

Night of the Pegasus

A D-Day Adventure for *GODLIKE*

By Jordi Diest, © 2004



Operation Tonga

This mission reproduces Operation Tonga—the capture of the bridges over Orne River and the Caen Canal—with *GODLIKE* flavour. The bridges must be held to ensure a supply route from Sword Beach to the 6th Airborne Division, which had dropped east of Caen to protect the flank of the Allied invasion.

The player characters are with Company D of the 6th Airborne, 2nd Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry (“Ox and Bucks”)—the first Allied soldiers to hit French soil on D-Day, proudly wearing the division’s flying horse patch.

They can be either Talents attached to the division and placed under Howard’s command, or ordinary soldiers of Company D. Non-Talent player characters should be allowed to spend the same number of Will points in character creation as Talents, but only for (non-hyper!) stats or skills.

One character from the players’ group has been detailed, a Talent nicknamed the Ghost, and the GM should create others to fill out the Talent squad. The players are free to create the rest of their squad from scratch or use ordinary soldier stats from page 313 of *GODLIKE*.

Game Moderator’s Background

This mission is modeled after the historic Operation Tonga, although a few details have changed. And the story has a darker twist: One of the British Talents, the Ghost, suffers from increasingly extreme mental strain that will turn him a Mad Talent in the middle of the mission. As if that wasn’t bad enough, a powerful German *Übermensch*, obsessed with Nazi mythology, takes a special interest in the Ghost’s growing power—with the players caught between them while struggling to capture and defend the bridge over the Caen Canal.

Weapons and Equipment

Each soldier in the players’ group is issued these items:

- Uniform and beret
- Helmet (2 LAR)
- Knife or bayonet
- Two hand grenades No. 36 (Penetration 2, Area 2)
- Entrenching tool
- Haversack with various goodies (rations, cigarettes, chocolate, etc.)
- One toggle rope
- Lee-Enfield rifle (for riflemen)
- Sten submachine gun (for officers)
- Bren light machine gun (for machine gunners)
- Webley revolver (for officers, NCOs, and machine gunners)
- One PIAT anti-tank rocket

Scene 1: The Bridge

The players are inside a 28-seater Horsa glider, in unseasonably frigid cold, along with Major John Howard and other soldiers of D Company’s first platoon, silently approaching their designated landing zone (LZ-X) near the canal bridge at 0016 of 6 June 1944.

The landing is not an easy one. The glider is going too fast and the braking parachute, deployed late, does little to slow the craft. It goes through the first barbed wire belt around the bridge and crashes to a halt. All passengers take 2 points of Shock damage in every location; both pilots are catapulted out of the cockpit, taking the equivalent of 10 Area dice in damage. And there’s one more unpleasant surprise. Have each character roll 1d. If it comes up 5 or lower, the character’s PIAT was damaged in the rough landing and won’t fire.

Two more Company D gliders land nearby and the men stumble out to help secure the bridge. (Three others, not featured here, assault the nearby Orne River bridge.)

Unbelievable as it may seem, the German soldiers on the bridge don’t notice the crash. If the players are fast and careful, they can gain full surprise.

The objective is a steel-girdered lift bridge slung low over the water of the canal, straddled by a steel control tower. Thanks to local civilians who passed the information through the Resistance to the British Special Operations Executive, Maj. Howard knows plenty about the bridge’s defenses and directs his men precisely in the darkness.

It is guarded on the west side by a German pillbox, manned by a gunner firing an MG 34, a belt-feeder, and four riflemen. Another two-man machine gun is set up in the bridge’s control tower. On the east side, nearer the landings, is a gun pit built beside the control tower, with a 5 cm Pak 38 cannon with a crew of four and a platoon of 11 riflemen. Two more German platoons—each with a two-man MG 34 team and ten riflemen—are stationed in trenches in the barbed-wire perimeter.

The German soldiers are actually a mix of Russian and Polish prisoners of war and German youths, led by veteran German NCOs. When the attack begins, they try to launch a warning flare to signal the garrison.

The Germans use suppressive fire to try to discourage the British from charging to close range. If the fighting becomes particularly fierce, the Germans surrender or run for it.

The first signs of trouble with the Ghost appear here—shaken up by the hard landing, he overreacts to the German defenses and panics at the first machine gun burst directed his way, using his power indiscriminately to freeze German troops. Steady leadership calms him, but he comes fully to his senses only when the action dies down.

Will Awards: +1 for capturing the bridge with light casualties.

Scene 2: Interrogating the Prisoners

With the canal bridge secured (along with the bridge over the Orne), the players may take time to interrogate captured soldiers. Complete rules for interrogation can be found in *Combat Orders No. 1: Donar's Hammer* and at the GOD-LIKE Web site, www.arcdream.com/godlike.

The players overhear young Germans muttering among themselves about winter and ice and staring superstitiously at the Ghost. They are loathe to discuss it, but the players may draw more out of them in interrogation.

If pressed, they admit that their own commander has been visited recently by a fire-powered *Übermensch*, *Die Fliegenfackel*, from *Überkommandogruppe 362*, who issued explicit orders that the troops should watch for Allied Talents with powers over ice or the cold. "The Flying Torch" claimed grandiosely that the Greek seeresses called the *Pythia* predicted he would face "the coming of winter" on this summer day. The soldiers dismissed it as ridiculous—but seeing the Ghost in action has sparked superstitious dread in many of them.

They have no idea where *Die Fliegenfackel* might be now.

The Ghost, for his part, becomes even more spooked and thoughtful on hearing about the Flying Torch and the Germans' interest in him.

On more mundane matters, the prisoners can reveal that they wired the bridge for explosives, but the demolition charges themselves have not been set; they can be found in a hut near the control tower.

They can also reveal that the forces in and around Bénouville, commanded by a Major Schmidt, include five light tanks, three half-tracks, and an infantry regiment, which confirms Howard's previous intelligence.

Will Awards: Penalties as usual for failed Mental Stability checks triggered by torturing prisoners.

Scene 3: Holding the Bridge

Now the players can decide what to do to protect the bridge. While most of the men will dig in around the bridge itself, Howard accepts any reasonable plan the players come up with. They may, for instance, decide to begin combat patrols to enlarge the security perimeter and control the town of Bénouville across the canal. Civilians in town welcome them with open arms—Mme Vion, head of the maternity hospital, is also head of the local Resistance, and Resistance member Mme Thérèse Grondrée has a café adjacent to the bridge where she learned much about the enemy.

There are five *PzKpfw* II light tanks (see page 268 of *GOD-LIKE*) parked in the Bénouville streets. But they won't take immediate action if they didn't notice the warning flare.

If the flare did go up, Maj. Schmidt, chief of the garrison, and two *Sdkfz* 251 half-tracks (as on page 269 of *GODLIKE*, but without the 7.5 cm Pak cannon) from Bénouville appear

German Conscripts

736th Grenadier Regiment, 716th Infantry Division

Body 2 Coordination 2 Sense 1

Brains 2 Command 1 Cool 2

Base Will 3

Skills Brawling 1 (3d), Explosives 1 (3d), Grenade 1 (3d), Knife-fighting 1 (3d), Machine Gun 1 (3d), Mental Stability 1 (3d), Mortar 1 (3d), Pistol 1 (3d), Radio Operation 1 (3d), Rifle 1 (3d), Running 1 (3d), Submachine Gun 1 (3d).

Weapons and Armour

Stahlhelm (helmet) (LAR 2)

Gewehr 41 Rifle (Damage width+2 in Shock and Killing, Slow 1, Capacity 10, Range 120/1,000).

Fixed Bayonet (Damage width+1 in Killing).

MP 40 Submachine Gun (Damage width+1 in Shock and Killing, Spray 2, Capacity 32, Range 20/100).

PO8 Luger (Damage width+1 in Shock and Killing, Capacity 8, Range 16/32).

Stielhandgranate 24 "Stick Grenade" (Damage width+1 in Shock and Killing, Penetration 3, Area 4, range 35/55).

MG34 (Damage width+2 in Shock and Killing, Spray 4, Capacity 75, Range 200/2,000).

5 cm PAK 38 (Damage width+3 in Shock and Killing, Slow 3, Penetration 8, Area 4, Burn, range 250/2,900).

Veteran German Reinforcements

716th Infantry Division, 2nd Engineering Company

Body 2 Coordination 2 Sense 1

Brains 2 Command 1 Cool 2

Base Will 3

Regular Skills Brawling 2 (4d), Endurance 2 (4d), Explosives 2 (4d), Grenade 3 (5d), Knife-fighting 2 (4d), Machine Gun 2 (4d), Mental Stability 2 (4d), Mortar 2 (4d), Pistol 1 (3d), Radio Operation 2 (4d), Rifle 2 (4d), Running 2 (4d), Stealth 2 (4d), Submachine Gun 1 (3d).

Frogman Skills Brawling 2 (4d), Endurance 2 (4d), Explosives 3 (5d), Grenade 3 (5d), Knife-fighting 3 (5d), Mental Stability 3 (5d), Pistol 2 (4d), Radio Operation 2 (4d), Running 2 (4d), Stealth 3 (5d), Swim 3 (5d).

Weapons and Armour

Stahlhelm (helmet) (LAR 2)

Gewehr 41 Rifle (Damage width+2 in Shock and Killing, Slow 1, Capacity 10, Range 120/1,000).

Fixed Bayonet (Damage width+1 in Killing).

MP 40 Submachine Gun (Damage width+1 in Shock and Killing, Spray 2, Capacity 32, Range 20/100).

PO8 Luger (Damage width+1 in Shock and Killing, Capacity 8, Range 16/32).

Stielhandgranate 24 "Stick Grenade" (Damage width+1 in Shock and Killing, Penetration 3, Area 4, range 35/55).

MG34 (Damage width+2 in Shock and Killing, Spray 4, Capacity 75, Range 200/2,000).

8 cm Granatwerfer 36 (mortar) (Damage width+2 in Shock and Killing, Slow 2, Penetration 5, Area 6, Range 500/2,625).



in 30 minutes. If the flare did not go up, it takes the Germans two hours to send the half-tracks to investigate. The half-tracks retreat after Schmidt observes the nature of the forces holding the bridge.

These troops come from the 716th Infantry Division, 2nd Engineering Company, and they are superior to the conscripts and youths that defended the bridge.

During these attacks The Ghost must roll a Cool+Mental Stability check every time one of his comrades in arms dies near him or if he is about to die. After the first failed check, curious things began to occur:

- Corpses begin to freeze solid.
- The air temperature begins to drop very quickly; apply the rules for cold described on page 25 of *GODLIKE*.
- A region around the bridge begins to freeze over. Every 30 minutes the zone's radius expands by one kilometer.
- The Ghost adopts an autistic attitude and starts to mutter incoherently. A Brains+Education roll recognizes the muttering as Shakespeare's poem "Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind." By this time the Ghost is so far gone he attacks anybody who tries to touch him—and he is immune to Will contests.

If Schmidt survives his scouting expedition, the players face one attack every hour. If he dies, the attacks come every two hours. Choose from the following encounters:

- Three *PzKpfw* II tanks attack. If the lead tank is disabled on the bridge or before reaching it, the others can't advance past it and retreat.
- A mortar team begins firing on the bridge from somewhere in Bénouville. The Talents can try to locate it—if they can avoid German patrols along the way and coming back.
- A sniper attacks from the church tower in Le Port, north of Bénouville. Unless the players have a better idea, Howard tasks them with finding and silencing him.
- A fighter-bomber attacks the bridge and drops a bomb. (Incredibly, the bomb bounces harmlessly off the bridge without exploding.)
- Two German platoons (20 soldiers) try to storm the bridge with help from a *PzKpfw* IV medium tank (see *GODLIKE*, page 268).
- A barge armed with a 3.7 cm Pak 35/36 cannon (*GODLIKE*, page 267) tries to distract the soldiers while two

frogmen begin to set various demolition charges. (Watch the Ghost's condition carefully—as the area freezes over the river will become more and more icy.)

- Two German gunboats approach the bridge and attack.

At 0200, Pevnost is dropped by parachute at within 50 yards of the Orne River bridge to begin Operation Rascal, teleporting Talents and heavily armed commandos to disrupt German the rearguard. These "rascals" make excellent reinforcements if the players have suffered heavy casualties; otherwise their orders are to range into the countryside and make trouble behind the lines "as only Talents can."

Will Awards: +1 for each tank, half-track, or gunboat destroyed. +1 for protecting Pevnost and the "rascals."

Scene 4: Fire and Ice

At 0700, the Royal Navy begins coastal bombardment as part of the Overlord landings—the shelling can be heard even in Bénouville. And the Germans launch their fiercest attack yet.

By now much of the Bénouville garrison has abandoned the town, but *Die Fliegenfackel* leads an attack force composed of three *SdKfz* 165 Hummel self-propelled guns and three infantry platoons (each with 10 riflemen and an MG 34).

Die Fliegenfackel times his attack carefully, waiting until most of the Rascal teams have come and gone but reinforcements from Sword Beach have not yet entered the town.

He targets the Ghost, not other Talents, using his powers to destroy Allied heavy weapons and spotlight Allied Talents for his troops and saving his Will to resist Talent attacks. As he circles the area, the cold in the region grows worse and worse.

Die Fliegenfackel wants to face his nemesis in what he imagines will be a battle of cosmic proportions. Unfortunately for him, the Ghost is beyond the usual limits of Talent powers and shrugs off *Die Fliegenfackel's* attacks.

Unfortunately for the players, the freeze deepens as the Ghost confronts *Die Fliegenfackel*. Each round, each character takes a point of Shock damage to each limb. The Ghost does not stop until *Die Fliegenfackel* is frozen solid.

At this stage the only way to break the Ghost's concentration and interrupt this deadly condition is for someone else to kill *Die Fliegenfackel*. If the players manage that before that final showdown, the Ghost comes near enough to stare at the body with dead eyes. Either way, with *Die Fliegenfackel* dead, the Ghost walks away without another word.

Around 1300, the players hear Bill Millin, the piper of No. 1 Special Service Brigade at Sword Beach, playing the pre-arranged signal indicating that they are ready to relieve the paratroopers. A few minutes later the commandos reach the bridge, the first troops of thousands coming to pursue the enemy into liberated France.

If the players succeeded, the bridge over the Caen Canal will be known from now on as Pegasus Bridge.

Will Awards: As usual for defeating a hostile Talent. +1 for each tank destroyed. +5 for holding the bridge until relieved.

SdKfz 165 Self-Propelled Gun

Armour Ranges: 3 to 1 cm **Heavy Armour Rating:** 3 to 1, open top

Guns: 150 mm cannon (Width+13 in Killing, Area 10+Burn, Penetration 9, Slow 4) and one MG34 machine gun (Width+2 in Shock and Killing, Spray 4)

Maximum Speed: 26 mph

Crew: 6

Weight: 24 tons

Die Fliegenfackel ("The Flying Torch")

Name: Emil Bauer.

Nationality: German.

Political Affiliation: Nazi (National Socialist).

Rank: *SS Sturmbannführer*.

Decorations: Iron Cross First Class, General Assault Badge, Close Combat Badge.

Dependants: Mother, Father.

Motivations: To win the war.

Known Parahuman Abilities: *Die Fliegenfackel* can fly and transform his body into a brilliant living torch.

History: Emil Bauer gained his powers when the 6th Panzer Division attempted to relieve German troops at Stalingrad.

Bauer is obsessed with the theories of Hanns Hörbiger, an Austrian engineer whose *Glacial Cosmogony* (1913) is a favourite of Nazi mystics. Drawing on the myths in the ancient *Edda*, Hörbiger wrote that the solar system began in a cataclysmic collision of fire and ice—and the first Aryans descended from embryos inside that ice.

In 1943, Bauer traveled to Delphi to ask the *Pythia* about his future in the war. The Oracle cast this omen: "As you came from the sixth and tried to save the sixth in vain, nobody will save you when Winter reclaims you in the sixth day of the sixth month." This clear reference to the loss of Sixth Army so enraged Bauer that he killed the Oracle with his powers. Of course, another Oracle soon appeared.

Now, nearly a year later, on the eve of June 6th he has become very nervous about this omen. . . .

Game Stats

Body 2 **Coordination** 2 **Sense** 2

Brains 2 **Command** 2 **Cool** 2

Skills Anti-Tank Rocket 3 (5d), Brawling 2 (4d), Dodge 2 (4d), Endurance 2 (4d), First Aid 2 (4d), Grenade 3 (5d), Health 2 (4d), Inspire 3 (5d), Intimidation 3 (5d), Language (English) 2 (4d), Leadership 3 (5d), Map Reading 2 (4d), Mental Stability 3 (5d), Navigation (Land) 2 (4d), Pistol 4 (6d), Radio Operation 2 (4d), Survival 3 (5d), Tactics 4 (6d).
Base Will 16

Talent Powers (Cost: 88 Will points)

Alternate Form: **Body of Fire** 2hd (Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat; Flaw: Glow -1/2/4; 4/8/16; 16 points total).

Harm: **Fire** 5d+1wd with **Area** 3+**Burn** (Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside Combat; Extras: Area +1/+2/+4, 5 points/rank; Burn +1/+2/+4; Flaws: Graphic -1/-2/-4; Glow, -1/2/4; Attached to Alternate Form, -1/2/4; 4/8/16; 51 points total).

Flight 1d+2hd (Defends, Robust, Useful Outside Combat; Flaw: Attached to Alternate Form, -1/2/4; Glow -1/2/4; 2/4/8; 9 points total).

Notes: *Die Fliegenfackel* uses multiple actions to attack while using smoke and superhot flame to deflect attacks. If he takes enough damage to kill his fiery form he instantly reverts to his powerless human form.

The Ghost

Name: John Dempsey.

Nationality: English.

Political Affiliation: None.

Rank: Corporal.

Dependants: Father.

Motivations: To survive the war.

Known Parahuman Abilities: The Ghost can turn his body insubstantial and freeze with his cold glance.

History: John Dempsey was studying English Literature when the war started. His Talent manifested in paratrooper training and he was immediately assigned to a Talent squad. For all his training and early enthusiasm, however, the true face of war has affected Dempsey deeply. Now he only wants to escape all this madness.

As his own madness deepens, he recites Shakespeare's poem "Blow, Blow, Thou Winter Wind":

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen
Because thou art not seen,
Although thy breath be rude.
Heigh-ho! sing heigh-ho! unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:
Then, heigh-ho! the holly!
This life is most jolly.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
Thou dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot:
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remember'd not.
Heigh-ho! sing heigh-ho! unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly:
Then, heigh-ho! the holly!
This life is most jolly.

Game Stats

Body 3 **Coordination** 3 **Sense** 2

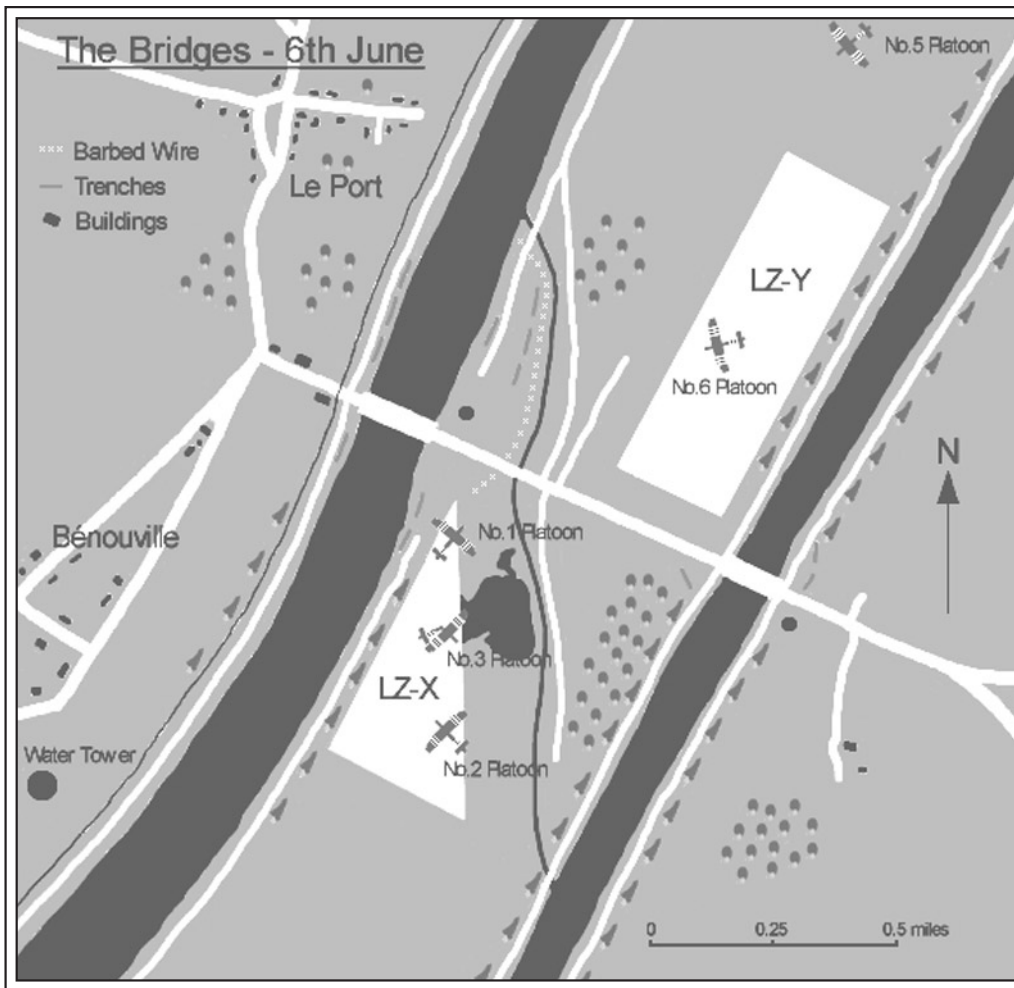
Brains 2 **Command** 1 **Cool** 1

Skills Anti-Tank Rocket 2 (5d), Brawling 3 (6d), Dodge 2 (5d), Endurance 2 (5d), First Aid 2 (5d), Grenade 3 (6d), Health 2 (5d), Inspire 3 (6d), Machine Gun 3 (6d), Map Reading 2 (4d), Mental Stability 2 (3d), Mortar 3 (5d), Navigation (Land) 3 (5d), Parachute 4 (7d), Pistol 4 (7d), Rifle 3 (6d), Submachine Gun 3 (6d), Survival 3 (5d), Tactics 2 (4d).
Base Will 2

Talent Powers (Cost: 58 Will points)

Insubstantiality 2hd (Defends, Robust, Useful Outside of Combat; 7/14/28; Extras: Breather +2/+4/+8, No Sink +1/+2/+4; 28 points total).

Harm: **Cold** 1d+1wd (Attacks, Defends, Robust, Useful Outside Combat; Extras: Cold +1/+2/+4; 30 points total).



The bridges over Caen Canal (left) and Orne River.



The Caen Canal Bridge at Bénouville (facing east), June 6, 1944.