast majority), simply make a Creature Powers check and possess the item for a number of sequences equal to the action result.
- When possessed, an object's inherent capabilities can be operated at will. A blender could be turned on and off, a firearm discharged, and so forth. Possessed items can also be physically manipulated with the borrower's relevant statistics, even to the point of being flung through the air or wrestled from those holding them.
- For these purposes, even low-tech objects are "technological" items. This schtick can be used to inhabit suits of armor, drawbridges, inkpots, and so forth.

Then Gao Zhang and the Eaters of the Lotus showed them the world of 2056. They saw how the steel and iron they loved was being used to make machines that thought for themselves. They saw how humanity no longer loved them. This, they agreed, was the ultimate perversion of their teaching.

Since then, the Lotus have used the ti kan to unleash havoc in the other junctures. They stoke and manipulate the metal spirits' passions, and the other factions fight them without (yet) understanding that all the ti kan want is a return to their ancient relationship with men and craft.

TECHNO JUDO

As noted elsewhere, the Lotus come to the secret war with a technological disadvantage. Laptops, mobile phones, and iPods don't exist at even a conceptual stage for them. Thus, when they try to bring the fight to the enemy — especially in 2056 — they tend to get their asses handed to them, sometimes without even knowing how or why. Ti kan help level the playing field by possessing objects — specifically, technological objects — instead of people.

Although they have a great deal in common, ti kan hate industrial demons (see p. 42).

TOMB SPIRIT

Origin: 69 AD

Type: Body-part wearing tentacle demon

Allegiance: None, but sometimes used by the Lotus

DESCRIPTION

When lucky people see a tomb spirit, they see a hideous corpse lurching and stumbling at them, its body parts rotting to the point of liquefaction. It reeks of decay, gasping in agony and howling at the endless torment of its undeath, all the while acting on its primal instinct to seek and consume flesh.

When *unlucky* people see a tomb spirit, they see a hideous *assemblage of corpses* lurching and stumbling at them. Body parts stick onto body parts, like a mass grave stitched together by a demented surgeon, risen *en masse* to stalk the living. Multiple heads shriek like a discordant choir of the damned, dozens of limbs grasping for the living to bring them down, rend them to pieces, and add them to the assemblage.

Truly unlucky people, of course, don't see a tomb spirit at all. They just hear a noise behind them, and then they're gone. . . .

BLOOD SPILT IN VAIN

Tomb spirits begin their existence when patients bleed to death at the hands of their doctors and the spirit is drawn out with the blood instead of remaining with the body. Bloodletting, a common medical treatment until the 1800s, killed many such unfortunates, even those who originally had inconsequential ailments, as their doctors attempted to purge the body of diseases.

As the blood of those killed in this way clots and congeals, it forms a semi-liquid substance that seeks to clothe itself in flesh, as it remembers having been in times past. In order to do this, it burrows into the flesh of other bodies and takes control of them. These new bodies, though, are dead — or if they aren't, the burrowing, glutinous string of sentient blood soon kills them. With the host dead, the spirit remains unsatisfied — the new body doesn't behave like the old. It has no warmth, no life. The creature adds whatever blood remains in the new corpse to its own form, and goes in search of another body.

Xu Mi

Just one of many patients killed by unnecessary bloodletting, Xu Mi's spirit now seeks rest that is forever denied him. It no longer responds to his name, or indeed possesses any memories of his past. Its only remaining instinct is to seek the half-remembered warmth of life.

Someone Says: "Holy crap! Who animated the morgue?!"

Attributes: Bod 10, Chi 1 (Mag 8), Mnd 3, Ref 8

Skills: Creature Powers 15, Intrusion 11, Martial Arts 12

Creature Schticks: Inevitable Comeback (x2), Rancid Breath* (x3)

Weapons: punch (11), blood-tentacles (16)

* This represents the burrowing of its blood-tentacles.

Tomb Spirit (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "Oh man, there's another head over there... no, by those three arms!"

Attributes: Bod 9, Chi 0 (Mag 7), Mnd 2, Ref 7

Skills: Creature Powers 8, Martial Arts 7

Creature Schticks: Rancid Breath*, Unnamed Inevitable Comeback (see p. 16)

Weapons: punch (10), blood-tentacles (10)

* As Xu Mi, above.

However, even though the current body isn't as good as their old body, it's still better than nothing. So instead of just jumping from one body to another, the creature instead extends a tendril of itself into the new body, taking over control of it and using some of its substance to glue the two bodies together, forming a reddish, string-like web between them. Some tomb spirits even animate intestines and other body parts, tying them around the new body to create a stronger bond.

As time goes by, the tomb spirit continues to add to its cargo-cult body, even as decay rots other parts until they liquefy and drop off. It even picks up bits

and pieces when it can't find complete corpses, snagging an arm or a head and sticking it on wherever it fits. The end result looks like a caddis fly that built its case in an unguarded morgue, but the truth is, these poor creatures are as much to be pitied as feared.

BAD BLOOD

The tomb spirit has an insatiable desire for bodies, and as such it's a common graveyard peril. Anyone who

finds it is in for a fight, as it sees no difference between the bodies of the living and the dead.

Lotus sorcerers capture and bind tomb spirits, holding them paralyzed and bringing them to population centers to rampage. They've recently taken to bringing them into other junctures. Since tomb spirits are caused by a medical practice that's out of date by 1850, and since very few tomb spirits survived the centuries, most modern heroes are totally unfamiliar with them. A few have mistaken them for ordinary zombies... a mistake they don't usually have long to regret.

TORTOISE-SHELL WARRIOR

Origin: An'yang ritual center in modern Henan Province, China, 1028 BC

Type: Animated collection of tortoise-shells

Allegiance: Eaters of the Lotus

DESCRIPTION

A tortoise-shell warrior looks like a twelve-foot-tall collection of tortoise shells and ox shoulder bones. The bones and shells are all pockmarked with blackened holes and covered with a combination of fine cracks and ancient Chinese characters. The creature's body is made of shells, and it has two arms made of ox bone: one ends in a corkscrew-like drill, and the other terminates in a magically hot poker.

MAKING CRACKS

Pyromancers of the Shang Dynasty divined the future by reading cracks in the shoulder blades of oxen or the shells of turtles. They made the cracks by drilling a hole into a bone or shell, then inserting a red-hot poker into the hole. Frequently, these "oracle bones" were inscribed with questions, the name of the diviner, and sometimes even the answers provided by the spirits (but only if the divination came true — nobody likes to record their failures).

A skilled pyromancer can bring oracle bones to life, assembling them into armored, ass-whuping warriors. Recently, the Lotus discovered a cache of these bones, and learned to do just that. So far, the creatures have been assigned as bodyguards to some of the eunuchs'

Di

In ancient China, "Di" was the embodiment of nature. This tortoise-shell warrior is made of shells used to divine the will of Di. When it came to life, it read the inscriptions upon itself, and believes that it actually is Di. This conceit makes it hard to control, and clever heroes may even be able to turn it against its creator.

Sample Dialogue: "I am the great and powerful Di! I am the god of rain, the god of thunder, the god of— uh, sorry. Yes master, I hear and obey."

Attributes: Bod 10 (Tgh 12), Chi 0 (Mag 8), Mnd 3, Ref 5

Skills: Creature Powers 15, Martial Arts 14

Creature Schticks: Armor (x3), Immune to Fire, Inevitable Comeback, One-two Punch

Weapons: drill-tipped left arm (14), hot poker right arm (14)

more prominent fire sorcerers, but it's only a matter of time before they're deployed as offensive weapons.

COWABUNGA!

Even though some tortoise-shell warriors have limited intelligence and are capable of speech, they remain

One-two Punch

New Creature Schtick

You can launch a special combination of attacks that do more damage if made in the proper order. For example, you might stab an opponent with Abysmal Spines, then bite him before he breaks free. The two attacks can't be completely identical, but the difference could be only cosmetic, if you want. (Legal: A punch with the left hand, followed by a punch with the right. Not legal: A vicious head butt, and then another one.)

You have two options when you attack. You can make both attacks in the same shot, as a single -4 AV stunt.

In this case, you inflict Wound Points equal to the more damaging attack + 4. Alternately, you can make the two attacks separately. The first attack is made normally, and inflicts damage normally. The second attack can be made one shot earlier than you'd normally be able to act again (but no sooner than the next shot, no matter how quick you are), is rolled at the normal Difficulty, and does an additional +4 damage if it lands.

For each additional schtick spent on this ability, you get another one-two combo.

mindless combatants, and obey the orders of their controlling pyromancer without question. They attack by drilling holes in their foes with their left arms, and then applying fire to the hole with their right.

Tortoise-shell Warrior (Unnamed)

Someone Says: "The inscription reads 'Have our ancestors forsaken—' Hey, did that thing just *move*?"

Attributes: Bod 6 (Tgh 7), Chi 0 (Mag 5), Mnd 1, Ref 4

Skills: Creature Powers 9, Martial Arts 9

Weapons: drill-tipped left arm (10), hot poker right arm (10)



Origin: The Underworld

Type: Demonic con artists

Allegiance: Mercenaries

DESCRIPTION

Demons come in all shapes and sizes. On one hand you might have your fashion plate: a tall, gaunt demon who conceals his pebbled, dark-green skin beneath a different custom-tailored suit for each day of the year. Maybe a demon like that hides his long, lugubrious face behind a goatee that's both sinister and debonair, and a pair of sunglasses behind which his eyes glow faintly. On the other hand you might have your prototypical Western devil: squat and powerful, with dusky red skin, cloven hooves, a pointy tail, and two tiny little horns on top of his head. A demon like that might even wear a loincloth and carry a trident, just to play up the image. If you had those two hands — the one hand, the other hand — you'd have Twilk and Casbit, demonic con men

with a beautiful partnership, playing every side of the secret war against the middle for their own profit.

Both Twilk and Casbit are more than they appear. Twilk's tailored suits conceal full-on demonic wings and a tail of his own; his cloven hooves are hidden in custom-made — and highly stylin' — shoes. His eyes don't actually glow; his sunglasses are enchanted because he thinks the glint makes him look badass. (And he's right.) Casbit usually communicates in guttural mono-syllables: angry, staccato bursts of threat and invective. It gives the impression that he's stupid, which he rarely tries to correct. Some people will do extraordinarily stupid things to con an idiot, and Casbit finds that useful.

When Twilk and Casbit are together, Twilk does the talking. His voice is smooth and silken, and he's

cultivated a British accent over the last hundred years or so because he thinks it makes him sound suave and nefarious. (And it does.) He pauses his sentences on words that sound dangerous and ambiguous; he thinks it makes people nervous and keeps them off-balance. (And that's usually true.) It doesn't hurt to have Casbit looming behind him, looking more and more dangerous second by second, like talking and talking is making him angrier and angrier, prone to violence at any provocation.

THE START OF A BEAUTIFUL FRIENDSHIP...

PART I: "I'LL SETTLE FOR A WEEK'S PAY"

The problem with glamour, Twilk thought as he leapt over a trash can, landed on a pile of debris, skidded, and narrowly avoided falling on his face, is that it's at its worst exactly when you need it most. He rounded the next corner a half-second before the mob behind him.

Alright, so he'd been caught, and red-handed. *Literally* red-handed — he'd been impersonating Satan to a group of Episcopalians on behalf of a crooked minister. It had seemed like a fair scam, appearing as the Prince of Darkness to spur donations at the offering plate, and his share of the take had promised to be... well, not spectacular, but enough to get him by for a week or two. How did the old saying go? *"Souls are eternal, but I'll settle for a week's pay."*

"There he is! Get him!" His pursuers rounded the corner behind him.

Twilk groaned inwardly — "Why me?" — and jumped up to a fire escape with a remarkably athletic lunge. He started climbing.

It was unfair, that's what it was. He'd been the spitting image of the Prince of Darkness. The flames, the bright red skin, the cloven hooves, the goat horns... he'd been eight feet tall, for the love of God! The guy in the front pew hadn't had any business being a professional boxer. *None.*

As Twilk reached the top of the building and sprinted across the rooftop, he decided that enough was enough. Glamour, charms, illusions, and a certain panache only went so far in the con business. What he

Twilk

Sample Dialogue: "What's 'lying,' mister? I'm just a little kid, remember?"

Attributes: Bod 5, Chi 0 (Mag 8), Mnd 8 (Cha 10), Ref 8

Skills: Creature Powers 16, Deceit 19, Martial Arts 12

Creature Schticks: Blast (acid), Flight, Glamour (see p. 7), Shapeshift (x3), Voice Mimicry (see *Thorns of the Lotus*, p. 103)

Weapons: Beretta Jetfire (8/1/8+1), blast (10)

Casbit

Sample Dialogue: "You don't find me scary? That's all right. I'm not here to be scary. I'm here to be unspeakably violent."

Attributes: Bod 10, Chi 0 (Mag 9), Mnd 6, Ref 6

Skills: Creature Powers 17, Intimidation 18, Intrusion 13, Martial Arts 14

Creature Schticks: Abysmal Spines (x2), Armor (x2), Blast (fire), Damage Immunity (explosions, fire)

Weapons: punch (15), blast (11)

needed, he resolved, as he vaulted across a gap large enough to discourage pursuit in all but the terminally enthusiastic, was a little muscle to back him up. Someone bright, but not so bright as to get ideas above his station.

Someone like — oh, say — the squat, red demon ducking down behind the air conditioner on the rooftop he'd just jumped onto.

PART II: "UHH... HOW MANY CROSSES IS THAT?"

The wind whistled across the rooftops in a manner that would sound dramatic in a film, but in the real world was just cold and annoying. Casbit decided it was even colder and more annoying when you only wore a loincloth and everyone just assumed you had the infernal heat of the Nine Hells to keep you warm. In point of fact, he was freezing brass monkeys and really, really wished they could get this hand-off over with so he could get back inside.

There were four players on the roof.

"Do you have the money?" That was Borak, an eight-foot demon weighing in at about a Hummer. Next to Borak was Borak's bodyguard, a skinny little *Reservoir Dogs*-looking guy who hadn't said anything yet. Casbit was a helluva lot more worried about the potential for a confrontation with Borak than with his bodyguard.

"I have the money. Do you have the artifact?" That was Jason, the guy Casbit was bodyguarding, a mortal who all-too-routinely mixed with demons, magic, and large sums of money. As Casbit stood there taking the situation's temperature, he suspected he'd be earning his pay in a big way.

Borak produced a briefcase.

Jason produced a briefcase.

They set them down.

Then all four did a slow, careful circle, and each picked up the other's.

They opened them simultaneously.

Naturally, both were empty.

Casbit sighed.

"I knew you'd double-cross me you slimy, shark-eyed bastard!" Jason barked at Borak.

"Double-cross you? Who double-crossed who? I put the Heart in that briefcase, and if it isn't there now, then—"

Borak's bodyguard suddenly drew a menacing handgun from his shoulder holster and pointed it at him. Borak narrowed his eyes in realization.

"Zat's right, eet vas me!" The bodyguard had an accent that'd put Casbit on the floor under other circumstances. "I treeple-crossed you! Vat you zeenk of zat?"

And then it got worse.

Jason looked over at Casbit and Casbit saw a lightbulb come on above his head. Jason pointed at him.

"You must have taken the money from *my* briefcase! You tried to... uhh... *how many -crosses is that?!*"

"Quadruple-cross," Casbit sighed, "but I never touched that briefcase, you never let it out of your sight, and I'm a godsdamned professional."

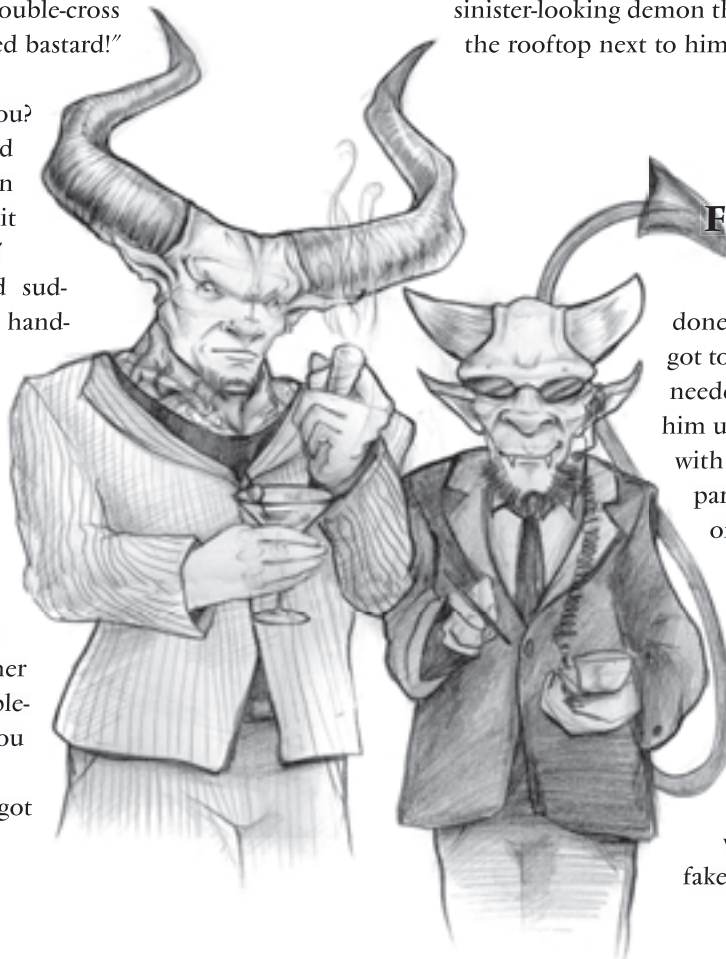
Everybody's eyes narrowed and their stances changed at the same time, in that unique way that telegraphs the outbreak of physical hostilities. Casbit dived behind the air conditioner to let them work it out among themselves.

As gunshots, the thudding of heavy punches, and what sounded like a flamethrower erupted on the other side of the AC, Casbit hunkered down and tried to figure out what had gone wrong. Maybe it was time to start looking for a better class of partner. Someone who had — well, not *ethics*, that'd be disastrous — but at least standards, and a better class of devious criminal scheme than "Let's not give him the money we promised him!"

Someone like — oh, say — the tall, green, vaguely sinister-looking demon that had just vaulted onto the rooftop next to him.

SOUND BUSINESS FOUNDATIONS

Twilk and Casbit have done a lot better since they got together. Twilk had always needed some muscle to back him up, and Casbit flourished with an intelligent, reliable partner. Usually, their line of work involves impersonation. Twilk's powers give him the ability to convincingly impersonate not just humans, but a wide variety of demonic figures. This comes in handy for a wide variety of stings, cons, fakes, and scams.



"Twilk & Casbit" continues on the next page.

Shapeshift

New Creature Schtick

You can make yourself look like other things. You can completely change shape, size, and color to make yourself appear to be almost anything, from a table lamp to another person to a motorcycle. You don't get any of the abilities of the object you transform into, though; shapeshifting into a bird doesn't mean you can fly, shapeshifting into a fire won't burn people, and shapeshifting into a suit of armor won't stop a blow or bullet. The other limitation is size: you can't grow to more than double or shrink to less than half of your natural bulk. But for each additional schtick you take in shapeshifting, you can double or halve again. A six-foot-tall character with three schticks in shapeshift, for example, could look like a forty-eight-foot building or a nine-inch decorative vase.

Shapeshifting takes skill — an unconvincing mimic won't fool anyone. When you change shape, make a Crea-

ture Powers check to see how well you've impersonated the object or person. There's no Difficulty for this check. Instead, your Action Result becomes the Difficulty for checks to see through your disguise. The GM may raise or lower this Difficulty after you make the roll depending on what you're impersonating, how familiar you are with whatever it is, how familiar a given observer is with it, and so forth. Modifiers of up to +/-10 are appropriate. In any case, you don't know how well you've done unless you bounce your impersonation off someone else, or have a mirror handy.

This schtick doesn't grant you the ability to alter your voice. Unless you've also taken the Voice Mimicry schtick (see *Thorns of the Lotus*, p. 103), the dainty courtesan you're pretending to be still speaks with your gravelly, demonic tone.

The two have found themselves heavily in demand in the secret war. Despite their general aversion to magic, the Lodge has hired Twilk and Casbit many times to impersonate various demonic figures. The Eaters of the Lotus paid them to pose as Tanbi Guiawu in the 1850 juncture in an effort to scare away the Guiding Hand. The Dragons even hired them once, scraping together the funds to get Twilk to impersonate the ghost of a murdered man to bring his killer to justice. (Twilk refused the funds, calling it a charity case, but while he was making his noble gesture, Casbit stole the killer's wallet, watch, and three of his gold teeth.)

Twilk and Casbit have three rules upon which they base their business:

Rule Number One: We Get Paid First. Twilk and Casbit have few ethics and hire themselves out to almost anyone, but they do expect payment in advance. Both are familiar with how situations twist and turn in the secret war, and know that a sure thing can turn into a total clusterbomb before you can say "Wong Fei Hong." And when that happens, it's best to have the *dinero* in hand.

Rule Number Two: Get While the Getting is Good. Since they have no stake in the success or failure of any

enterprise (they already have the money), they don't stick around when disaster strikes. As long as there's a chance of salvaging the scam, they try, because they're professionals who want to earn their pay. But they see no point in going down with the ship.

Rule Number Three: Don't Hold Grudges. Since Twilk and Casbit will work for anyone, they sometimes wind up in the employ of those they've conned in the past. They don't dwell on this with clients (because not everyone follows Rule Number Three), but they also don't hold the failure of a past operation against the potential client who caused it. They got their money, after all, and while the knock on their reputation might cost them, you can't eat a reputation.

Twilk and Casbit get around a lot, and your PCs could easily find themselves on the wrong side of one of their scams. It probably won't end in a knockdown, drag-out battle, though; Twilk and Casbit see violence as unproductive and unnecessarily painful, so they fight only to get away and move on. This means you can use them as recurring villains. And since they're for hire, the PCs could even see them switch sides and work as allies from time to time.

TWISTED MAN

Origin: Hell

Type: Unrepentant fortune teller

Allegiance: None

DESCRIPTION

Dante described them in his *Inferno*, residents of the Eighth Circle of Hell: fortunetellers who blasphemed against God by attempting to divine the future. Their heads are twisted 180 degrees, forcing them to walk backwards. Their eyes continually weep tears that run down their back, and they are condemned to walk forever without rest.

ETERNITY DENIED

When the Devil mapped out Hell, he reserved a special place for those who had foreseen his fall. When he twisted their necks, cracking their vertebrae and watching the first of an endless stream of tears drip down their backs and between their legs, he felt the glorious satisfaction of a job well done. But he didn't imagine that if they'd foreseen his fall, they might have foreseen their punishment, as well.

Tiresias, most powerful of all seers, had known that someday he and his brethren would be condemned to Hell. He saw it as unjust. He believed he had done God's work in revealing the plan of Creation, and to be punished for it was a cosmic injustice.

Knowing that the souls of the damned were powerless in Hell, Tiresias, before his death, left a stone tablet covered with coded instructions hidden in a cavern. The instructions purported to describe a method for summoning powerful servant-demons, so the avaricious archaeologist who discovered the tablet and carried out the ritual was surprised to discover that it instead emptied Hell of the damned twisted men, setting them free from their bonds of eternal punishment as Tiresias had both planned and foreseen.

KNOWLEDGE WORKERS

Since their escape from Hell, the twisted men have hired out their expertise in foretelling the future to the

Tiresias

Tiresias carries no weapons; foreseeing conflict, he avoids it.

Sample Dialogue: "There we agree, secret warrior: Justice is not a natural state, but a circumstance we precipitate through righteous action."

Attributes: Bod 7, Chi 0 (Mag 8), Mnd 7 (Int 9), Ref 7

Skills: Info/History 17, Info/Future History 17, Info/Hell 16, Sorcery 16

Sorcery Schticks: Divination, Influence, Summoning

Twisted Man (Generic)

Sample Dialogue: "I have foreseen what you seek, and will reveal the truth of it... for a price."

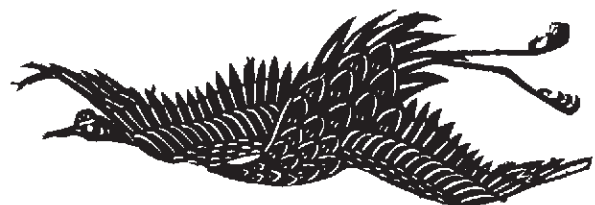
Attributes: Bod 6, Chi 0 (Mag 8), Mnd 6 (Int 8), Ref 6

Skills: Info/History 14, Info/Future History 14, Sorcery 9

Sorcery Schticks: Divination, Influence

highest bidder. They often work for the unscrupulous, putting them at odds with heroic secret warriors, but their opposition to Hell can also make them *de facto* PC allies. Most of their considerable wealth has been put to use creating elaborate security systems and precautions against demons sent from Hell to recapture them.

The divinations of the twisted men tend to be accurate, though aren't always, as the winds of fate are complex and capricious. Complicating matters further, the twisted men don't always relate what they divine with total fidelity, as they have their own agendas, as well.



UNDERWORLD TRACKER

Origin: *The Underworld*

Type: *Demonic truant officer*

Allegiance: *Various demon factions and clans*

DESCRIPTION

An underworld tracker looks, at first glance, like a mindless beast. Everything about it gives the impression of primal, feral power: it hunches like a gorilla, sniffing the air and turning its horned head this way and that. Massive muscles bulge under rough gray skin, its powerful crocodilian tail slashes the air, and a rasping tongue slithers over a mouthful of shark-like teeth.

But then it pulls a cigarette out of a small pouch hidden in its loincloth and lights it up. In the light of the smoke, as it leans up against a wall, it looks more world-weary than savage. The light in its eyes as it stubs out the cigarette shines with intelligence, not the mindless viciousness common to many (most?) demons.

That doesn't mean that underworld trackers aren't dangerous. To the contrary, they're insanely dangerous. They simply don't attack without reason. Which is nice to know. But it's even nicer to know what those reasons are, and to avoid becoming one.

INFERNAL PURPOSE

The Underworld is sovereign territory, inhabited by demons in the same way our world is inhabited by humans. It has rulers just like human kingdoms do. And like our human kingdoms, those rulers have rules about who may enter and leave.

Thus, demons of the Underworld may only leave the Underworld under specific conditions and terms. Ritual may bring them forth, certain places and times are natural routes of egress, and loopholes exist. If they didn't, demons couldn't test humankind and their purpose would go unserved. But demons can't simply wander out of the Underworld whenever they want and wreak whatever havoc they choose. So when a demon or a ghost escapes the Netherworld, someone or something has to bring them back.

Underworld trackers serve that purpose. In fact, it's their only purpose: to maintain the natural order and

Unerring Dagger

Unerring Dagger is the underworld tracker Alec Wang aided. In its own way, the creature genuinely admired Alec as a kindred spirit. That didn't stop it from punching a fist through Alec's stomach to rip the sorcerer's heart out when he used Alec as a human shield. It did mean that he chose a relatively non-lethal angle of entry.

Sample Dialogue: "By all means, distract yourself by taking a hostage."

Attributes: Bod 10, Chi 0 (Mag 8), Mnd 6, Ref 6

Skills: Creature Powers 15, Detective 9, Martial Arts 12

Creature Schticks: Abysmal Spines (x3), Armor (x3), Quarry Signature

Weapons: claw (17)

Underworld Tracker (Generic)

Sample Dialogue: "Stand aside and everybody wins: I save time, you keep drawing breath."

Attributes: Bod 9, Chi 0 (Mag 7), Mnd 5, Ref 5

Skills: Creature Powers 12, Detective 8, Martial Arts 11

Creature Schticks: Abysmal Spines, Armor, Quarry Signature

Weapons: claw (12)

keep the world in balance. In their own way, they're almost noble.

Noble, and ruthless. To an underworld tracker, everything in the entire world of human existence is one of two things: in their way, or not. Things in the latter category are ignored. Things in the former are eliminated. They're not unintelligent, just single-minded.

On rare occasions, underworld trackers make alliances with people who can help them. (They're not proud, just rarely in need of help.) Alec Wang, a cop who helped one apprehend a murderer who'd escaped from the Underworld, claimed that the creature re-

Quarry Signature

New Creature Schtick

A creature with this schtick acquires a target (or, “victim”) by obtaining some physical relic of him, her, or it. This might be hair, toenail clippings, blood, an object soaked in the target’s (er, “victim’s”) sweat, or anything similar. Acquiring a **target** victim by obtaining such an artifact requires no skill check.

Once the creature marks its victim, it can pinpoint his location precisely — distance and direction — as long as both remain in the same juncture, or both are in the Netherworld, or both are in the Underworld. Distance and direction, however, are the extent of it; this schtick gives no other indications about the victim’s surroundings. If the victim is on an airplane, the only indication

the creature gets is that the victim is 20,000 feet up and moving rapidly east to west. The schtick also gives no clues on how to reach the victim. If the creature is on one side of the Grand Canyon, and the victim is on the other, all the creature knows is that the victim is about a hundred yards away.

Why “victim” and not “target?” Because a creature can only mark one at a time, and that mark remains until either the creature or victim is dead. No agency can remove the mark, and no other victim can be marked until the current one is deceased. It’s impossible to take this schtick multiple times.

minded him of some of the police officers he’d worked with: old, cynical, dragged down by the weight of the world... but still determined to pursue its quarry because its duty was its identity — it knew no other way to live. He said he felt sorry for it. He also said he hoped never to meet one again.

SINGLE-MINDED KILLERS

Underworld trackers might wind up on either side of a conflict the heroes are involved in. PCs tracking rogue demons and renegade ghosts might make an alliance with one, but they might just as easily have to

oppose one, if they’re helping a ghost who’s escaped Hell to track down her killers.

Keep in mind that most demons are not renegades, nor are most ghosts, and that underworld trackers don’t concern themselves with morality, but with the arcane and complex legal codes of the Underworld. In fact, that whole “unconcerned with morality” thing is something to consider if the PCs ally with one, because underworld trackers don’t think like heroes. They kill hostages, ignore wounded comrades, resolutely refuse to stop and help children trapped in burning buildings, and generally act with complete disregard for anything except their quarry. Half the adventure might be about steering the underworld tracker to its target with minimal collateral damage.



Origin: Unknown

Type: Undead, bloodsucking fiend

Allegiance: Not even each other

DESCRIPTION

Vampires resemble ordinary humans, though they tend toward the gaunt and pale. Most can pass for ordinary people as long as they avoid physical contact and don't smile too broadly; otherwise, the fact that they're corpse-cold to the touch and have fangs tends to give them away. Vampires are intensely and eerily charismatic. In fact, they're supernaturally so, although many victims of their magnetism fail to realize the magic of it, even after they've been fed upon. Vampires are supernaturally strong, must drink the blood of the living to sustain themselves (but are immortal otherwise), can spread their curse at will to those they feed upon, and have a variety of irritating vulnerabilities.

Other than that, virtually anyone you see at night could be a vampire. They don't (necessarily) dress in black, wear sunglasses in the dark, sport ankhs, or paint their nails black. Save a couple who are actually from Eastern Europe, none are named "Vlad."

During the daytime, you can recognize vampires by the bright flames coursing over their skin as they burn to death.

UN-HISTORY

Nobody knows where the first vampire came from, not even the vampires themselves. This isn't too surprising; vampires avoid having culture *per se* because whenever two of them live near each other, they're twice as likely to be found out.

Vampires are none too happy about the last few centuries of writing and film, whose vampire fiction has propagated information about vampire weaknesses far and wide. Back in the day, only those with esoteric knowledge were aware that vampires are repulsed by garlic, may not cross running water, can be killed by a stake through the heart, and so forth. These days — speaking of the contemporary juncture, of course — every idiot who's seen *Fright Night* knows how to deal with them.

Heinrich Nest

Heinrich Nest is one of the oldest vampires in the contemporary juncture at seven centuries and counting. He's obsessed with the fact that he can't find any trace of his own existence in 2056. Assuming that the Buro's rise to power has something to do with his disappearance, he's begun arranging attacks against contemporary Buro operations.

Sample Dialogue: "I bear no grudge against the living, but neither do I spare them my sympathy."

Attributes: Bod 10, Chi 0 (Mag 8), Mnd 6 (Cha 11), Ref 6

Skills: Creature Powers 17, Deceit 14, Guns 13, Martial Arts 14, Seduction 15

Creature Schticks: Blood Drain (x3) (AV gain), Corruption, Damage Immunity (bullets, falling, hand-to-hand weapons, suffocation, unarmed attacks, vehicle damage), Domination, Glamour (see page 7), Transformation (x3) (bat, mist, wolf), Vulnerability (crosses, garlic, holy water, sunlight, wooden stakes), Will Not Die (x3) (see *Thorns of the Lotus*, p. 104)

Weapons: sword (14), AK-47 (13**/5/30)

Vampire (Generic)

Sample Dialogue: "Walk away and live, mortal. Keep waving that stick around and your life ends here."

Attributes: Bod 9, Chi 0 (Mag 8), Mnd 5 (Cha 10), Ref 6

Skills: Creature Powers 11, Deceit 13, Martial Arts 7, Seduction 14

Creature Schticks: Corruption, Damage Immunity (bullets, falling, hand-to-hand weapons, suffocation, unarmed attacks, vehicle damage), Domination, Vulnerability (crosses, garlic, holy water, sunlight, wooden stakes), Unnamed Will Not Die (see p. 15)

Weapons: sword (13), punch (10), kick (11)

Vulnerability

New Weakness

You have a dangerous susceptibility to something that's otherwise generally harmless. When forced into physical contact with whatever-it-is — sunlight, say — you suffer 5 Wound Points per sequence of exposure, which is not reduced by armor or Toughness. (Unless the armor somehow prevents physical contact, but in that case, you haven't been forced into physical contact, have you?) You must also make a Will check every sequence to stand your ground if there's an avenue of escape available. The check's Difficulty is equal to the Wound Points you've sustained so far.

If you're stuck or shot (or whatever) with a weapon made of whatever-it-is — silver, say (hard to make bullets out of sunlight) — the wound bypasses Toughness (armor still helps you, though) and does double its normal damage directly in Wound Points. Ouch.

When this weakness is taken multiple times, either multiple susceptibilities can be designated, or the damage caused by an existing vulnerability can be doubled (or tripled, or...).

IMMORTAL, BADASS KINGS OF PAIN

Bloodsucking fiends from beyond the grave with awesome supernatural power and severe bloodlust... you'll probably be able to figure out how they fit into

your game without too much trouble.

Here's an interesting twist for cocky heroes who think it's easy to prey on vampire vulnerabilities: vampires know what they're vulnerable to, too, and the smart ones take steps. Hazmat suits, heavy gloves, and even plate steel over the old sternum are just a few clever vampire tactics.





CHAINS OF BONE

The Premise

The heroes are hired by a mysterious businessman's intermediary to retrieve an artifact from a tomb in an unusual network of caverns.

The Twist

Manipulated by a ghostly sorcerer intent on recovering his own skull, the heroes find out they've stumbled not into the Netherworld, but the Underworld.

The Climax

The heroes must face the Price of Blood, Price of Fortune, or Price of Flesh to return home.

"Chains of Bone" is a scenario for either an experienced group of veterans or a younger group of rookies. Neither the players nor their characters need be familiar with the secret war, or be members of a particular faction. The introductory scenes assume the players begin in contemporary Hong Kong, but they can easily be adapted to any time period or locale.

BACKGROUND



Dou Ping was a Lotus sorcerer with the bad luck to get killed while raiding a tomb in the Underworld. Though his soul now belongs to the Yama Kings — the demonic overlords of the Abyss — his ghostly body is free to wander the earth. But Dou Ping doesn't want a ghostly body; he wants his flesh-and-blood body back. He could get it if he managed to get his skull out of the tomb where he was slain, but the contract he signed with the Yama Kings forbids him from entering it. Naturally, Dou Ping has decided to trick a hapless band of do-gooders into retrieving the skull for him.

A HELL OF A DEAL

It begins with a smell: the stench of rotten eggs. The time and place are up to you — a restaurant, if you like.

The heroes are approached by a black-suited man with a glassy, unfocused gaze who brings the stink with him. He skips the small talk and pitches a business proposition, perhaps before the characters have even stopped talking among themselves:

"Most esteemed associates, my employer wishes to hire you to retrieve an artifact from a most unusual place. He assures me your talents and experience are absolutely necessary, and has authorized me to entice your cooperation with an obscenely generous reward. Would you be interested?"

The man is Danny "Egg" Zhou, so-known for obvious reasons. He claims to be working on behalf of one Dou Ping, an antiquities dealer with an Aberdeen address. The artifact he wants the players to retrieve is a skull engraved with ancient runes. Danny is vague about the skull's location, revealing only that a cave near the Sai Kung peninsula leads to the tomb. He refuses to give details beyond that, insisting his employer will give the PCs more thorough instructions once they get there.

A suspicious Sorcerer with Divination or Influence can use either — or Perception — to make a Difficulty 15 check to realize Danny is under the effects of Influence/enchantment. No further information about that can be divined, however.

The "obsценely generous reward" should be tailored to the heroes. It could be incriminating photos of an enemy, evidence a PC cop was framed, straight-up blackmail (for real or invented crimes), or anything else at all. The boring version (yawn) is \$30,000 HK, half up front and half on completion. Danny's got the first fifteen on him.

If the heroes agree (and if you've dangled the right reward, they can hardly not), Danny gives them a rough map to the cave, tells them he'll meet them there the next morning, and departs.

Simple investigation (a Difficulty 7 Police, Detective, or Info/Streets check) about Danny reveals him to be a homeless man with no history whatsoever of business suits or business deals. Further investigation about anything at all (Dou Ping, skulls with ancient runes, etc.) delays the fighting, so head off those avenues with clues that point to the cave. It's where Ping is rumored to have a hidden stash of goods, it's where Danny has been known to sleep, it's where a crazy hermit sorcerer who might know about skulls lives, or whatever.

Dou Ping, Ghost

Sample Dialogue: “Cower before me, meaningless insects!”

Attributes: Bod 5, Chi 0 (Mag 8), Mnd 8, Ref 6

Skills: Creature Powers 15, Deceit 15, Leadership 10, Sorcery 16

Creature Powers: Damage Immunity (everything), Flight, Insubstantial (no exceptions, always on), Invisibility

Sorcery Schticks: Divination, Influence

Weapons: none, but his high-pitched whining can get pretty annoying

Invisibility

New Creature Schtick

As a one-shot action, you turn invisible and make a Creature Powers check. The Action Result is the Difficulty of the Perception check required to detect you for the remainder of the sequence (or, outside combat, until either the end of the scene or you choose to become visible). Anyone who detects you may attack you, but suffers a -4 penalty to the attack. If you attack someone, he gets +4 to his next Perception check against you.

Hair Trigger Neck Hairs and other schticks that give Perception bonuses may be used to detect you. Wave Scanners find you automatically. Taking this schtick during character creation costs two schticks, and buying it later costs double the usual amount of experience points.

THE CAVE

The trip to the peninsula is uneventful: a shuttle bus drops the PCs off at the head of a hiking trail indicated on the map, the trail winds its way down to the shoreline, and after about an hour of hiking, the heroes reach the cave entrance.

The cave itself isn't impressive; after a short passage it opens up into a roundish chamber. The floor is littered with beer cans and the walls are covered with graffiti, both entirely expected.

No matter when the heroes arrive, Danny's waiting for them. He hands them a small bamboo cage with a cricket inside, explaining:

“The skull lies inside the Tomb of Zhou Li Wang. Beyond this cave is a dark world of twisting passageways and frightening chambers. There is no map, so you must find your own way, but my employer provides this cricket as a guide. Ask it to show you the way toward the skull, and it will point in the proper direction. Ask it a question, and it will chirp once for no, twice for yes.”

“When you have found the skull, smash the cage and you will be transported back to this cave.”

Danny turns to go, but then remembers something else:

“Oh, one more thing. There is a black sword in the tomb. It is a weapon of unspeakable evil. Whatever you do, leave it alone.”

At this point Danny leaves, the graffiti starts to pulse with sickening green light, and the walls of the cave begin to vibrate. There's a blinding flash of green light and the heroes discover themselves in another place entirely: an unused chamber near the Fifth Court of Hell.

If the heroes try to flee, they're unsuccessful. If they try to prevent Danny from leaving, they might be able to, if they make some decent rolls. It doesn't matter; if he gets transported with the rest of them, he becomes useless, uncommunicative, and looks for the first opportunity to kill himself.

So what's going on here?

Dou Ping has been hiding in the cave and using Invisibility to remain unseen, Insubstantial to avoid bumping into anyone, and Influence to control both Danny and the cricket (the latter being an utterly mundane insect). Once Danny delivers his instructions, Ping uses Summoning to activate the demonic spell worked into the graffiti. All of this is undetectable and unstoppable; doing either would derail forward progress.

There are two things the players can discover to give them clues, however:

First, if a geomancer examines the cave, studies the geography along the hike to the cave, or thinks back on either after being transported to Hell, he can make a Difficulty 10 Info/Geomancy check to realize the chi flow in the area isn't strong enough to support a Netherworld portal. This is a clue that the heroes have not been teleported to the Netherworld, where veteran players may believe they've wound up.

Second, if someone with Sorcery examines the graffiti and makes a Difficulty 15 Sorcery check, he notices powerful demonic symbols have been worked into it. This is another clue about the nature of their teleportation.

Di Yu at a Glance

Di Yu, the Chinese Hell, consists of a series of torture chambers inside a huge mountain prison complex divided into levels or courts. The exact number differs according to variations on Buddhist or Taoist beliefs. Some Buddhist texts mention 18 chambers, although this is simplified from

134 for convenience. Other sources mention ten courts or tribunals, each ruled by one of ten emperors, called the Yama Kings. For the purpose at hand, let's say Di Yu consists of 18 (or more) chambers spread over ten courts, with a Yama King ruling over each. Here's an overview:

Court	Contents	Ruler
First Court	Mirror of Retribution	Qin Guang Wang
Second Court	Hell of Ice and Forest of Blades	Qu Jiang Wang
Third Court	Upside-down Prison of Black Rope	Song Di Wang
Fourth Court	Lake of Blood and Terrible Bee Torture	Wu Guan Wang
Fifth Court	Sixteen Departments of Gouging, Boiling, and Wailing	Yan Luo Wang
Sixth Court	Pool of Reeking Filth and Department of Administrative Errors	Bian Cheng Wang
Seventh Court	Torture by Mincing Machine	Tai Shan Wang
Eighth Court	Burning Wok of Suffocation and Tower of Homesickness	Du Shi Wang
Ninth Court	Hell of the Iron Web	Ping Deng Wang
Tenth Court	Wheel of Rebirth and Tea of Forgetfulness	Zhuang Lun Wang

As a separate domain from other junctures or the Netherworld, Di Yu also has its own juncture modifiers:

Arcanowave Devices: 0

Sorcery: +2

Creature Powers (Supernatural Creatures): +2

Creature Powers (Abominations): +1

OH, HELL

As the green light fades, the characters find themselves at the bottom of an underground chamber standing on a pile of what looks like white gravel. But before long, someone notices the gravel is actually human teeth, discarded from the Chamber of Unnecessary Dentistry on a level somewhere above. If the players stick around, every few minutes another freshly pulled molar or bicuspid clatters down.

Only one tunnel leads from this chamber, and next to the opening a wooden sign displays a Chinese proverb: "If the lips are gone, the teeth grow cold."

Experienced PCs who've been to the Netherworld may think that's where they are. Don't disabuse them. But suspicious players may make an Info/Netherworld or similar check to discover or realize the following:

- Netherworld portals flash white. When the players were transported here, the light was bright green (Difficulty 8).
- The air in the Netherworld is warm and moist. The air here is hot and dry (Difficulty 10).
- Netherworld caverns are carved out of moist, grayish, limestone-like rock. Some of the rocky caverns here are moist and gray, but all are hard (Difficulty 12). Further, the stuff of the Netherworld can be shaped (see *Feng Shui*, p. 202); this stone can't be shaped, which can only be noticed (but is noticed automatically) by a character with the Shaping skill who tries it.

The cricket responds to reasonable questions with one or two chirps, and can point in the direction of the tomb at any given junction of passages. Otherwise, it behaves like a perfectly normal cricket. (Which, remember, it is; Dou Ping is using Influence to answer for

Blooderfly

There are 4–6 blooderflies per PC.

Attributes: Bod 3, Chi 0 (Mag 8), Mnd 1, Ref 6

Skills: Creature Powers 9, Martial Arts 9

Creature Schticks: Abysmal Fangs (x2), Blood Drain (AV gain), Flight (x3) (Move 7)

Auxiliary Schticks: Group Attack

Weaknesses: Fragile (x2)

Weapons: fangs (8)

the cricket, and point it in the right direction.) If the heroes lose or kill the cricket, Dou Ping creates a new one with an Illusion spell.

For the first few scenes in the Underworld, Dou Ping has plot immunity, remaining undetectable. You can drop hints — mysterious whispering, odd shadows — but Sorcery, supernatural schticks, or arcanowave abilities that detect spirits either malfunction or give confusing results. However, if the players get into serious trouble or stray too far off track, Dou Ping uses Influence to make suggestions or briefly take over someone's mind to correct the problem. If anything goes horribly wrong, Dou Ping may become visible and pretend to be a "friendly ghost."

THE BLOODERFLY GROTTO

After about ten minutes of following the cricket through branching tunnels and caverns, the path ends in a stone doorway. It easily pivots down the center to reveal a large underground grotto.

To one side, a small waterfall dribbles out of a hidden fissure into a tranquil pond in the middle of the cavern. A wooden sign nearby advises: "Do not remove a fly from a friend's forehead with a hatchet."

A path winds through clumps of giant toadstools. Some are covered with large, bone-white leaves that flutter gently in the breeze... except that there's no breeze. As the heroes make their way into the grotto, the "leaves" flutter into the air, circle gracefully, then descend on the heroes with bloodsucking fangs.

COOL THINGS THAT COULD HAPPEN

- The giant toadstools make perfect platforms for hopping across the cavern, leaping into the air, or breaking falls.
- Smaller mushrooms could be used as large clubs (Str + 2 damage). Caps could be cut off and used as shields (+1 parry, +1 Toughness).
- Missed attacks or stray bullets could hit a ripe spore cap, releasing a cloud of spores into the air. They could obscure vision, cause nausea (1 point of Impairment), knock people out (Difficulty 5 Willpower check to remain conscious), or induce hallucinations.
- The blooderflies don't like water, so diving into the pond offers a temporary escape. A clever hero might try a cannonball, splashing water, or diverting the waterfall with magic. Once a blooderfly's wings get wet, it flounders helplessly on the ground (–5 Dodge AV).
- Stalactites or stalagmites could impale... oh, just about anyone.
- The rock near the pool is slippery when wet. If the hero carrying the cricket cage slips, he might fall and accidentally crush it.

THE TOMB OF ZHOU LI WANG

After the blooderfly grotto, a short passage opens into a larger cavern that contains two tall, bronze doors. Chinese characters molded in the doors (and excited chirping from the cricket) identify this as the tomb. Next to the doors another wooden sign says: "He who seeks vengeance must first dig two graves."

The doors are two meters wide and four tall, made of solid bronze, and barred with an engraved lead seal. Attempts to pass or see through the doors via magic, creature powers, or arcanowave devices fail. The only way to open the doors is to break the seal, which has Toughness 5, by dealing it 10 points of damage. Then they open easily.

If the players examine the lead seal, they see most of the engraving has worn off over the years. Decipher-

ing the text requires an Info/Ancient Chinese, Info/Archaeology, or other suitable skill check (Difficulty 10). Success reveals the fragments, "Danger!... do not open... evil magic... trapped inside."

If the players lack sufficient interest in the doors, or waste too much time investigating, Dou Ping loses his patience and reveals himself:

"I have waited too long to suffer this mush-brained idiocy! You, spineless worm, open those doors and fetch my skull, or suffer the eternal vengeance of Dou Ping!"

He points at the character with the lowest Willpower and uses Influence/enchantment to force him to do his bidding.

Give the enchanted hero 3 shots of surprise to break the seal and force the doors, then call for initiative rolls. Since it's not a lot of fun to have all the heroes beating the snot out of one of their own in the long term, allow the enchanted PC a Willpower check against Dou Ping's Sorcery AV to break the enchantment at the end of every sequence.

Dou Ping can't be physically hurt, but continues to use Influence and his creature schticks to harass, trick, and enchant the players into entering the tomb. Dou Ping is forbidden from entering the tomb himself, but if he can get his skull outside the bronze doors, he can regain his physical form.

THE TOMB CHAMBER

The octagonal, domed tomb chamber is 20 meters wide. A variety of ceramic jars, urns, and vases are stacked around its perimeter. Piles of white bones, twisted into bizarre shapes, lie scattered about. At the far end of the chamber a yellow skull sits patiently on a stone altar.

If anyone touches the skull or altar, horrible moans fill the chamber and four named hungry ghosts with large ulcers — Chen, Wu, Yang, and Xie — rise out of the floor to attack. All four (or more, if the heroes are having too easy a time) work together to return the skull to the altar, but they can't leave the room.

On the far side of the altar, initially concealed from view, lies the rest of Dou Ping's desiccated corpse. If the heroes have already seen his ghostly form, they may notice the resemblance (Perception or Detective check, Difficulty 7).

Oh, and that black sword the heroes were warned about? It's stuck in the body's ribcage. Nothing in-

Chen, Wu, Yang, and Xie

Someone Says: "Hear that? He wants you to throw him a bone."

Attributes: Bod 9, Chi 0 (Mag 10), Mnd 4, Ref 8

Skills: Creature Powers 13, Martial Arts 13

Creature Schticks: Insubstantial (gold, silver, copper, tin, lead), Pus Bucket

Weapons: bite (10), pus spray (8)

Black Mountain Fang

This Chinese jian sword (Str + 4 damage) has a straight, double-edged blade and a two-handed grip, characteristic of the Han dynasty. The folded steel is blackened and the hilt inlaid with onyx. A disk-shaped pommel features two fanged dragons entwined, snapping at one another, and the matching black wooden scabbard is inlaid with a similar motif.

This sword is the bane of sorcerers and supernatural creatures. Whenever it strikes a sorcerer, supernatural creature, ghost, or anyone with Magic 5 or higher, it deals an additional 3 points of damage, and the target must make a Willpower check of Difficulty equal to the Wound Points taken or be stunned (unable to act) for the rest of the sequence. Black Mountain Fang's wielder also receives a +3 AV bonus to resist the effects of sorcery and creature schticks, and a +3 Toughness bonus when hit with Blasts.

teresting happens if it's touched, or even picked up. A successful Info/History, Info/Archaeology, or similar check (Difficulty 5) reveals the sword is made from folded, fire-blackened steel, probably during the Han era, but remains sharp and well-balanced. Characters etched into the blade proclaim the sword to be Black Mountain Fang, forged by the smith Seven Sky Hammers.

COOL THINGS THAT COULD HAPPEN

- Those bronze doors are heavy. Knock or shoot one off its hinges and it could crush or pin someone to the floor.

Dou Ping, in the Flesh

Sample Dialogue: “Now you will feel the full force of my heel, worm!”

Attributes: Bod 5, Chi 0 (Mag 8), Mnd 8, Ref 6

Skills: Creature Powers 10, Deceit 15, Leadership 10, Sorcery 17

Creature Powers: Will Not Die (see *Thorns of the Lotus*, p. 104)

Sorcery Schticks: Blast (conjured weapons, flesh-eating insects, lightning), Divination, Fertility, Influence, Movement, Summoning

Weapons: blast (10), kick (7), punch (6)

- The ceramic jars, urns, and vases shatter nicely into sharp fragments (damage 6 when hurled), and many contain blinding powders (Difficulty 7 Reflexes check to avoid 3 points of Impairment until a suitable remedy is found) or sticky, tar-like residues (Difficulty 10 Reflexes check to avoid having to make a Difficulty 5 Strength check to move or put anything down for the rest of the fight).
- The chemical reaction between a ghost's Pus Bucket schtick and an urn's contents could be really interesting — explosive, for example.
- A hero might try to avoid a hungry ghost by putting the stone altar between it and himself. That would be a great time for him to discover hungry ghosts are insubstantial.
- The hungry ghosts aren't bright, but they know a sword's pommel from its point. Black Mountain Fang could do some serious damage to magical PCs.
- Dou Ping can't enter the room, but if the players leave the doors open, he can see and cast spells inside. If two or more heroes fall under Ping's dominion, they can toss the skull back and forth to keep it away from their fellows, or hurl it out through the doors to Dou Ping.
- If the skull is dropped or knocked to the ground, it could get kicked around the room like a soccer ball.
- If the heroes attack the skull directly, use the Dodge AV of the character holding it (unless the character holding it is trying to help, in which case use Dodge AV 0). The skull has Body 5; keep track of damage and make death checks like a named character.

BONE OF CONTENTION

After fighting the ghosts and perhaps their fellows, what happens next depends on the heroes' disposition toward Dou Ping. If he's been playing the friendly ghost, or has remained invisible so far, he appears, identifies himself as the one who hired the players, and demands they hand over the skull. If they hesitate or refuse, he resorts to Influence/enchantment.

If Dou Ping gets hold of the skull, he cackles maniacally as blood pours from its eye-sockets, dripping down to form bones, organs, muscles, and finally skin. This process is just fast enough that there's no time for the heroes to stop it. In his new form, Dou Ping has new stats.

At this point, Dou Ping may simply thank the PCs and disappear in a cloud of smoke (Illusion sorcery) while cackling evilly. If the heroes have been difficult, he may decide to teach them a lesson and start blasting away. But if he takes more than 15 Wounds, or anyone slices him with Black Mountain Fang, he thinks better of it, announces that now is not the time to test his powers, and beats a hasty retreat. If the players give chase or pound him to a pulp before he can get away, they discover that he can't die (due to his Will Not Die schtick).

If the players defeat Dou Ping, drag his body into the tomb, destroy the skull, or refuse to remove it from the tomb, Dou Ping flies into a rage and ominously pronounces:

“Worthless maggots, you shall pay dearly for your insolence! I invoke the Most Vile Curse of Insidious Doom on you all!”

Ping uses Divination and Fertility to give the PCs bad luck. Roll his Sorcery and compare it to each character's Fortune or Chi, whichever is higher. If successful, the next time that player spends a Fortune Die, he *automatically fails* the check in question. (He should still roll, though — maybe he'll fumble, too.) If you want to be particularly horrible, rule that this effect continues until the heroes undertake a quest to rid themselves of the curse.

In any case, once the players have dealt with Dou Ping one way or the other — and don't forget he can just leave, if he becomes an impediment to the next fight — he disappears in a cloud of smoke, either cackling maniacally or swearing dire revenge.

STORMING THE HALL OF JUDGMENT

When Dou Ping departs (or maybe earlier), the heroes will want to get back home. Crushing the cricket's cage (if it hasn't already been crushed in one of the fights) does nothing other than either kill the cricket or free it. Retracing their steps may or may not be helpful, and continued searching will probably be proposed.

In truth, it doesn't really matter what the PCs try, because the commotion over the tomb and skull has attracted the attention of Qin Guang Wang, Ruler of the First Court. The next time the heroes pass through any kind of portal or doorway (the bronze tomb doors, the doorway at the blooderfly grotto, or anything else), they're transported to the Hall of Judgment. Wherever that door went before, now it leads directly to Qin Guang Wang.

THE HALL OF JUDGMENT

Qin Guang Wang's Hall of Judgment is a large, multi-level arena whose walls, floor, and domed ceiling are covered with dozens — no, hundreds — of doors, portals, windows, gates, and hatchways leading to and from other chambers all over the Underworld. At one end of the arena stairs ascends to a raised platform where the immense, golden Mirror of Retribution stands. On a higher platform above it is the massive throne where Qin Guang Wang sits.

Qin Guang Wang appears as a tall, handsome human with bright red skin and robes of shimmering liquid gold. As the heroes enter the hall, he bangs his staff on the platform, there is a clap of thunder, and he announces:

"I am Qin Guang Wang, Ruler of the First Court of Di Yu. Identify yourselves!"

If they try to explain about Dou Ping, the tomb, the skull, and how they got there, he assures them Dou Ping will be dealt with. Regardless of how the heroes represent themselves, he replies:

"According to the records of Yen Lo Wang, there is no place for you in the Courts of Di Yu... at least, not yet."

Price of Blood

First Wave

- Needle-throated hungry ghosts (see p. 40), 3–5 per character.
- A gang of Poison Thorns on motorcycles, from "Baptism of Fire" (see *Feng Shui*, p. 230), 3–5 per character.
- Belching ogres (see *Elevator to the Netherworld*, p. 81), 2–4 per character.

Second Wave

- Flying kerises (see p. 30), 2–3 per character.
- Hungry ghosts who receive lost food (see p. 42), 1–2 per character.
- Tortoise-shell warriors (see p. 72), 1–2 per character.

Third Wave

- Four Burning Fists (see p. 33).
- Jack Donovan (see *Golden Comeback*, p. 12), Mad Dog McCroun (see *Golden Comeback*, p. 14), and/or Sun Chen (see *Blood of the Valiant*, p. 72).
- Long Ti, Imperial Dragon (harsh ending only, see *Thorns of the Lotus*, p. 70)

He smiles wickedly, suggesting that perhaps some day the heroes will find themselves in Hell once more. But for now, he continues:

"But by decree of the Jade Emperor, a price must be paid before anyone may leave Di Yu. Thus, I offer a choice."

"First, you may earn the right to leave by paying the Price of Blood. I will summon foes against whom you must prove your courage. If you defeat them, you will be allowed to leave. However, if you are defeated, I will dispose of your souls as I see fit."

"Second, you may pay the Price of Fortune. You must choose from among the portals of this Hall of Judgment and deal in turn with whatever they reveal, until you choose the portal that leads you home. If you are defeated before you escape, your souls are forfeit."

"Finally, you may pay the Price of Flesh, and bear the marks of the Yama Kings back to the earthly world. Each mark represents one task you must perform at our call. When all the tasks have been carried out, your payment is complete."

*"Now... **choose.**"*

Price of Fortune

Chamber of Fire: A quintessentially hellish underground lake of fire, with islands of rock. Fire elementals (see p. 24), 2–4 per character, rise from the fire and attack.

Hall of Unspeakable Verse: A stone-walled chamber where a gnarled marauder (see *Feng Shui*, p. 169) reads poetry so awful it makes the ears bleed to a handful of tormented souls strapped to a variety of torture devices. Freed prisoners might fight on the heroes' side.

Graveyard of Hua: An underground field of dirt and stones filled with grave markers and haunted by tomb spirits (see p. 71). To enter, the PCs must dig upwards through loose dirt (the portal is a horizontal coffin lid), which then collapses and buries the portal (at which point the tomb spirits attack). The heroes must dig their way back down while under attack to return to the Hall of Judgment.

Dungeon of Cramped Cells: A long hallway where people and creatures are trapped inside fiendishly small cells, some as small as shoeboxes. The imprisoned plead with the heroes to set them free, promising in return to help in their search and struggle. Most — but not all — are lying. The incarcerated might include flying heads (see p. 28), dead riders (see p. 15), monkey spirits (see p. 49), and imprisoned humans of any of the character types in the *Feng Shui* rulebook.

Whirlwind Cavern: A giant cavern with a tornado in the center. As soon as the portal leading here is cracked, wind rips the door (or whatever) off its hinges and into the maelstrom. Heroes must make checks to avoid the same fate, and if they fail, are sucked in and must find some way to overcome the gale to return.

Portal of Lightning: The door opens on an impassible curtain of electrical energy that shoots the equivalent of a lightning Blast (Sorcery 13, damage 10) at the closest character once every third shot. Slammed shut, the door will only hold for so long.

THE PRICE OF BLOOD

The Price of Blood is straightforward: enemies jump out of the Mirror of Retribution and attack the heroes. This is your excuse to use any of the creatures

in this book, or anything else you can think of, to give the PCs a knock-down, drag-out fight.

Qin Guang Wang can call up anything that's died and gone to Hell, including demons (of course), but also departed enemies, jilted lovers, legendary heroes, historical figures, and so on. Got an old villain you want to bring back? How about a squad of Roman legionnaires? Josef Stalin on a triceratops? You name it, Qin Guang Wang can bring it. If you'd like to choose enemies *à la carte*, there are some ideas in the "Price of Blood" box.

Attackers come in waves, the second of which may be a rude surprise, since Qin Guang Wang does nothing to disabuse the heroes of their likely assumption that the first wave is the only one. The second wave hits in the third sequence, the third in the fifth, and so forth. The number of waves depends on whether you prefer an easy ending, tough ending, or harsh ending; see "Happy Endings, and Otherwise," below.

THE PRICE OF FORTUNE

The Price of Fortune is similar to the Price of Blood, in that the heroes are going to have a fight on their hands. Instead of the battle coming to them, though, the PCs are ordered:

"Choose, then, among these portals! When you discover the doorway home, it is yours to pass!"

Each time a new portal is opened, ask the opening character's player to make a Fortune check to see whether he's found the way home. The Difficulty is based on whether you decide the Yama Kings are fair, tough, or harsh; see "Happy Endings, and Otherwise," below.

Portals that don't go home lead all over Hell (and back). Create destinations at your nefarious whim, or choose from the "Price of Fortune" boxed text. Not all portals start a fight, but most should. Some might actually lead somewhere useful.

Not entering a given chamber is possible, but once a door has been opened, its denizens can get into the Hall of Judgment to attack the heroes, which most try to do. In order to tempt heroes to enter otherwise horrific chambers, include useful tools that might help them in the ongoing fight. Some chambers might also have one-way entrances, such as chutes that, once fallen down, must be climbed back up to re-enter the Hall of Judgment.

THE PRICE OF FLESH

The players may have some questions about this option before they pick it. Qin Guang Wang explains that five tattoos will be burned into their flesh, each representing a task they must perform for the Yama Kings in the earthly world. He refuses to say what the tasks will be or when they'll be required. If a hero refuses to perform an assigned task, a demon will be sent to reclaim his soul. One mark will disappear with each completed task; after all five tasks are finished, the debt will be repaid and the Yama Kings will bother the hero no further.

If a PC agrees to this, a demon appears, and, with a red-hot claw, burns five symbols into the hero's chest or arms. Each mark deals one permanent Wound Point that cannot be healed by any means other than completing the task it represents. So until the character starts working off his debt, he'll always have 5 Wounds.

The Price of Flesh, obviously, is the quickest way out of Hell, and also provides some great adventure opportunities in the future. The Yama Kings generally use these marks to recapture escaped demons or bring in unusual individuals who somehow cheat death. When they want to call in a mark, they contact the hero and give him the name of someone who needs to be killed. If the hero refuses, the Yama Kings send demonic servants (such as Underworld Trackers, see p. 78) to collect his soul.

How difficult or heart-wrenching the assigned killings are is up to you, but keep in mind that the Price of Flesh does amount to a deal with the Devil. The hits should start relatively painlessly but get progressively worse. If you really want to put a character through some angst, the last one should be a close friend, partner, or love interest.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

You should decide in advance whether to let different heroes choose different prices. (But to be clear, even if you allow different choices, you should definitely group all those who make the same choice together.) Keeping them together makes things easier on you and can help keep the adventure shorter, but different choices can add more texture and let the PCs differentiate themselves.

So You Died in Hell

Ghost

- Raise your Magic stat to 7, if it's lower than that.
- Gain the creature schticks Flight and Insubstantial.
- Choose one additional creature schtick, which both the player and GM must agree is appropriate for the character.
- Gain the Creature Powers skill, with an AV equal to (your Magic stat + 1), the first time you try to use one of your new schticks.
- Gain the Ghost type's unique limitation with regard to healing.

Supernatural Creature

- Raise your Magic stat to 8, if it's lower than that.
- Gain the creature schticks Blast and Damage Immunity. The type of Blast and nature of the immunity must be agreed on by both the player and GM based on what's appropriate for the character.
- Gain the Creature Powers skill, with an AV equal to (your Magic stat + 1), the first time you try to use one of your new schticks.
- Gain the Supernatural Creature type's unique limitation with regard to healing.

If you allow (and the characters select) different choices, take care of the Price of Flesh first. The other two choices can be taken in either order, which could mean one group watching another get slaughtered, or fight their way to freedom. To avoid one group of players getting bored while the others fight, you can ask waiting players to take control of enemy combatants.

HAPPY ENDINGS, AND OTHERWISE

There are three possible endings to both the Price of Blood and Price of Fortune: the easy, tough, and harsh endings. Choose among them based on your GMing style and narrative aesthetic.

If you think the Yama Kings are tough but even-handed judges, go with the easy ending. If you think the Yama Kings wouldn't let the heroes leave Hell without someone paying a price, choose the tough ending. If you

think the Yama Kings are thoroughly corrupt and would never give anyone a fair shake, use the harsh ending.

Easy Ending: For the Price of Blood, when Qin Guang Wang thinks the players have defeated a suitable number of enemies to prove their courage, he pounds his staff on the floor, thunder claps, and the portal home opens. He may wait for some suitably heroic moment to do this, such as when one character risks his life to save another from certain death. For the Price of Fortune, the Fortune check Difficulty is $[15 - (1 \times \text{the number of portals opened so far}) - (3 \times \text{the number of death checks rolled so far})]$. If the check succeeds, the portal leads home. On failure, it's another challenge.

Tough Ending: For the Price of Blood, enemies continue to appear until one of the characters fails a death check. Then, Qin Guang Wang announces the fight is over, the price has been paid, and shows the remaining heroes (the ones who chose that price, anyway) to the portal home. See "Servants of Death," below, for what happens to the deceased hero. For the Price of Fortune, the Fortune check Difficulty is $[20 - (1 \times \text{the number of portals opened so far}) - (1 \times \text{the number of death checks rolled so far})]$. As above, the heroes don't find the portal home until they succeed at one of these checks.

Harsh Ending: For both the Price of Blood and Price of Fortune, Qin Guang Wang has no intention of letting the heroes leave Di Yu alive. He keeps sum-

moning more powerful enemies or sending the PCs though ever-more-dangerous portals until all are dead. As things get worse, make it obvious there's no way the heroes will be allowed to survive. Ask the players how they want their characters to die, and make sure they get the glorious deaths they deserve. Then, see "Servants of Death," below.

SERVANTS OF DEATH

In the tough and harsh endings to the Hall of Judgment, heroes die. After a suitably heroic death, dead characters...

...return to play as ghosts or supernatural creatures.

You should agree, with the player of each dead character, which of the two types is more appropriate for that hero. Then, apply the relevant set of stat modifications from the "So You Died in Hell" box.

Characters transformed into ghosts and creatures are tied to Hell, and fall under the dominion of Qin Guang Wang. Exactly what this means in your campaign is up to you. The heroes may have to obey the commands of the Ruler of the First Court and his minions, may retain their free will but suffer when they ignore Qin Guang Wang's commands, or may be affected in some different way.

CRUNCHY BITS INDEX

This section provides a handy reference to the crunchy bits scattered across this book like so much splattered blood. In these last few pages of *Glimpse of the Abyss*, you'll find...

- Lists of the new schticks in this book come first, grouped by type, with summaries of each. This list is intended for players and GMs to use when shopping for new schticks for player characters and GMCs. General use schticks come first, available to all, followed by unique schticks and weaknesses, which are useful only to GMs.
- Next, there are lists of the non-schtick crunchy bits, like character types, sorcery combinations, and so on. They're not technically schticks, which is why they're broken out into their own section.
- Finally, there's an alphabetical list of each and every crunchy bit with a page number. This is to make it easy to find the rules for a given schtick when all you know is its name.

Schticks by Type

Schtick Name	Page	Schtick Type	Summary
Necromantic Implanter	14	Arcanowave Schtick	Excrete creepy slugs that can turn zombie drones (created via Zombify) into corpse factories.
Necrosis Unit	54	Arcanowave Schtick	Saturate your flesh with flesh-eating bacteria that keep you from rotting and melt those who touch you to goo.
Weather Control Crystals	8	Arcanowave Schtick	Cause rain from clouds, or obnoxious storm clouds around a target.
Group Attack	10	Auxiliary Schtick	A trained and/or intelligent group attacks with a single check.
Henchmen	9	Auxiliary Schtick	Designate flunkies to take your licks for you.
Chi Desecration	11	Creature Schtick	Permanently disrupt the chi flow from feng shui sites.
Devourer	51	Creature Schtick	Heal yourself through gluttony.
Disperse	44	Creature Schtick	You are bound to a location, but can disappear into that environment, leaving no trace.
Elemental Body	24	Creature Schtick	Varying capabilities for bodies of earth, fire, metal, wood, and water.
Fog of Darkness	20	Creature Schtick	Create a field of darkness that gives you cover.
Guardian	50	Creature Schtick	Attune to a person or object in order to gain special abilities to protect him or it.
Latent Schtick	52	Creature Schtick	Some other creature schtick you possess lies dormant, but may reveal itself in the future.
Invisibility	84	Creature Schtick	Become, you know, invisible.
Mesmerizing Song	26	Creature Schtick	Entrance an opponent while you continue to sing.

Schtick Name	Page	Schtick Type	Summary
Multiple Arms	34	Creature Schtick	Parry better and perform continuous actions more easily with an additional pair of arms and hands.
Pus Bucket	39	Creature Schtick	An attacker who strikes you is sprayed with acidic pus (identical to Burning Blood).
Quarry Signature	79	Creature Schtick	Given a physical relic of some target, you can track him down anywhere in the same juncture.
Seizure	12	Creature Schtick	Cause Impairment due to violent seizures.
Shapeshift	76	Creature Schtick	Make yourself look like other things.
Skin-stealing	62	Creature Schtick	Disguise yourself in the skins of those you slay.
Swarming Mass	55	Creature Schtick	A mass of small, mindless creatures behaves and attacks communally.
Tenacious Hold	27	Creature Schtick	Attack and hold to inflict automatic hits in subsequent actions.
Throat Binder	39	Creature Schtick	Suffocate your enemies.
Tortoise-shell Warrior	73	Creature Schtick	Launch combination attacks that do more damage.
Transparency	66	Creature Schtick	Make yourself see-through, at will.
Unnamed Inevitable Comeback	16	Creature Schtick	Unnamed creatures might rise again in the sequence after their death.
Unnamed Will Not Die	15	Creature Schtick	Unnamed creatures gain Impairment instead of dying.
Unliving	30	Creature Schtick	Be an object that need not eat, drink, breathe, or sleep (and can't, you know, do much of anything).
Zombify	14	Creature Schtick	A modified version of Corruption.
Inner Alchemy	66	Fu Power	Call forth the thirty-six thousand gods that inhabit your body.
Path of Visible Resonance	69	Fu Power Path	Those with Thumper Rigs can shake the earth and disrupt flows of chi.
Dream	18	Sorcery Schtick	Create and manipulate dreams, drive the unwilling to slumber, and read dream-portents.
Glamour	7	Stat Schtick (Charisma)	Supernatural charisma lets you make a second check when you fail a Charisma or related skill check.
Nauseating Touch	22	Transformed Animal Schtick (General)	Give those you strike food poisoning (Impairment).
Dog	65	Transformed Animal Package	Bark, mark your prey, hump your enemies, and sniff out your opponents' schticks.
Demonic Conduit	45	Unique Schtick	Lai Kuang is a living conduit to the Underworld; he can summon demons with ease, but they can also sometimes come unbidden.
Foo Dog Pup	33	Unique Schtick	A female foo dog can summon her pups.
Magic Wishing Staff	49	Unique Schtick	Monkey spirits' staves can shrink or expand as they will.

Schtick Name	Page	Schtick Type	Summary
Reaping and Sowing	19	Unique Schtick	Collect semen during intercourse and pass it to another during subsequent relations.
Superior Memory Drain	48	Unique Schtick	Like Blood Drain (memory drain), but more thorough, and permanent.
The Tama	32	Unique Schtick	A male foo dog can create light and make a selfless wish.
Tech Borrow	70	Unique Schtick	Similar to Body Borrow, Ti Kan can possess objects and operate them at will.
Fascination	31	Weakness	Suffer undue preoccupation with some activity or area of knowledge.
Formless	48	Weakness	You are shapeless and without structure.
Fragile	9	Weakness	The Outcome necessary to take down unnamed characters goes down by 1.
Vulnerability	81	Weakness	You have a dangerous susceptibility to something that's usually harmless.

Non-schtick Bits

Animate Environment	44	Blast Special Effect	Surroundings come maliciously to life.
The Wondrous Victorious Power of Unlimited Awesome Self-existent Light	39	Sorcery Combination	Fertility and Summoning combo satiates hungry ghosts, convincing them to move on.
Elemental	23	Character Type	Creature of fire, water, metal, wood, or earth.
Demon Martial Artist	35	Character Type	Kung fu master from the depths of Hell.
Thumper	67	Character Type	Sound incarnate.

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