

# Kult

*Death is Only the Beginning...*

Gunilla Jonsson • Michael Petersén

**Metropolis Ltd.**

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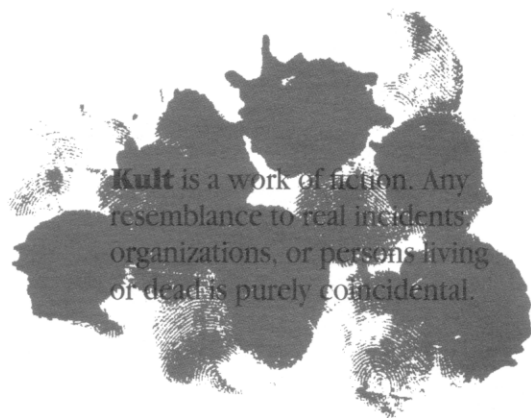
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*The Lie*

**Truth**





# A World in Darkness

**W**e live in a world where the sun has set. Forlorn creatures roam deserted streets in crumbling cities, in search of terrors from their own past. The demons of the cities were spawned by the forgotten grief of these vague existences. Now they prowl the realities, striving to shackle their old masters: humankind.

Behind steel shutters in tall skyscrapers, men in dark suits strap their victims to cold alloy autopsy tables. Forbidden rituals are woven with human

blood and terror. Later, mangled bodies are taken away in plastic bags, to disappear forever.

*The Children of the Night*, distorted images of sick thoughts materialized in the physical world, wait in the dead cities that only the desperate and insane can find.

Dreams spawn jackals of hunger who crave for living meat. The plastered walls of reality are pierced by talons of steel, haunting the dreamer, dragging his body through endless nocturnal labyrinths.

**T**his is a world of twisting corridors in the maze of the great city, where street peddlers sell demons in bottles from Estée-Lauder and secret words are spoken over sweating bourbon glasses in run-down bars. Forgotten gods are revived by the neon lights and the street noise, and tread their dance of death in trendy clubs. Every doorway, every rickety staircase down to the subterranean levels can be an entrance to Hell.

Secret societies meet in elegant conference centers to plot and reach for the powers they have glimpsed in the shadows beyond. Condemned men hunt for the secret of immortality. Discreet organizations waste unfathomable fortunes on deciphering characters carved by madmen on walls in the subways. The witchmasters of our time seek the paths to power and riches in their own dark souls. They all crave for hegemony, searching for keys to solve the riddles that they see in the diversity of our reality.

But nothing is what it seems to be. Only a handful of the many facets of reality are accessible to our senses. The world we see around us is an illusion, created by our imagination to stave off madness. Those who fancy themselves masters of the invisible forces will be cruelly disappointed when their illusions crumble and the demons arrive to collect their worshippers.

In the borderland between darkness and madness, dreams and death, there is a reality beyond the senses. Dreams and illusion can shape matter. Horror can twist bodies and bring insanity out into physical reality. The barrier between the outer and the inner is an illusion.

Not long ago there was a creator God and a firm order of nature. But God has abandoned his children and disappeared out into the darkness; perhaps dead, perhaps in exile. Lost angels and demons bear weak memories of a higher power, a force of order that once ruled their lives. But gradually, they forget.

The boundaries of reality have been weakened. Increasing numbers of people are breaking through the barriers and encountering the chaos that lies on the other side. Heaven and Hell do not have the same meaning for every man. Each creates his own purgatory. Dreams and madness lead further and further out in the dark, away from what is familiar and reasonable.

The Prince of Darkness wanders far, seeking God, the only being who can justify his existence and give it meaning. Heavens and hells have broken open or been abandoned. Demons and angels roam homeless on

Earth and look for the worshippers they need for their own survival in a world without a god. In the cities, where all truths are equal, they forget the old boundaries between evil and good.

Old gods linger powerless and bewildered in the slums, remnants of the past. Perhaps they were left there by old beliefs, or perhaps they were created anew by human hopes of a better life in a distant and half-forgotten past.

But in the end all is torn apart and destroyed. Scientists put forward theories that chaos is the fundamental principle of the universe. Their findings are echoed by increasing disorder around them, as if the very knowledge of reality's nothingness was devouring the ancient patterns.

**Kult** is a role-playing game set in the world of large cities at the end of the 20th century. It is a world where human wickedness is mingled with terrors from other parts of reality. Fascism, rooted in the sec-

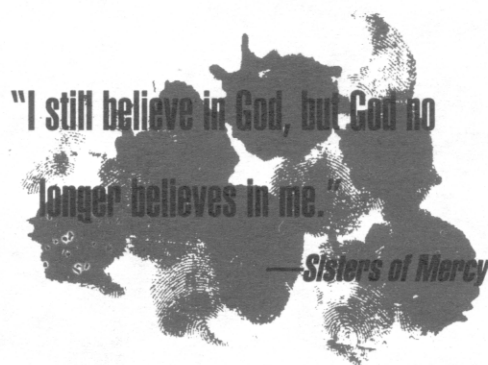
ond World War, still pervades European politics and commerce. Sensitive people are crushed by the anonymity of the cities, and become psychotic monsters. Under the surface, those primitive passions, still held at bay by the morality of past civilization, grow and fester until they erupt in sick perversions.

But human darkness is not all that threatens. The evil that humans do corrodes the bound-

aries of reality and admits creatures from the other side. Our dreams assume physical form and chase us. Creatures from the past are reborn into the present, to re-arrange our lives. Our own fear gives birth to monsters that threaten to devour us. Misfits who are not tolerated in ordered society hide themselves in abandoned cities, dilapidated industrial complexes and condemned buildings in the inner cities. There they are transformed into something not quite human.

Occult teachings can be used to establish openings into different worlds, and tap power from the unknown. But few if any humans know anything about the powers they conjure up. Sooner or later, they are all consumed by the demons they cannot control.

Such is the world in which the heroes of our game must live. Are they helpless leaves blown about by the cosmic winds? No. They are vehicles of destiny, bound to act in myths that they have never heard of. Myths which people have forgotten, but which are reborn in the thronging cities where no truth is greater than another.



The heroes of the game can be seekers of truth, perhaps motivated by a desire to regain a forgotten past, or to have revenge, or by simple curiosity. They aren't pure-hearted crusaders against evil. Rather, we should think of them as lost souls who need to kill their own demons in order to have peace.

They are woven into tales which are tied to their own past. Old crimes overtake them and demand satisfaction. Terrors from childhood pop up and assume physical forms. Horror is created inside us. We cannot behold what ever is there without seeing ourselves mirrored. Every man has his own demons, his own purgatory. In this game, the heroes are forced to go into darkness, perhaps into death—only to discover that there is no end. Death is only a beginning.

The game can be played very darkly, with doomed heroes who must perish when they have fulfilled their destinies. But that is not the point. Rather, we like to think that the heroes should seek out the darkness and accomplish something by fighting it. In a way, it's their own fears they struggle against; when they win they gain some wisdom and a few more scars in their souls.

The world of **Kult** is founded in modern western thought, formed by two thousand years of civilization based on Christian ideas. Good and evil really do exist, in a cosmic sense. There are angels and demons and an absent god who abandoned his children in the terrors of war. In man, there is a desire to wreck and do evil. But there is also light that can drive away the darkness.

*We would like to add that this is not a statement about our own religious beliefs, nor a creed which we in any way desire to impart to the reader. It is merely the setting of this role-playing game.*

**Kult** can be used to recreate the atmosphere from horror movies like *Nightmare on Elm Street* or *Hellraiser*, as horror with undead and monstrous creatures, or psychological horror like *Twin Peaks*. It can be an action game where our heroes combat superior evil forces, human and otherwise. The main characters can be helpless victims of psychotic murderers. Or they can be schizoid killers themselves, needing to reveal their own dark secrets and exorcise them, perhaps by dying.

## What is a Role-playing Game?

As the name indicates, role-playing means that the participants play roles. **Kult** is a game where the play-

ers control fictional characters in a frightful world of shadows, secrets, cults and madmen. The characters are bewildered existences who chase knowledge, fight powers from beyond death, or from their own subconscious. The players act like actors in a radio theater.

But role-playing is not theater. The participants tell a story together. They don't actually walk around and do the things that happen in the game, but they tell the Gamemaster what their characters do, and they say the things that their characters say. Some players are contented to simply state what their characters do, others identify with their roles and try to act and speak like their characters. The choice is yours. Everyone plays in his own fashion and no way is better than another. The adventures in **Kult** will become more exciting if the players try to enter their characters' minds, so to speak, just like actors do. But they should not feel any pressure to perform—that detracts from the fun. And having fun is the object of playing the game.

All relevant facts about the characters are described on a piece of paper that each player has in front of him or her. This is a pre-printed form which is called a Character Sheet. If a player wants to know something about the character, e.g., if he/she can dance, all that's needed is a glance at the Character Sheet. The players usually sit together around a table. Most of what happens is talking and rolling dice. Perhaps someone gets excited and waves his hands to underscore his words. Getting up and walking about is another way to enhance the illusion of reality and make it easier to identify with your character.

Before the game starts, all players create their characters. This is done with the help of this booklet and a number of die rolls. All facts about the character are recorded on the Character Sheet which each player has.

The most important participant is the Gamemaster. He or she is the person who sets the scene for the action, moves the story ahead, brings the characters into the scene and interprets and applies the rules. The rules determine what a character can do in a given situation. For instance, they help the Gamemaster decide if the character scores a hit when he's shooting at something with a gun. The most complicated part of the rules is the one that deals with combat and injuries. In combat it's very important to get an exact result; otherwise characters might easily be killed by chance. Of course, opinions differ on what constitutes a realistic battle.

Most of the time, the Gamemaster alone handles everything that is connected to the rules and the mechanics of the game. Occasionally, the players roll the dice themselves—they may want to do this especially when the result may mean the difference



between life and death. Some players prefer to roll all the dice for their characters themselves. Others think that the role-playing gets better if the Gamemaster relieves the players of everything that has to do with the game system, so that they can concentrate on what is happening in the story. This works well if the Gamemaster knows the rules well and is able to improvise. A novice Gamemaster may need help from the players.



The Gamemaster has no character of his own. Instead, he controls all the people the player characters meet in the adventures. These are called Non Player Characters (NPC). They are seldom described in great detail like the player characters. The Gamemaster has relevant information about the most important NPC in his notes. Others, he invents as the game goes along.

The Gamemaster also invents the story in the adventure that the player characters face. Before play starts, he or she must at least have some idea about what the story will be like. The events in the story are not determined in advance, and the acts of player characters can and will affect what happens around them. But in any story, there must be a plot and some goal that the characters may wish to reach.

The Gamemaster describes to the players what happens, and plays the roles of the NPCs. The players improvise how their characters act. There is no script with pre-written lines for them to speak. The events unfold in a teamwork between players and Gamemaster.

At the end of these rules, you will find some suggestions which may serve as a starting point for the

Gamemaster's further ideas and developments. You can also buy adventure scenarios separately. You can use them as they are, in their entirety—or you can read them for inspiration and use parts of them, as you wish.

There are no winners or losers in a role-playing game. The players usually feel good if their characters achieve their goals. But even if they fail, nobody really loses. The players have still gone through the adventure and experienced joy, excitement and friendship. One of the ideas with this game is that the characters should change when they are confronted with the dark powers of Kult. Some may become hurt, warped and even insane. This only creates an incentive for further adventures where they seek to mend the damage, expiate their evils and reach the light.

## The Red Death

It may not be obvious how to play if you have never done it before. Below, you will find a small excerpt from a longer game, which will explain how it works. In this particular episode, the Gamemaster speaks unusually much. This may be needed at dramatic moments, to create the right atmosphere of suspense. When the characters talk among each other and with NPCs, the Gamemaster will be less verbose. The players speak the lines of their respective characters, Peter, Cassandra and Gilbert. They also state what the characters do, like stopping the car at the end of the one-way street and getting out, approaching the warehouse where they see a light. The gamemaster tells what happens, describes the environment, and what Gilbert says when he has become possessed so that the player no longer has control over him. We have also written some hints about gestures and faces that the players make, to demonstrate how, with very small means, you can make the game more lifelike. Imagine the players sitting around a table, the lights dimmed and with low, suggestive music playing in the background.

Peter: "I stop the car at the end of the street. We get out."

GM: "The harbor is deserted. You can see the lights from the freeway as glittering reflections in the water. It is night. You hear a rhythmic, thumping sound coming from one of the warehouses. The gates are half open, and a flickering light can be seen inside. After a few moments, you hear a scream. It is a long, agonizing scream of pain and horror, echoing out over the waterfront."

Cassandra gasps: "It's Gilbert. They are killing him!"  
(to GM:) "I draw my gun, and we silently run up to the gates of the warehouse."

GM: "Looking inside, you see a large, dimly lit store-room. Here and there, smoking oil fires illuminate



spotty steel walls. Chains hang from overhead cranes at the ceiling, swaying slowly in the wind and throwing weird, flickering shadows on the walls. You get the impression that the shadows are like an inscription in a language you cannot understand.

"In the middle of the room, with his arms backward over a steel bar, hangs Gilbert. Large chains hold him to one of the bars that hold up the roof. He is naked and splattered with what looks like black oil. A crisscross pattern of thin lacerations covers his body. Blood is dripping from the cuts, down on the floor which seems to absorb every drop. A dull red light appears to come from the concrete around his feet.

"In a semi-circle around him stand the men from the club. They are all dressed in tight, black leather pants and their upper bodies are bare. Long, thin knives glint in their hands. They haven't seen you. They continue to slowly cut more long, thin lines in Gilbert's shivering body."

Peter: "Is he alive?"

GM: "Yes. Gilbert, you can feel a presence. It is Cassandra, and you see two other shadows far away in the darkness. It's close now."

(The GM has explained to Gilbert earlier, in private, what is happening to him here. He has been stricken by a curse and is doomed to be devoured by a demon. But his friends don't know that.)

Gilbert: (The player half lies across the table. He slowly raises his head and opens his eyes, looking desperately at the other players.) "Kill me. Kill me now, before it comes and takes me away."

(Cassandra's player raises her hand as if she was aiming a gun.)

GM: "Two of the men turn around and see you. They draw large revolvers."

Cassandra: "I shoot at one of them."

(GM rolls some dice.)

GM: "The one you aimed at staggers back from the impact when your bullet hits his shoulder, but he is not much affected and raises his gun." (GM aims a finger at Cassandra's player.)

Gilbert: "No! Kill me. It's too late..." (His voice breaks and ends with a gurgling sound.)

GM: "One of the men gives a shout and backs off. 'Watch out!' The guns are lowered and all turn toward Gilbert, who is staring down at the red, glowing floor."

(Gilbert's player stares at the floor with his eyes wide open.)

GM: "The floor under him seems to boil and pulsate. Suddenly, a creature of steel and blood rises out of the floor. A sinewy, dripping hand shoots out and

the steel fingers rip open Gilbert's chest. The hand grips his heart and slowly pulls it out."

(Gilbert's player writhes and then stops moving. He tries to look dead.)

GM: "Blood pumps out of the still beating heart, splashing the monster. The heart beats one last time and then stops forever. The hand brings it to the creature's mouth where it is devoured.

"The monster turns around. The men stand perfectly still, mesmerized. The creature extends its hand again, this time closing the fingers over the face of one of the men. The man does not move as the monster crushes his head like an eggshell and lets the grey brain tissue ooze out between its fingers." (GM closes his hand as if he was crushing something.) "The man's body drops lifeless to the floor, and the blood is absorbed into the grey concrete.

"The creature stands till for a few seconds, as if hesitating. Then it melts away and disappears into the floor. It is gone. Gilbert's chest is a mass of blood and guts. The men step back and watch the lifeless carcass, as if waiting for something.

"Then, the body jerks as if in a cramp. The arms move, muscles tense. With a crash, the chains are ripped away from the steel bar. He lifts his head and looks up."

(Gilbert's player looks up with a fiendish grin.)

GM: "The blood-soaked feet slide down to the floor. The men kneel and press their faces to the concrete, but he isn't looking at them. He looks at you."

(The GM makes a terror throw to see if Peter and Cassandra are able to do anything except stand still and look horrified. The dice indicate that they are both petrified with fear.)

"You stand frozen in terror at the half-open gate.

Gilbert's eyes are dark red, glowing like the blood-soaked floor around him. 'You should have killed me. Now, it is too late', he says and comes toward you."

## The Game Mechanics

During play, you will often need to check if your character succeeds in what he is doing, and how well he succeeds. Whether he is using a skill, such as Sneak, or an ability, such as Strength, the same method is used to determine his success.

In the game, virtually all such things are settled by rolling a 20-sided die. The result determines if the character achieves his purpose, the difference between the roll and his skill or ability score shows how well he does it. We mention this here, before the

rest of the rules, because it is the fundamental mechanism of the game.

## The Skill Throw

Skill and ability scores are usually a number between 1 and 20. In exceptional cases they may be higher. A die result equal to or lower than the character's score means he succeeded with the action he was trying to perform. A character with a score of 20 or more only fails on a roll of 20, or if the situation is such that the chance of success is lowered by the Gamemaster.

## The Effect

When you know whether the action was successful, you need to find out how well the character achieved his purpose. This is determined by the difference between the throw and the skill or ability score. A higher effect means a better result. If the character failed his throw, there is no effect. For weapon skills it works differently. There the effect is determined by a second, separate die-roll.

Skills and effect are explained in more detail in the chapter "Skills," but here is a summary of how the effect should be interpreted:

| EFFECT | THE RESULT WAS                             |
|--------|--|
| 0      | Bad  |
| 1-5    | Acceptable                                 |
| 6-15   | Normal                                     |
| 16-20  | Well                                       |
| 21-25  | Very well                                  |
| 26-29  | Exceptionally well                         |
| 30+    | So well that impossible things may happen! |

Of course it is impossible to roll more than 20 with a 20-sided die, but there are modifications and bonuses which we will explain later.

It is also possible that someone else is trying to stop the character's action. For instance, if the character is trying to sneak past an alert guard, it is important how well the character manages to sneak, but also how well the guard succeeds in listening.

In this case, you first roll to determine the outcome of the character's attempt to sneak and calculate the effect. The Gamemaster then makes a skill throw and notes the effect for the guard's attempt to listen. If both succeed, the Gamemaster subtracts the character's effect from the guard's effect. The result indicates how much the guard will hear. If it is below "0" (zero) he hears nothing at all. A bad result means he hears something but is not sure of what. A good result means he detects the character.

The effect is used for all skills, to indicate how well the character's action went. There are also situations where the Gamemaster will demand a minimum effect for the action to succeed at all. For instance, he might determine that a minimum effect of 15 is required to scale a particularly difficult wall. A successful skill throw but a too low effect can mean that the character has got halfway up the facade, but finds no more footholds and must climb down and try to find a different way up.

## Rounding Numbers

If nothing else is said, we use standard procedures to round numbers; a fraction of 1-4 are rounded down, 6-9 up, and 5 to the nearest even integer.

## Terms & Abbreviations

Some terms used in this book are probably strange to new role-players and need to be explained. Below follow brief definitions. Common abbreviations are given in parentheses.

**Ability points**—all players have 100 points to distribute among the eight abilities. Every point raises the ability score by one, up to a maximum of 18. Above 18, every step costs three ability points.

**Ability score**—a number usually between 1 and 20, which shows how well developed an ability is. The higher, the better.

**Ability throw**—a die roll made to determine if the character succeeds with an action that depends on an ability (not a skill). The result must be lower than the character's ability score with a 20-sided die. 20 is always a failure, even for a character with a higher ability score than 20.

**Ability**—every character has eight basic abilities which denote how good he is in various fields of activity. They are Strength, Constitution, Agility, Comeliness, Ego, Perception, Charisma, and Education.

**Academic skill**—skill which requires a score of 13 or higher in the basic ability "Education".

**Action**—depending on the character's movement, he can perform a number of actions during one combat round. The more actions he has, the more he can accomplish.

**Advantage**—a trait in the character that makes his life easier. Advantages are acquired by expending skill points or points from disadvantages (q.v.). Advantages improve the character's mental balance.

**Adventure**—a plot and a series of events which the Gamemaster has devised, which the player charac-

ters live through and can affect.

**Character sheet**—a pre-printed form where you can write down a description of your character in the terms of the game.

**Combat round (CR)**—a combat round is five seconds of combat. A character can perform a limited number of actions during one combat round.

**Conjurer**—a person with skill in one or more magic lores.

**Damage bonus (DB)**—a bonus to the effect of hits which strong characters get in combat. They do more damage than others.

**Damage capacity**—a secondary ability which determines how many wounds of a certain type the character can take without losing consciousness or dying.

**Dark Secret**—an event in the character's past that has caused many of his or her advantages and disadvantages.

**Disadvantage**—a trait in the character that makes his life harder. Disadvantages give points which may be spent to acquire advantages. Disadvantages lower the character's mental balance.

**Disaster**—if the player rolls more than 1/10 of the character's chance to fail at using a skill, something bad will happen.

**Effect**—determines how well a character succeeds with an action he or she is performing. The effect is the difference between the skill throw and the skill or ability score in question. For weapon skills the effect is always a separate roll of another 20-sided die. The higher result you get, the better the action succeeds.

**Endurance**—the character's ability to endure pain and work. Will decrease if the character is subjected to long, hard work.

**Experience points**—all characters receive one experience point after every successful adventure. The points are used to increase the character's ability or skill scores.

**Five-sided die (d5)**—the result of throwing a 10-sided die (d10), dividing the result with 2 and rounding it up.

**Gamemaster**—the person who leads the game, knows the plot and plays the non-player characters.

**General skill**—a skill which all characters have without needing to use any skill points. The character's score in general skills is always 3.

**Hero points**—used to modify an effect in favor of the character or to detract from an enemy's effect. Normally used only in critical situations. All characters have 10 hero points at the start of the game, and get more when they do something heroic.

**Initiative**—a die roll (1d10) which determines who acts first in combat. A movement of more than 12 gives a bonus to the initiative throw.

**Lore rating**—a number which determines if it is possible for a character to learn a spell. The character's skill score within the magic lore must be equal to or higher than the spell's lore rating.

**Magic Lore**—a branch of magic. Every magic lore is a separate skill. A conjurer cannot learn spells with a higher lore value than his skill score in that magic lore.

**Martial art maneuver**—a special skill within a martial art. Bought like an ordinary skill, but can only be acquired if you have a Martial art skill.

**Martial art**—a special skill at hand-to-hand combat, which costs a lump of skill points and gives several separate combat skills.

**Mental balance**—The character's advantages minus his disadvantages. Mental balance is a measurement of dark and light, good and evil, within the character's mind.

**Movement**—the maximum distance a character can move during one combat round (5 seconds).

**Non-player character (NPC)**—a person occurring in the game, played by the Gamemaster.

**Parry**—to block an attack with a weapon, shield, limb or something else.

**Perfect throw**—If the character gets a result of under one tenth of his chance to succeed with a skill, this indicates an unusually good result, and +10 is added to the effect.

**Player character**—the imaginary person you play in the game.

**Player**—a person who participates in playing this game.

**Ritual**—gestures, incantations and preparations which are necessary to perform a spell casting.

**Secondary abilities**—certain ability data calculated from the physical basic abilities.

**Skill points**—all players receive 150 skill points to distribute among the character's skills.

**Skill score**—a number, usually between 1 and 20, which indicates how good the character is at a skill. He must roll equal to or lower than his skill score to succeed in using the skill.

**Skill**—something the character knows how to do. A score, usually between 1 and 20, indicates how good the character is at doing it. The higher, the better.

**Spell**—a magical skill. All spells belong to one of several magical Lores. They are used with a skill score and an effect, just like other skills.

**Ten-sided die (d10)**—if you don't have a 10-sided die, roll a 20-sided die and subtract 10 from results of 11 or more.

**Terror throw**—an ego throw which determines if the character is shocked or mentally knocked off balance by a terrible situation.

**Twenty-sided die (d20)**—a die with 20 facets, numbered from 1 to 20. Some dice are numbered from 0 to 9 twice, with the two series 1-10 and 11-20 distinguished by different color. A "0" always means 10 or 20. This type of die can also be read as a 5- or 10-sided die.

**Vehicle maneuver**—a maneuver with a vehicle, which is so difficult that it requires a minimum effect to succeed.

**Weapon maneuver**—a special maneuver used in combat.

**Weapon skill**—the skill to handle a specific type of weapons. Every type of weapon is a separate skill.

## Accessories to the Game

### Adventure Scenarios & Sourcebooks

Ready-to-use adventures for **Kult** will be available for purchase. They describe a basic plot, the people whom the characters will meet, the places where the action takes place, and the background of the events. Only the Gamemaster should read the adventure scenario before play. The events should come as a surprise to the players.

### Calculator

It's useful, but not necessary, to have a calculator available. It may save you some number crunching.

### Paper & Pencil

You need to have note paper and pencils available during play. Players make notes on their character forms, e.g., when the character is wounded. In complicated detective stories, it may also be necessary to write down a number of facts, clues, names and addresses of people the players meet and other information. It may also be a good idea to draw a map in some situations. We recommend the use of graph (or hex) paper.

## Props

In order to create a suitable atmosphere, you can dim the light, use candles, and play suggestive music in the background. Film music from action or horror movies often has the right ring. Ambitious Gamemasters can even make props especially for the game. If the characters find a blood-stained letter from a vanished friend, the GM can write the letter by hand and stain it with red ink. This is much more effective than just saying "You find a letter" and reading out the text. Only the GM's imagination limits the possibilities.

## Miniatures

Sometimes it is important to know exactly where the characters are in relation to each other and their enemies. This is particularly true in combat. The current situation can be illustrated with metal or plastic miniatures. Dice, erasers, cookie jars and other common objects can serve as houses, doors and furniture. Miniatures are available at your game shop.

## Dice

The only dice used in **Kult** are 20-sided. These can also be read as 5- or 10-sided dice. Dice are cheap and can be bought at your game shop. If you have a computer, there are special applications which can roll any type of dice for you.

If you have a 20-sided die with two series of numbers from 0-9, you must paint the numbers in different colors. One of the series is then 1-10 and the other is 11-20.

If your 20-sided die is numbered from 1-20 and you need to roll a 10-sided die, you simply read the rightmost figure only (18 means 8, and so on).

To get a number between 1 and 5, you roll a number between 1 and 10, divide the result by 2 and round it up.

To roll a number between 1 and 100, you roll two 10-sided dice and count one of them as the first digit and the other one as the second digit. Use dice of different colors, so that you know which is which. If the black die is the first digit and it shows a 3 and the red die for the second digit shows a 5, the result is 35. A result of 10 on any die counts as zero. Two zeros equals 100.

In this book, we use abbreviations to describe dice. A twenty-sided die is called "d20," a ten-sided die is called "d10," a five-sided "d5" and a hundred-sided "d100." A number before the "d" indicates how many dice should be thrown; "3d10" means three ten-sided dice. This yields a result between 3 and 30.





# The Heroes of the Game

**T**he first time I met Gilbert and Cassandra was at Max's funeral. Max had been in the Company, but none of us knew how he had died. Gilbert was a hot-shot from Active Operations, but I had never met him before. I knew that he had worked with Max in northern Africa for a few years, a long time ago. Gilbert and I talked a little outside the church. He looked careworn, considering that

he was only 39 years old. His black hair was graying at the temples and thinning at the back. He wore dark sunglasses and his hands were strong and furrowed. I had read his file, of course. I read everybody's files as they came into the office. Gilbert had a lot of experience: Algeria, Hong Kong, Beirut, Berlin, a handful of other places. Always at the center of events. Seeing the man, one could hardly believe that.

*Cassandra was an unknown. I had never seen a file on her, but I later realized that she also worked for the Company. She was tall, dark, silent and introduced herself as Ms Martinique. I surmised that she was a close friend of Max's. We sat next to each other during the funeral service. The casket was black and covered with wreaths of bright flowers. The minister never mentioned Max's work or the cir-*

**T**he player characters are the heroes of the game. Their adventures are the story that the game tells. You create your own character, and he or she then struggles through the dangers together with the other player characters. Your character should fit into the world where the game takes place. The world of **Kult** is a dark place filled with terror and violence. The player characters live in a combat zone between light and darkness. The need to fight darkness brings out the beast within them and pulls them into a series of violent events. The light which also dwells in their hearts protects them from being engulfed by evil. They can be servants of darkness, full of pain and terror, or angels that the dark forces cannot touch.

Your character will probably be somewhere in between; a hero of the big city, walking the shadowy streets and alleys, or perhaps a disillusioned drug enforcement agent, a desperate anarchist, or a sentimental revolutionary.

The rules will help you create and describe the person you want to play. Chance does not determine what your role is like. You do. The rules only exist to help you describe the role. If you find that the rules are a hindrance and not an aid, you can change them—the Gamemaster is the final arbiter of such matters. The only important thing is that you get a role that you can play.

Write down all the data about your character on the *Character Form* which is included with the game. It should contain information about the character's abilities, personality, appearance, background, skills and other facts that are helpful during play. These notes help you remember who you are playing, between games, and it also provides room for recording how the character develops.

Begin by giving some thought to what sort of person you want to play. It's easier to use the rules if you have some basic idea to work on. The archetypes provide a number of character outlines, packed with ideas for different player roles. Talk to the Gamemaster when you choose an archetype. He may assign a special background or a particular key function to your character. It's best to talk it over. If you reach an agreement, the adventures will be better and the

*cumstances of his death. I had nearly dozed off when the candles were snuffed out by a sudden puff of wind. It became dark. The church doors closed with a clang, and the minister, gasping, took a couple of steps backward. The coffin began to tremble, first lightly and then gradually more violently until the lid shot straight up in the air and a gnarled, pale form rose from within to face us. Gilbert pulled out his gun.*

Gamemaster will not have any problems with trying to squeeze impossible characters into a story where they don't fit.

**Example:** You want to play a man of action, a person who is used to handling himself in all situations. The archetype "Secret Agent" fits with your ideas. You name your character Gilbert Arnaud, agent of the French Suarte, and note the basic data about him on the character sheet:

**Name:** Gilbert Arnaud

**Player:** John

**Birthplace:** Rouen, France

**Home:** Paris and London

**Address:** Rue St. Martin / Hamilton Close

**Archetype:** Secret Agent

**Profession:** (chosen from the archetype)

**Living standard:** (determined by the archetype)

**Employer:** Suarte

**Age:** 39 (born 13 February 1954)

**Height:** 183 cm

**Weight:** 80 kg

**Hair:** dark blond

**Eyes:** gray

## Background

Think about where your character comes from and what he or she has done earlier in life. Both good things and bad should be noted in the background story. It describes how the character came to have a certain skill or knowledge. Where was the character educated, what subjects did he study, where did he work, who are his friends and enemies. Any important personal property or special events should also be part of the background.

With such things available, your past can easily be integrated in the story. You may say, "Well, in 1968 I lived in Paris and was studying at Sorbonne. I have probably met professor Caludel, though I don't remember him." The Gamemaster knows where you have lived and where you have worked.

The background of each character should be noted on the Character forms supplied with the game. If you want to make up characters quickly and get the game

going at once, you can skip the backgrounds. But it is useful to have this information because it makes the characters part of the world they live in, and it explains any personal quirks, neuroses or special skills that they have.

**Example:** You think through Gilbert's past. He is a restless soul, a disillusioned agent with many lives on his conscience. He married an Englishwoman and moved to London. A son was born to him there. But the marriage failed and he is now divorced. His family is Jewish, and many of his relatives died in the war. There is a curse on his family, and Gilbert tries not to have any unnecessary contact with them.

You begin to write down those parts of Gilbert's background that you already know about, on the character sheet. You leave some space for events between childhood and the marriage.

February 13, 1952, Rouen General Hospital.

Gilbert is born.

July 15, 1955, Rouen General Hospital. Gilbert's twin sisters Judith and Louise are born.

April 19, 1961 Rouen General Hospital. Gilbert's brother Simon is born.

August 21, 1961. Gilbert is sent to boarding school in Paris.

April 17, 1965, Rouen. Gilbert's brother Simon is killed in an accident.

1969, Paris. Gilbert enters the Military Academy.

1970, Paris. Gilbert leaves the Academy and joins the Foreign Legion.

1970-74, Chad. Gilbert promoted to lieutenant.

1974, Paris. Gilbert is recruited by French Intelligence.

August 14, 1978, London City Hall. Gilbert marries Helen Carpenter.

November 5, 1978, London Harefield Hospital. Gilbert's son James is born.

December 19, 1982, London. Helen divorces Gilbert. He moves back to Paris.

This is enough to start with. You can fill in the rest while you describe him. You note a few things about his family and personality. You can embellish it later.

**Family:** Father Gabi, retired colonel, and mother Nicolette, both living in Rouen. Sisters Judith (fur seamstress) and Louise (TV producer), both in Paris. No family of his own. Previously married to police inspector Helen Carpenter, London, England. Son: James, 13 years. Sees them seldom.

**Personality:** Cynical and suspicious. Avoids close contacts and seldom shows his feelings.

## The Group

The player characters form a group who go through the adventures together. Very divergent characters may be difficult to use together in a group. It's not necessary that the members of a group love and support each other in everything, but they should have sufficiently strong common interests to keep them together and make them work for a common goal. An event or a circumstance that brings the group together may be introduced.

If the adventure demands that the characters investigate something out of pure curiosity or because they simply feel like it, stronger bonds between them may be needed. The Gamemaster can provide a common background or something else that binds the characters together. They may be childhood friends, colleagues, business acquaintances or simply friends. If the characters are too different from each other, such explanations may become implausible and unrealistic. The best thing is to think relations through before you create the characters.

It is usually an advantage to have characters which are closely connected to each other—like relatives or close friends. Spend a few minutes inventing plausible relations, common experiences, old conflicts, broken-up love affairs. These things provide a background for the playing, something to talk about that is not directly connected to the present adventure. It makes the characters seem more like real people—not just faceless packages of skills and abilities who suddenly popped into existence from nowhere.

**Example:** To knit the group together, the gamemaster decides that all player characters have some connection to French Intelligence. This is where Gilbert has met the other player characters. Their names are noted under "Friends."

### Friends:

Peter Nikolayev, Russian exile writer of children's books, French spy.

Cassandra Martinique, Haitian new-age consultant.

Jaques Renault, jack of all trades, police spy and fence in the underworld of Paris.

Alfred Eldridge, artist and art dealer in Paris.

## The Quick Reference Table

Use the QRT (Quick Reference Table) to create a character. First, choose an archetype that fits your role. Invent an outline background. Think about past experiences that may affect your skills, secrets, friends and enemies. The background is then merged with the

story of your character which you will be writing continuously.

Next, you calculate the eight basic abilities, four physical and four mental.

The physical abilities are Strength, Agility, Constitution and Comeliness. These also determine certain secondary physical abilities. The mental abilities which make up the character's personality are Ego, Perception, Charisma and Education. There are no secondary mental abilities.

Next, the personality should be furnished with a number of advantages and disadvantages. These are phobias, neuroses, psychic skills etc. The advantages and disadvantages control your mental balance, which determines how well you cope with disasters and shocking events. Many advantages make it easier to withstand mental ordeals. Disadvantages make you sensitive.

If you have a low mental balance, this is probably because you are carrying a dark secret, something that has happened to you which may explain why you have become the way you are. Choose a dark event that fits your archetype and background.

You also need to select a profession and some skills, to see what your character's occupation is and what type of knowledge he has. Some skills are described in this book, others are easily invented. For instance, an art director may have the skill "graphic design." This is not included in our list, but you can make it up yourself.

If the Gamemaster allows it, your character can have magical skills. This is optional, and magic should not be used when it might disrupt the adventure or the atmosphere that the Gamemaster seeks to promote in his campaign. In special circumstances, one of the players can even have a non-human character, such as a "bête noir" or a Child of the Night with special abilities, closely tied to the realm of dark horrors. Rules for such characters can be found at the end of *The Lie*.

Finally, decide how much money and property your character owns.

Some things are not controlled by the rules. The character's name, age, address, hair color, eye color, weight, height and nationality may all be chosen freely (within what is possible for human beings). Note all these things on the character sheet. Space is also provided for a sketch of the character. If you are good at drawing, this is the best way to describe what he or she looks like.

## Quick Reference Table

A. Personalia. Name, address, height, weight, hair color, eye color, age, birthdate and any particular distinctive features are noted.

B. Archetype. Choose an archetype that corresponds to the role you want to play. Or create a new archetype. Select an archetype that is in keeping with the disadvantages, advantages, secrets, profession and skills you want.

C. Background. Briefly consider the previous history of the person you will play. This will be elaborated further later.

D. Abilities. 1. You have 100 ability points to distribute among the eight abilities. 2. Calculate the secondary physical abilities (maximum load, movement, number of actions, initiative bonus, damage bonus, damage capacity and endurance), based on the four physical abilities.

E. Dark Secrets. Unpleasant facts from the character's past affect his/her personality. All characters with a negative mental ability score have a dark secret, others may choose to have one or not.

F. Advantages and Disadvantages. 1. Choose advantages and disadvantages, and calculate their point value. 2. Note in the background data how the character came to have these advantages and disadvantages.

G. Mental Balance. Subtract the total points for disadvantages from the total points for advantages to get the mental balance score.

H. Skills. 1. Note down the start scores for the abilities. 2. Distribute 150 skill points on your chosen skills. Add or subtract points depending on advantages and disadvantages. 3. Calculate any magic skills. 4. Note in the background data where and how the character got these skills.

I. Standard of living. The archetype determines the character's living standard.

J. Money and equipment. Calculate property and savings, depending on the living standard. Note in the background data when the character acquired any important property.

K. Hero Points and Experience. 1. All characters begin the game with 10 hero points.

## Simplified Character Generation

If you want to get started quickly, you can use the rules below to simplify things. Creating characters this way takes less effort than the standard method, the disadvantage being that you don't get to know as much about your character. These rules are for creating non-player characters (NPC), or if you think that an increased element of chance is a good thing. There is



nothing to stop you from providing a simplified character with a full background story.

In the rules about character descriptions, we will also give information about the options for simplified character generation.

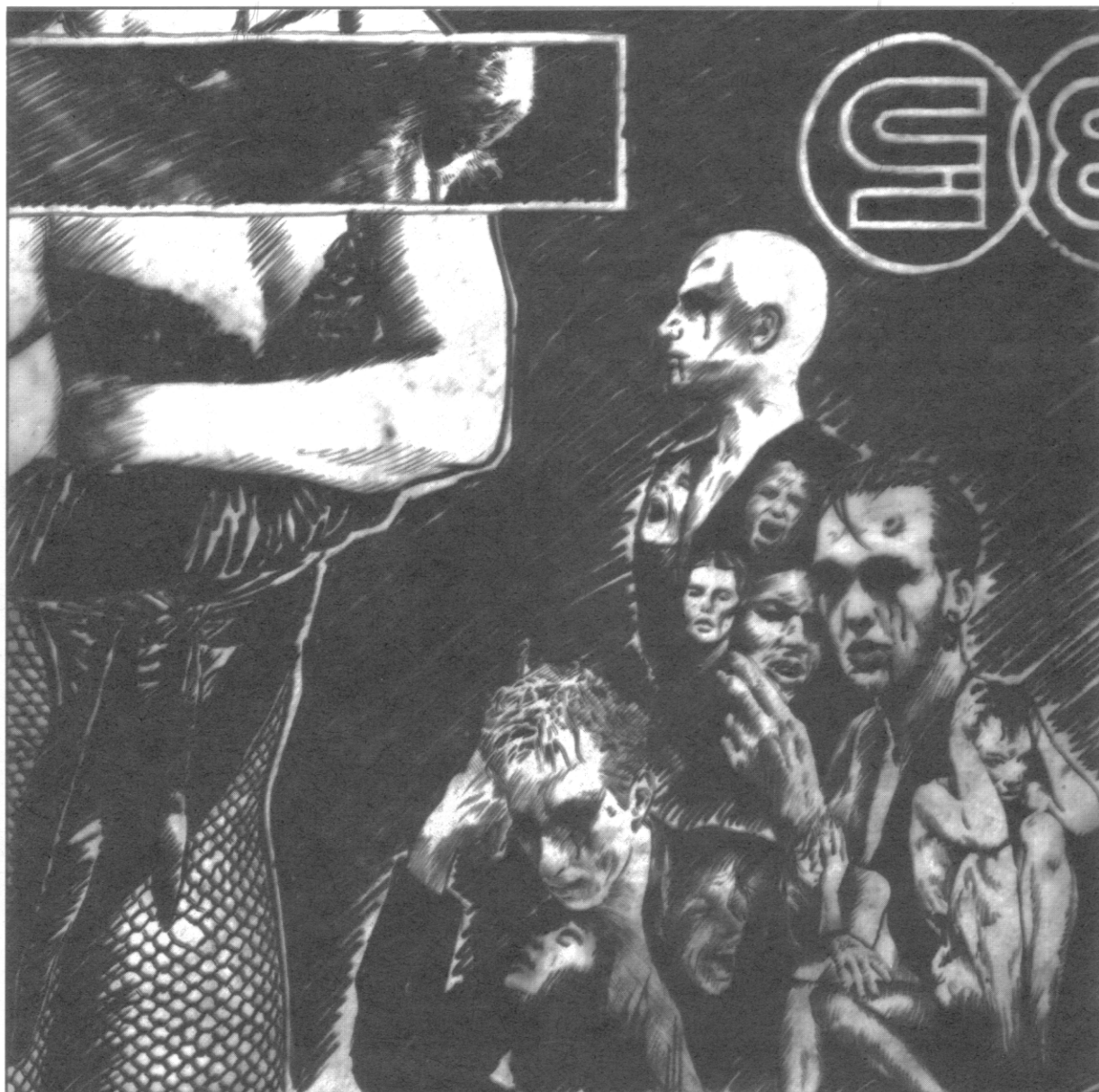
- A. The archetype.** Simplified characters are built entirely according to the archetypes. Choose an archetype. The character will follow it closely.
- B. Personal data.** Decide on a name, address, height, weight, color of hair and eyes, age, birthdate and any other special traits. Write them down.
- C. Abilities.** Generate the abilities randomly by rolling 2d10 for each ability. This gives a score between 2 and 20. The average will be slightly lower than for an ordinary character, but if you are lucky you could get much higher scores than would otherwise be possible. Distribute the generated numbers freely among the abilities (or, if you prefer, place them in the order they are rolled).
- D. Secondary abilities.** Load capacity, movement, number of actions, initiative bonus, damage capacity, damage bonus and endurance are calculated in the normal way, from Agility, Strength and Constitution.
- E. Dark secret.** If you want, choose a dark secret to explain your disadvantages. Pick one of those listed in the archetype.
- F. Advantages and disadvantages.** Roll 1d5. This is your number of disadvantages. Choose from those listed on the archetype. Roll 1d5 to get the number of advantages, and choose them in the same way. The points for advantages and disadvantages are only used to calculate your mental balance. You pay nothing for the advantages and get no points for the disadvantages.
- G. Mental balance.** Calculate your mental balance. The points from disadvantages are subtracted from the points for advantages, yielding the mental balance.
- H. Choose profession and note your living standard.** Your living standard is the middle one of the

three possibilities for your archetype.

- I. Skills.** You have two skills with a score of 18, two with a score of 15, and eight skills with a score of 10. Choose skills according to the archetype, and write them down with the scores. Your abilities don't limit your skill scores, as they normally would. If the archetype doesn't contain enough skills, choose some more from the skill list. You are also free to exchange some skills from the archetype if they don't fit your ideas about the person. A martial art on student level counts like a skill with a score of 18. At instructor level, it counts like two skills, scores 18 and 15. At master level, it counts as three skills, scores 18, 15 and 15.



- J. Money and equipment.** Calculate property and savings from your living standard. Determine what equipment you have.
- K. Hero points and experience.** Your character begins the game with 10 hero points.



# The Archetypes

**I** was wearing my blue trenchcoat. The wind was hard out there on the pier; and I had to hold my hat to keep it from being blown away. Cassandra tried to look as if she wasn't freezing in her net stockings. Raymond was standing at the end of the pier, waiting for us. Behind him were his three bodyguards, big guys in neat suits and mirrored sunglasses. Raymond himself appeared to be slight-

ly nervous, chewing a cigar and tapping his fingers on the railing.

'Have you got the stuff?' he asked when we were still some way from him. I tried to look cool.

'We've got 'em. Not with us, of course, but we have them.'

Raymond paled visibly. 'Idiots! I told you to bring them here. Where are they?'

*'We can arrange an exchange, if you have the cash,' said Cassandra. Raymond didn't answer. He looked past us towards the end of the pier.*

*'It's too late now,' he said hoarsely. 'You'll have to sort this out by yourselves.' His gorillas pulled out their guns and pointed them at us while Raymond began to climb down a steel ladder on the side of the pier. We could glimpse a speedboat waiting for him down in the water. The bodyguards followed him. Cassandra pulled*

*at my sleeve and pointed a trembling finger behind us. Three nepharites were standing there at the shore end of the pier. Heavy overcoats covered their mutilated bodies. Only the small puddle of blood and pus that was slowly gathering around their feet betrayed their real nature. Raymond's speedboat started with a roar and disappeared out into the darkness. The nepharites were coming toward us.*

**P**laying a role is challenging. Common, everyday people are the hardest roles of all. Caricatures and stereotypes are much easier. It's easier to play an alcoholic private eye than to portray a common industrial worker. That doesn't mean that the private eye will necessarily become just a bundle of platitudes. He has a personality of his own, but he is a well-known "standard figure" in fiction, and you only need to step into this. We call such roles archetypes. The other players will probably know pretty well how to respond to the archetype. An anarchist has his reaction ready and knows precisely what attitude to take when he encounters the police. Perhaps the anarchist will modify his reaction later, if something happens to make him realize that there is a person behind the truncheon. Nevertheless, the archetypes facilitate the role playing in the beginning of the game. It doesn't take as much time to mold the characters into real personalities, as it would if you started from scratch.

The game will feel more realistic, like a film or a book, if the characters are all drawn from the same world. Private investigators, policemen and femmes fatales all belong in the same old-fashioned, run-down city world. Gang members, city samurai and businessmen belong in a more modern city environment. Decker in *Blade Runner* is an archetype from the 1930's acting in a futuristic cyberpunk world. Mixing styles is possible, but too glaring anachronisms and too jarringly out-of-place archetypes may ruin the game's atmosphere.

Archetypes work as guidelines for the character's advantages and disadvantages, professions and skills. Suggestions for all of these things are given in each archetype description. Don't choose all of them. Take a few which match the character's background. There are no rules about how to distribute the ability points, but think of the archetype when you do. A femme fatale with a score of 5 in comeliness and charisma is a contradiction in terms.

There is nothing to stop you from choosing other advantages and disadvantages than those suggested. The most important thing is that the character stays within the frames of the archetype in his or her lifestyle and personality.

You may create your own archetypes. We provide several which fit well into a dark big-city world. Many others are possible, particularly if you elect to play in a different environment. It's easy to find suitable role models in books and films.

Two special archetypes, New Ager and Burnt-out Occultist, are described in the chapter on magic. These archetypes have knowledge of magic. The Gamemaster decides if they are allowed in the campaign.

You can also describe your character without using an archetype. If you already have a good idea about your character, it may work just as well as the ideas we have provided. In that case, skip this chapter and go on to the abilities.

## **Simplified Character Generation**

The archetype determines a simplified character. Just apply the whole thing, lock, stock and barrel. The number of advantages and disadvantages are determined by rolling 1d5 for each, and you then choose from those listed in the archetype. You can choose a dark secret, but it's not necessary. Note profession as usual, and your living standard is the middle one of those you can choose between. Skill scores are not determined with points. Instead, you choose two skills with a score of 18, two with a score of 15 and eight with a score of 10. Choose first from those listed in the archetype. Martial arts cost one 18-score skill for students, one 18 and one 15-score skill for instructors, and for masters one 18 and two 15-score skills.

## Archetypes

The archetypes can be found on the color pages. Each archetype contains the following information.

Firstly, we provide a general description of the lifestyle and typical activities of the person. There is no need to follow this to the letter, but it's best to stay within the framework of the archetype.

Under "personality" we suggest a suitable approach for the archetype. However, don't hesitate to make personal variations.

Advantages and disadvantages may be tied to a personal dark secret, or they can be typical for the archetype. You can also choose some that fit with the environment of the adventures.

We provide suggestions for dark secrets. Any such secret should be worked into the character's background. Dark secrets often arise from events that happened early in life, so they don't need to be tied to the archetype.

The archetype lists a number of professions which are in tune with the type of person. It is important that your work is congruent with your general lifestyle.

Living standard indicates how much money the character has, relative to others. You may choose between three different levels. The lowest is free, the middle one costs you 10 skill points, and the highest costs you 20 skill points. If the Gamemaster thinks it is

reasonable, he may give a character whichever living standard he likes, also one that is not noted down under the archetype. Living standards are described in a separate section.

Some skills are directly tied to a profession, others to an archetype. It is possible to choose other skills, but remember to make them fit in with the character's background.

**Example:** Gilbert is a secret agent. You choose advantages, disadvantages, dark secrets and skills which fit your ideas about him. Write down those you think you might choose. Later, you will decide exactly how many advantages, disadvantages and skills your points allow. Go back to the archetype again and again while you are describing the character. You don't have to decide everything in detail at this point. You choose a living standard of 6 and note this with his profession, intelligence officer.

**Possible disadvantages:** Death wish, Oath of revenge, Phobia, Mental constriction, Nightmares, Curse, Drug addict

**Possible advantages:** Code of honor, Influential friends, Body awareness, Sixth sense, Endure torture.

**Dark secret:** Family secret (Curse)

# Gang Member

*"We hang out under the bridge or in the City Garage where we work cars. Last night we made five hundred bucks on a car stereo that we sold to Micha. Later, there was some celebration down at the waterfront but someone started a fight and Dicco got knifed."*

You were born in the city slum or in a run-down suburb. Since there were eight kids in a two-room flat, you soon moved out on the streets. Your father is someone you only heard about, but never met. Your mom works twelve hours per day to feed her kids. She dreams that some day you will get through school. Your elder sister may have a chance to do that. The rest of you have run yourselves out of the system, with about a hundred misdemeanors in the police files before you were 14 years old.

**Personality:** You are proud of being who you are. The most important thing in your life is belonging to the gang. Other people don't give a fuck about you—so why should you care about them?

**Disadvantages:** Bad reputation, Death wish, Mortal enemy, Oath of revenge, Fanaticism, Mental constriction, Intolerance, Wanted, Touchy, Habitual liar, Mania, Drug addiction, Egotist

**Advantages:** Artistic talent, Code of honor, Body awareness, Cultural flexibility, Sixth sense

**Dark secret:** Family secret, Victim of crime, Guilty of crime, Victim of medical experiments

**Profession:** unemployed, criminal, general worker

**Living standard:** 2-4

**Skills:** Dancing, Dagger, Poisons and drugs, Graffiti, Hide, Immigrant language, Burglary, Climb, Impact weapons, Drive car, Handgun, Sneak, Martial arts: any, Rhetoric, Man of the world, Estimate value





# Avenger

*"It's etched into my eyes. The blood. Martin's screams. The look in his eyes when he died. I don't know what they did with me after that—it's a blank spot in my memory. But when I woke up in the hospital, I swore to track them down even if it takes the rest of my life."*

Life has not been kind to you. Disaster has struck yourself or those dear to you. Perhaps your family was murdered, or you were beaten up severely, your property was stolen, you were evicted and dumped in the street. In short, you have a serious grudge against someone. The object of your hate may be an individual, a gang of criminals, the mob, the IRS or perhaps a corporation. They wrecked your life, and the only thing that keeps you going is your wish to wreck theirs.

**Personality:** You are obsessed with revenge. It fills your whole existence. You are always planning, iterating the memories of your plight, blaming yourself, asking why and how it could happen.

**Disadvantages:** Bad luck, Bad reputation, Death wish, Maimed, Depression, Drug addiction, Fanaticism, Habitual liar, Mania, Mortal enemy, Mental compulsion, Paranoia, Schizophrenia, Sexual neurosis, Wanted, Oath of revenge

**Advantages:** Code of honor, Sixth sense, Endure hunger/thirst/cold/heat/pain/torture

**Dark secret:** Family secret, Guilty of crime, Victim of crime, Victim of medical experiments

**Profession:** choose according to profession

**Living standard:** 3-5

**Skills:** Automatic weapon, Burglary, Climb, Dagger, Demolition, Disguise, Drive Car/motorcycle, Dodge, Falling technique, Information retrieval, Handgun, Hide, Impact weapon, Interrogation, Martial arts (any), Search, Shadow, Sneak



# Dealer

*"You need heavier stuff, like a machine-gun. It's not impossible. I happen to know a guy who has those things in stock. Good prices, untraceable. What kind of ammo were you looking at? It will cost you... 20 grand. Meet me at Leon's tomorrow at eight. Bring the money."*

You've got the contacts. It doesn't matter what people want—you can get them a brand new Lamborghini from Italy in one month, all paperwork done. A room or an apartment in the city? No problem, you always have at least ten different available. You are admitted to all the clubs, you get invited to all the parties that count, and you have all those unlisted phone numbers that go straight to the right people. You have contacts among criminals as well as among the top politicians and businessmen.

**Personality:** Charming, a bit shallow and very talkative. You seldom worry about yourself, you're more interested in how others react to you.

**Disadvantages:** Bad reputation, Death wish, Mortal enemy, Oath of revenge, Greed, Touchy, Habitual liar, Drug addiction, Rationalist, Egotist, Reckless gambler

**Advantages:** Empathy, Influential friends, cultural flexibility, Intuition, Sixth sense, Luck

**Dark secret:** Family secret, Forbidden knowledge, Victim of crime, Guilty of crime

**Profession:** jack of all trades, consultant, small businessman

**Living standard:** 5-7

**Skills:** Computers, Diplomacy, Dagger, French, Forgery, Information retrieval, Italian, Net of contacts: at least three different, Drive car, Search, Handgun, Sneak, Gambling, Martial arts: karate, German, Rhetoric, Man of the world, Estimate value



# La Femme Fatale

*"Now I had Mark exactly where I wanted him. The next step was to make it look like he was responsible for the deals. It took only a little persuasion to get him to fetch the package for me. A few hours later I was on my way to Spain with all the money. Poor Mark. The police are after him. That's what happens when you don't look out."*

You are beautiful, seductive and lethal. You want money and power, and go after it with all the means at your disposal. Your childhood was hell, either in the worst slum or as an oppressed little mouse of a girl in a conservative family. Now you break all the rules to get what you want. Other people have always treated you badly and tried to control every aspect of your life. Now you have found ways to make them regret it. In a world where men make the rules, you have become expert at using your female charm to control them.

A possible variation (with the increasing number of women in powerful positions) is of course a male version of the Femme Fatale.

**Personality:** Arrogant and seductive. Ruthless when anyone crosses you. You don't trust anyone and are careful not to get emotionally involved with people.

**Disadvantages:** Depression, Bad reputation, Death wish, Mortal enemy, Oath of revenge, Mental constriction, Greed, Touchy, Mania, Drug addiction, Sexual neurosis, Habitual liar, Egotist, Reckless gambler

**Advantages:** Artistic talent, Animal friendship, Empathy, Influential friends, Intuition, Body awareness, Gift for languages

**Dark secret:** Family secret, Forbidden knowledge, Victim of crime, Guilty of crime, Insanity

**Profession:** artist, criminal, journalist, private investigator, rentier

**Living standard:** 6-8

**Skills:** Dancing, Diplomacy, Dagger, Etiquette, French, Interrogation, Disguise, Poisons and drugs, Information retrieval, Net of contacts: jet set, Drive car, Handgun, Acting, Gambling, Martial arts: ju-jutsu/karate, Rhetoric, Man of the world, Estimate value





# Private Investigator

*"I would never have guessed how events were going to develop that morning, when a pretty blonde stepped into my office and asked, 'Are you Marc Boland? I have a small problem that I'd want you to help me with'. If I had known where it would lead, I would have chucked her out at once."*

You are one of those few private investigators who always seem to stumble into really difficult and complicated cases. Sure, you do your share of shadowing unfaithful husbands to cheap motels, but you also get dragged into tragic family quarrels, grotesque murders and big drug deals. Not all private investigators work for private citizens—you may be hired by the police or by a big corporation. Anyway, you live in your office and only deal with colleagues, hoods, prostitutes and bartenders.

**Personality:** Constantly seeing all the worst sides of humanity has made you bitter and disillusioned. Goodness doesn't exist, only self-interest, cruelty, greed and brutality. Everything is pointless. Jack Daniels is your best friend.

**Disadvantages:** Depression, Bad reputation, Death wish, Mortal enemy, Oath of revenge, Curse, Mental constriction, Paranoia, Greed, Habitual liar, Drug addiction, Rationalist, Egotist, Reckless gambler.

**Advantages:** Chivalry, Empathy, Code of honor, Influential friends, Cultural flexibility, Sixth sense, Luck, Endure hunger/thirst/cold/heat/pain/torture

**Dark secret:** Family secret, Forbidden knowledge, Victim of crime, Guilty of crime

**Profession:** private investigator, security consultant

**Living standard:** 5-7

**Skills:** Automatic weapons, Forensics, Dagger, Electronics, Photography, Interrogation, Disguise, Hide, Information retrieval, Drive car, Handgun, Shadow, Sneak, Night combat, Martial arts: commando training/karate/ju-jutsu, Security systems, Rhetoric, Man of the world



# Veteran

*"It usually happens when I get angry. Everything turns black, and then it's there—the roar of the bombers, the explosions, the pain, the dead faces. That's when I lose control and start beating everything and everyone around me."*

You are an ex-soldier and somewhat uncomfortable with civilian life. It's difficult to live without clear rules and commanders who tell you what to do. It breeds disorder. You probably fought in some small, dirty war in Africa, Southeast Asia or Latin America. Perhaps you were in the French Foreign Legion, the US Army, the Soviet Red Army, or a mercenary outfit.

**Personality:** violent, sentimental, you have an intense love-hate relationship with the military world. More or less mentally damaged by war experiences.

**Disadvantages:** Depression, Death wish, Phobia (afraid of sudden noises or the dark), Mental constriction, Paranoia, Wanted (for desertion or crime), Touchy, Habitual liar, Drug addiction, Mental compulsion

**Advantages:** Body awareness, Pacifism, Sixth sense, Endure hunger/thirst/cold/heat/pain/torture

**Dark secret:** Family secret, Victim of crime, Guilty of crime

**Profession:** unemployed, general worker

**Living standard:** 3-5

**Skills:** Automatic weapons, Dagger, Dodge, Parachuting, Interrogation, First Aid, Hide, Throwing weapons, Climb, Drive car, Motor mechanics, Piloting, Handgun, Radio communications, Swimming, Sneak, Demolition, Martial arts: commando training, Heavy weapons, Survival



# Secret Agent

*"This problem has to be dealt with, said Chernow. Meaning, 'kill him'. Nikolai had become a security risk and was to be eliminated—and I was chosen to do it. There were no practical problems. Chernow arranged an identity for me, one that would allow me to just walk past all the security, right into the room where they were hiding him. But I was terribly uncertain. After all those years we had worked together in the criminal department, I didn't know if I could go through with it. I had Nightmares before the job. I kept seeing Nikolai's face with bullet-holes in it."*

You work for a civilian or military intelligence organization. Your job is to infiltrate and gather information. You live a dangerous life with double identities, you perform assassinations and covert operations so dirty that no government would recognize them. You know that your knowledge may one day become a liability. Your own organization may suddenly turn against you and decide to remove you. Permanently.

**Personality:** distrustful cynic. You can't trust anybody, least of all your family and close friends.

**Disadvantages:** Depression, Death wish, Mortal enemy, Oath of revenge, Mental constriction (crimes, terrible deeds), Paranoia, Habitual liar, Nightmares, Drug addiction, Rationalist, Reckless gambler

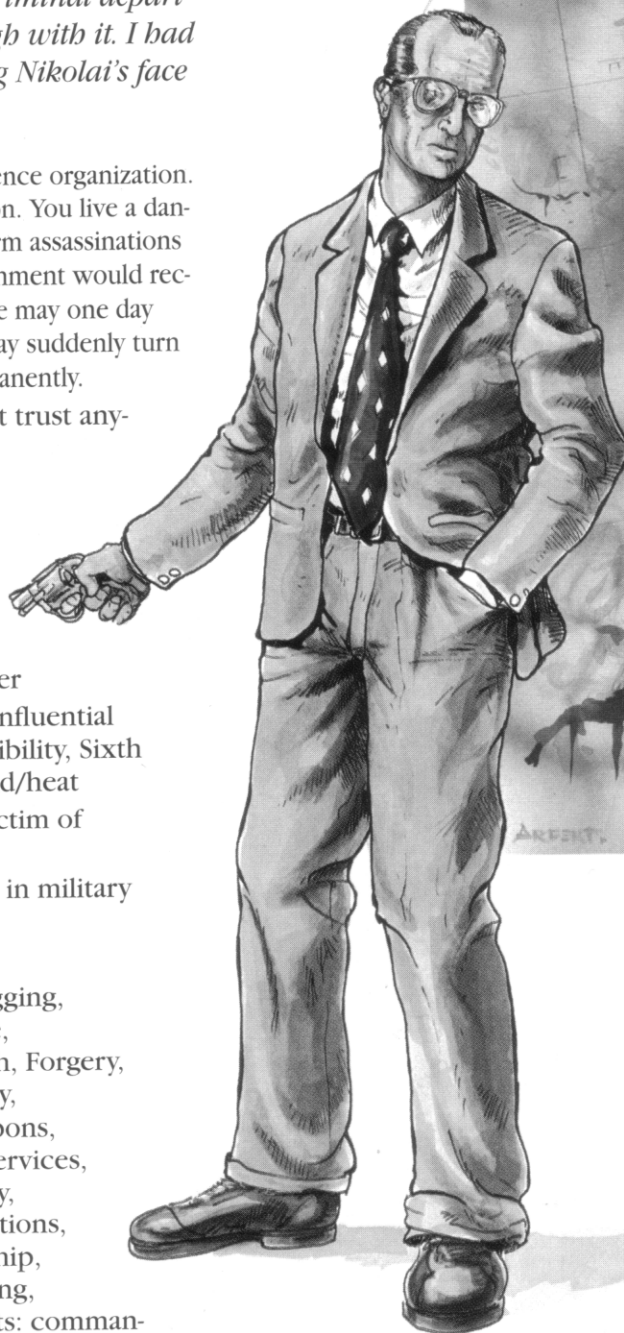
**Advantages:** Chivalry, Code of honor, Influential friends, Body awareness, Cultural flexibility, Sixth sense, Luck, Endure hunger/thirst/cold/heat

**Dark secret:** Forbidden knowledge, Victim of crime, Guilty of crime

**Profession:** intelligence officer, officer in military special forces

**Living standard:** 6-8

**Skills:** Arabic, Automatic weapons, Bugging, Forensics, Computers, Dagger, Dodge, Parachuting, Falling technique, French, Forgery, Interrogation, Disguise, Hide, Burglary, Information retrieval, Throwing weapons, Climb, Net of contacts: intelligence services, Cryptography, Drive car, Search, parry, Piloting, Handgun, Radio communications, Riding, Russian, Swimming, Seamanship, Shadow, Sneak, Gambling, Scuba diving, Demolition, Night combat, Martial arts: commando training, German, Man of the world



# Company Careerist

*"Jannine tried to con Systems Development. She thought they wouldn't check their current files. That was a bad move. She managed to get about fifty thousand before they were on to her. It was madness, to throw away a whole career for just fifty grand. Now she's on the black list all over the market. Last thing I heard, she had gone into the media industry instead."*

After high school or university, you started out as a trainee. At that time, your whole life was focused on climbing, getting into better departments, getting chosen for duty abroad, becoming an executive. You invested your life in the company. That was where you met your boyfriend. That was where you got your friends. Every useful thing you know comes from the company's internal training program. Your loyalty is unquestionable.

A possible variation is the company careerist who left the company or was fired after some internal power struggle. You are disillusioned and have lost the firm ground you used to stand on.

**Personality:** careerist. Your self-confidence depends utterly on the esteem you get from other people, and that esteem depends absolutely on your position, salary and function in the company. A laid-off company careerist loses all his self-confidence and is driven by a blind hatred for his former employer.

**Disadvantages:** Depression, Mortal enemy, Phobia, Mental constriction, Greed, Intolerance, Habitual liar, Drug addiction, Rationalist, Egotist, Reckless gambler, Mental compulsion.

**Advantages:** Good reputation, Influential friends, Intuition, Gift for languages, Luck

**Dark secret:** Responsible for medical experiments, Forbidden knowledge, Victim of crime, Guilty of crime

**Profession:** businessman, criminal, economist, engineer, lawyer, consultant, other well-paid professional

**Living standard:** 6-8

**Skills:** Accounting, Computers, Diplomacy, Economics, Etiquette, French, Forgery, Information retrieval, Law, Net of contacts: business world/company, Handgun, German, Rhetoric, Estimate value, Man of the world



# Student

*"They say an undergraduate degree should take four years, but then they're not counting the time you need for moonlighting and partying. I was knocked out all of last week. Then I took a job at Mazinsky's to get some dough so I could buy the books for the next class. I really like this life and I'm gonna be a student for as long as I can."*

You are a high school, college or university student. You're always short of money, between rent, food and beer. So moonlighting takes a lot of time from your studying. But you enjoy this life and you're in no hurry to finish your exam. The adult life as a professional, working 9 to 5, seems incredibly dull.

**Disadvantages:** Depression, Mental constriction, Paranoia, Habitual liar, Mania, Drug addiction, rationalism

**Advantages:** Cultural flexibility, Mathematic talent, Gift for languages

**Dark secret:** Responsible for medical experiments, Family secret, Forbidden knowledge, Victim of medical experiment

**Profession:** student

**Living standard:** 2-4

**Skills:** Computers, French, Seduction, Sport, Information retrieval, Net of contacts: students and scientists, Written reports, Rhetoric, Man of the world, some academic skills.





# Mad Scientist

*"You shouldn't discard a result just because it looks impossible. It has cost me a fortune to build this lab since they threw me out of the Institute, but now it's yielding some results. There actually is a connection between the brain waves and the way these particles move. I will soon have enough facts to present the results publicly."*

You are at the forefront of science, one of the scientists of the future. Your colleagues are bogged down by ancient paradigms and aren't getting anywhere. But you boldly explore new roads of scientific research. Unfortunately, most of your results are discarded by the scientific establishment as unsubstantiated drivel. But you strive earnestly to prove that your theories are right.

**Personality:** Fanatically interested in your own area of research. Everything else comes second.

**Disadvantages:** Bad reputation, Death wish, Mortal enemy, Fanaticism, Mental constriction, Paranoia, Intolerance, Wanted, Touchy, Mania, Drug addiction, Rationalist, Egotist

**Advantages:** Enhanced awareness, Influential friends, Intuition, Mathematical talent, Luck

**Dark secret:** Responsible for medical experiments, Forbidden knowledge, Victim of medical experiments, Insanity, Supernatural experience

**Profession:** scientist (professor, medical doctor, engineer, psychologist, etc)

**Living standard:** 5-7

**Skills:** Computers, Electronics, Poisons and drugs, Humanistics: psychology, Information retrieval, Chemistry, Net of contacts: scientists, Medicine: any speciality, Natural science: any speciality



# City Samurai

*"First I was a bodyguard to Marick North, before his group was busted by the police. Later, I also acted as a courier for him, but that's not really my thing. It's for amateurs. Lately I've done a lot of guard work and last winter there were lots of gang wars. We wiped out the Bluestones and Old Man took over their territory. Those were good days."*

You are a samurai of the street, a modern warrior who works for criminal syndicates or shady companies. Skilled in martial arts and armed to the teeth, you are useful as bodyguard, hit man or general contractor. You like to dress boldly and you're keen about preserving your image.

**Personality:** Cool. You are lethal and you enjoy it. The world is a hard and cold place where only those who are harder than their environment survive. That's just the way things are.

**Disadvantages:** Bad reputation, Death wish, Mortal enemy, Oath of revenge, Greed, Intolerance, Wanted, Touchy, Habitual liar, Drug addict, Egotist.

**Advantages:** Code of honor, Influential friends, Body awareness, Sixth sense, Endure hunger/thirst/heat/cold/pain/torture

**Dark secret:** Forbidden knowledge, Victim of crime, Guilty of crime

**Profession:** criminal, bodyguard, security consultant

**Living standard:** 5-7

**Skills:** Acrobatics, Automatic weapons, Dagger, Dodge, Falling technique, Interrogation, First Aid, rifle, Hide, Burglary, Throwing weapons, Climb, Net of contacts: criminals, Impact weapons, Drive car, Search, Whips and chains, Handgun, Swimming, Shadow, Two-handed combat, Sneak, Night combat, Martial arts: any, Sword, Man of the world



# Muckraker



*"We had a contact inside the Ministry who said he could arrange for us to meet the source in their garage. It seemed like we might be on to a big scoop. But when we got there and all those black cars came towards us, we knew we had been set up."*

You are an investigative reporter of the old-fashioned sort. By using infiltration, disguises, illegal bugging devices and secret sources, you dig up truths that no paper dares print. You are especially interested in connections between politicians and big business, dirty deals in foreign politics, illegal export of arms, and things like that.

**Personality:** Somewhat arrogant. You consider yourself a champion of truth, and you make no secret of that you believe yourself to be morally superior to most other journalists.

**Disadvantages:** Depression, Bad reputation, Mortal enemy, Oath of revenge, Fanaticism, Wanted, Touchy, Mania, Drug addiction, Rationalist, Egotist.

**Advantages:** Code of honor, Influential friends, Intuition, Cultural flexibility, Sixth sense, Luck, Honesty

**Dark secret:** Forbidden knowledge, Victim of crime, Guilty of crime

**Profession:** journalist

**Living standard:** 5-7

**Skills:** Forensics, Computers, Photography, Forgery, Disguise, Burglary, Information retrieval, Handgun, Written report, Shadow, Sneak, Rhetoric, Man of the world



# Plainclothes Cop

*"It really sucks that we can't arrest them. We caught three for assault yesterday and had to let them go almost immediately. They break the law, you arrest them, and half an hour later they're back on the street. What is the legal system doing to stop the hoods? Nothing. It's all so pointless."*

You are a plainclothes policeman in the narcotics or violence department. You and your partner drive around in a car, hit junkie hideouts, battle street gangs in the slum and move in on mob activities. You know the dregs of the city, every illegal club, brothel and casino, every dope peddler. You spend hours collecting valuable evidence which is then destroyed by incompetent investigators and district attorneys, or dropped because of legal technicalities. Most of the time, the guilty go free. You feel very bad about this, but all you can do is to go on and do your job.

**Personality:** You have rigid opinions about crime and punishment. Criminals are vermin who should be exterminated. You are sentimental about traditional family values and you care about the "ordinary" and innocent people who are victimized by criminals.

**Disadvantages:** Death wish, Mortal enemy, Oath of revenge, Fanaticism, Mental constriction, Intolerance, Touchy, Nightmares, Drug addiction, Rationalist, Mental compulsion

**Advantages:** Chivalry, Code of honor, Altruist, Sixth sense, Endure  
hunger/thirst/cold/heat/pain/torture

**Dark secret:** Family secret, Victim of crime, Guilty of crime, Insanity

**Profession:** police detective

**Living standard:** 4-6

**Skills:** Automatic weapons, Forensics, Interrogation, Disguise, Rifle, Sport, Burglary, Information retrieval, Drive car, Handgun, Social sciences, Martial arts: any, Shadow, Sneak



# Artist



*"Okay, I understand that Alberoni needs to sell everything he has in the gallery. I just feel that he should have some respect for artistic integrity. He is telling me to become a prostitute! I'd rather paint for myself and live on Welfare."*

You are a painter, sculptor, writer, poet or free artist of some other kind. You probably live in a half-modern one room apartment down town. You spend part of your time in the chilly studio which you share with three other artists, and the rest in a bar where you penetrate life's great questions with colleagues.

**Disadvantages:** Depression, Fanaticism, Curse, Mental constriction, Touchy, Mania, Manic-depressive, Nightmares, Drug addiction, Schizophrenia, Mental compulsion.

**Advantages:** Artistic talent, Empathy, Enhanced awareness, Intuition, Endure hunger/thirst/cold/heat

**Dark secret:** any secret may have caused the character to become an artist. Perhaps his/her art is a subconscious attempt to exorcise the secret.

**Profession:** Artist, writer, musician

**Living standard:** 3-5

**Skills:** Acting, Written report, Craft, Dancing, Net of contacts: artists/cultural establishment, Painting/drawing/sculpting, Photography, Play instrument, Rhetoric, Singing, Man of the world

# Rock Musician

*"Farrow, the manager, complained about us having busted up the hotel room. But they're just trying to make a sensation. If we had been businessmen at a conference, they wouldn't have said a word. Then some girl fainted during the concert and there was a lot of bullshit in the papers. Lots of that these days."*

Music is your life. Confer with the Gamemaster to decide how successful your career has been. Perhaps you made an album or two and you mostly play at the clubs in your home town. Perhaps your records are at the top of the charts and you tour the world. A musician's life is hectic and wears you down. It's probable that you drugged yourself to oblivion a couple of times, had dozens of failed love affairs, and attempted suicide at least once.

**Personality:** You have difficulty keeping yourself and your image apart. You are reluctant to let others close because you always suspect that they're out to get famous and rich at your expense.

**Disadvantages:** Depression, Bad reputation, Death wish, Curse, Touchy, Mania, Nightmares, Drug addiction, Sexual neurosis, Mental compulsion

**Advantages:** Artistic talent, Empathy, Enhanced awareness, Influential friends, Luck

**Dark secret:** Curse, Forbidden knowledge, Victim of crime, Pact with dark powers, Insanity, Guilty of crime

**Profession:** musician

**Living standard:** 6-8

**Skills:** Acrobatics, Dancing, Poetry, Seduction, Poisons and drugs, Writing music, Marketing, Singing, Acting, Gambling, Play instrument, Man of the world



# Outsider

*"The bike and the road, the wind in my hair, the water that glitters on the asphalt. That's freedom. Hell starts when you get to a new place, with cops and social workers and people who whisper and talk behind your back."*

Early in your teens, you rejected society. You dropped out of school. The only jobs you could get were temporary and with lousy pay. The police harassed you for no reason—at least no very good reason. You drifted from town to town. It seemed that you couldn't stay in one place more than a week or two without screwing up so that you had to leave. You make a living from petty thefts and temporary jobs. The friends you may once have had are long gone. Perhaps you found some companionship among other outsiders, with anarchists who occupy condemned buildings. Or perhaps you prefer to sleep alone in a cardboard box under the railway bridge.

**Personality:** You don't need the rest of humanity. Let them keep their small, petty, intolerant society. You can get along without them. It's better among the dropouts and the homeless. At least they don't lie about the futility of life and they never try to make you do things you don't want to.

**Disadvantages:** Depression, Bad reputation, Death wish, Mortal enemy, Oath of revenge, Curse, Persecuted, Mental constriction, Paranoia, Wanted, Touchy, Drug addiction, Bad luck, Schizophrenia, Sexual neurosis, Egotist, Reckless gambler

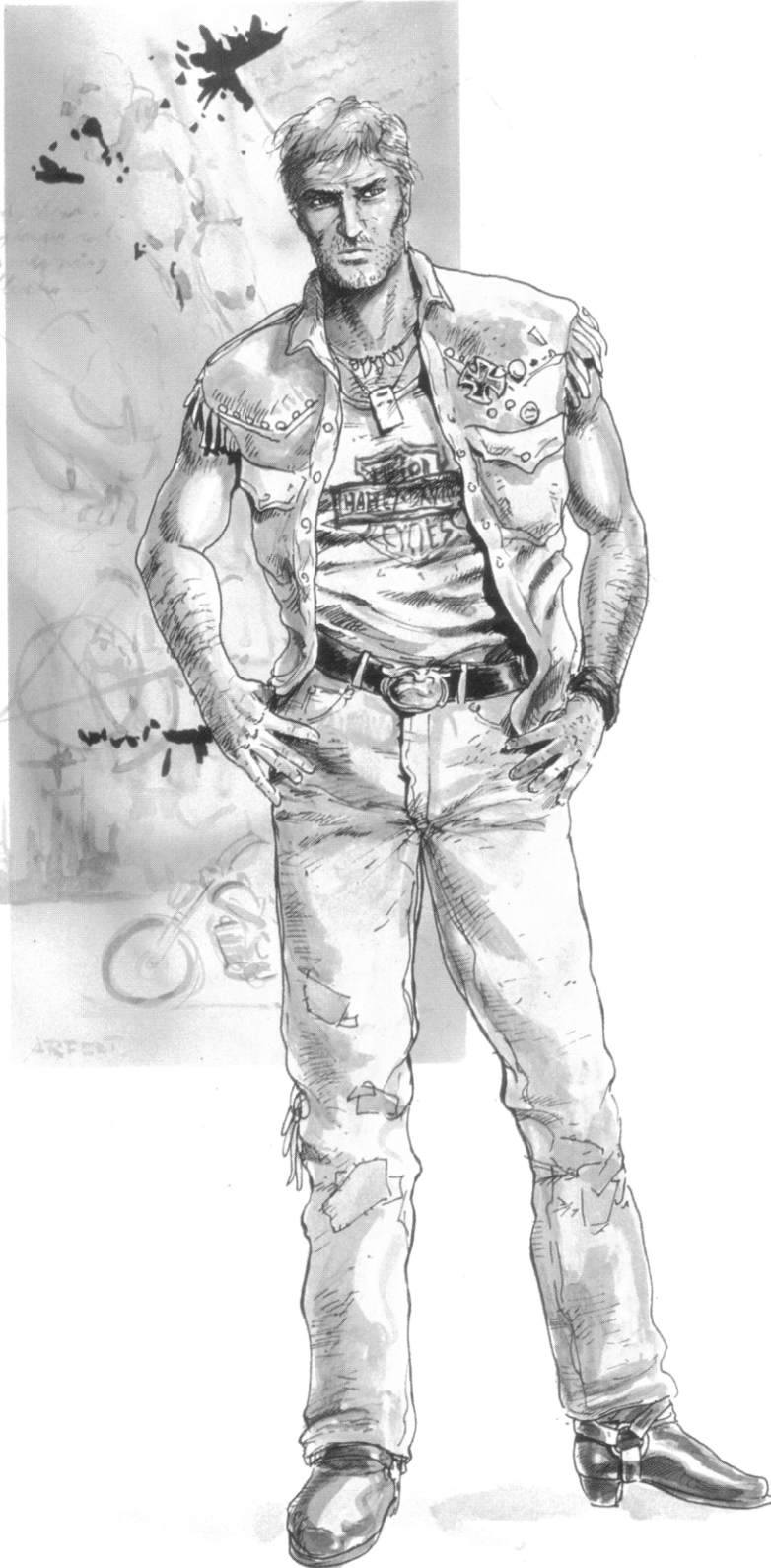
**Advantages:** Artistic talent, Enhanced awareness, Body awareness, Cultural flexibility, Sixth sense, Endure cold/heat/hunger/thirst/pain/torture

**Dark secret:** Family secret, Curse, Forbidden knowledge, Victim of crime, Guilty of crime, Insanity, Victim of medical experiments

**Profession:** unemployed, criminal, general worker

**Living standard:** 1-3

**Skills:** Automatic weapons, Dagger, Dodge, Falling technique, Seduction, Disguise, Rifle, Poisons and drugs, Hide, Burglary, Throwing weapons, Climb, Net of contacts: outsiders, car/motorcycle driving, Motor mechanics, Whips & chains, Handgun, Singing, Shadow, Play guitar/harmonica, Gambling, Sneak, Night combat, Martial arts: any, Man of the world, Survival.







# The Abilities

**T**he howling from the wolvens' throats grew stronger. It echoed through the tunnels, and we ran for our lives.

Suddenly the way was blocked by an ancient iron grill. Rusty, slimy iron bars went from the ceiling down into the sewage on the floor. Behind us, the wolven were getting closer. "Give me a hand here!" Gilbert grasped the grill and began to pull. The roaring carnivores seemed very close now. We could see their red eyes gleaming behind us. We tensed every muscle in our bodies to the limit, and suddenly the grill

came away with a crash. It fell right over us, and only a tiger's leap backward saved me from being trapped under it. Gilbert wasn't quick enough. The grill caught his leg and made a nasty gash in his shin. "Just a flesh wound," he mumbled but he looked pale. "Let's go on." The tunnel was narrower here and we had to walk in single file. There were hooks and iron bars that stuck out of the concrete walls, some of them very sharp, and difficult to get past. Gilbert, with his big bulk, was soon covered with small wounds. He gritted his teeth and tried not to faint from the loss of blood. The



*darkness in front of us slowly became gray, and finally there was light ahead. It seeped down through a vertical shaft in the ceiling. "I'll help you get up there," said Gilbert. I put my foot in his hands and he heaved me up. Searching with my hands in the shaft, I found an iron bar. I*

*took a firm hold on it and lifted myself up. Then I reached down and caught Gilbert's hand, pulling him up after me. We were dangling a couple of meters above the tunnel floor when the flood of black, howling bodies swept under us.*

**T**he basic abilities describe your body and psyche. They determine how easy or difficult it is for you to learn various skills. There are four physical abilities: Agility, Strength, Constitution and Comeliness, and four mental ones: Ego, Charisma, Perception and Education.

## **Ability Score**

The ability score is usually a number between one and twenty. A high score means a well-developed ability. If your Strength score is one, you are so weak that you can hardly stand up. With a Strength score of twenty, you are unusually strong even for an athlete.

The ability score determines how easily you can learn various skills. If your Agility is 15, you would have no problem with learning acrobatics. A person with an Agility score of 5 would need a lot more work to achieve the same level of skill.

## **Ability Points**

The ability points are used to determine ability scores. You have 100 ability points to distribute among the eight abilities. Every ability point allocated to an ability increases that ability score by one. Ability points cannot be used for any other purpose than to determine ability scores.

You must have a score of at least one in each ability. You may choose to give your character a score of more than 18, but every step above 18 costs three ability points. For example, getting a score of 20 costs a total of 24 ability points ( $18+2 \times 3$ ).

It is also possible to increase your ability scores later on, as a result of experience and practice. All scores except Comeliness can be increased in this fashion. Comeliness can only be increased by plastic surgery or extremely diligent body care. The methods for increasing scores are described in the section "Experience and Practice".

## **Simplified Characters**

For simplified characters you roll 2d10 for every ability and distribute the scores as you see fit (or, if you should prefer that, in the order that you roll them). It gives a worse average, but if you're lucky, some really good scores. Otherwise the rules for abilities, e.g.,

aging, apply to simplified characters too. Simplified characters can not have ability scores above 20.

## **Aging**

The ability scores will change as the character gets older, or if you choose to create an old person from the start. The initial scores apply to characters between 15 and 40 years.

When you pass the age of 40, your Agility, Strength, Constitution and Perception will drop one point each. Ego, Charisma and Education increase one step. The same thing happens when the character gets to be 50 years old.

At the age of 60, your Agility, Strength, Constitution and Perception will drop by two points each. No scores are increased. The same thing happens when you reach 70 and 80. If any ability reaches zero, the character dies of old age.

The rules about aging are not compulsory. If the Gamemaster thinks players who start out with old characters will grumble about the low scores, it's perfectly possible to skip this rule. Just see to it that very old characters don't have incredible physical scores.

## **The Ability Throw**

The Ability Throw is used to determine if the character can perform an action which depends on a certain ability. Your Strength determines if you can kick in a locked door. Your Perception determines if you will discover the woman with the razor hiding in the shadows.

Ability throws are only used when there is no skill that affects what you are trying to do. If you are actively searching for women with razors, your success is controlled by your score in the skill Search, not by your Perception.

You roll 1d20. If the result is equal to or lower than the character's ability score, the action was successful. If the result is higher than the ability score, the action failed.

When the ability throw has determined that an action was successful, you calculate the effect by subtracting the throw from the ability score. The effect shows how well the action succeeded. A high effect means that the action went as intended, or even bet-

ter. A low effect means that you only barely managed it. In the section "Game mechanics" you will find a table that helps you interpret the results of the effect. The rules about good and perfect throws, and blunders, also apply to the ability throws.

If the action is particularly difficult, the Gamemaster may require a minimum effect for success, e.g., any effect lower than 5 may be a failure.

There are some situations where the Gamemaster should do the ability throw himself. For example, to determine if a character has discovered a hidden person. If the Gamemaster asks the player to roll, the player will understand that something is afoot, and may act differently because of knowledge that the character does not have—which is not realistic. It's better that the Gamemaster rolls without saying what the roll is for.

Example: You have 100 points to distribute among Gilbert's abilities. He should be agile and bright, but not extremely strong and tough. He has a square face and isn't particularly good-looking. He has attended high school and some college, but didn't get his degree. You distribute the points.

|              |    |
|--------------|----|
| Agility      | 18 |
| Strength     | 15 |
| Constitution | 11 |
| Comeliness   | 8  |
| Ego          | 15 |
| Charisma     | 12 |
| Perception   | 10 |
| Education    | 11 |

When Gilbert is 40 years old, his Strength, Constitution and Perception will drop one point, while his Ego, Charisma and Education rise one step. This affects his secondary abilities but not his skills.

## Physical Abilities

The first four abilities describe the physical aspects of the character. There is no need to divide them equally between physical and mental abilities. Your character can be big, strong, quick, beautiful and rather stupid—or small, weak, clumsy and very intelligent and well-educated. You have absolute freedom in allocating the ability points.

Each of the abilities comprises several traits and talents, which are explained below. In parentheses you will find the abbreviations which we will use further on when we refer to the abilities.

## Agility (AGL)

*The carnivore rises from its torn victim and pricks up its ears. A bullet strikes the wall behind it, but the beast is already gone with a leap into the darkness.*

*The burglar carefully slides along the air duct. He squirms like a worm, not to get stuck in the narrow passage.*

*A wave of heat and darkness penetrates the room as the demon materializes. The conjurer unwillingly takes half a step backwards and almost stumbles across the lines of the protective pentagram. At the last moment, he recovers his balance and stands firm, facing the apparition.*

Agility determines your ability to move and control your body—your speed, precision and balance as well as your nimbleness. If your Agility score is one, you probably have some disease of the nerves that almost paralyzes you. A person with an Agility score of 20 is able to dance on a tightrope and squeeze himself through very narrow passages.

### When to Roll for Agility

The carnivore rolls for Agility to see if it manages to leap away before the next shot is fired. The burglar rolls to see if he manages to get through the narrow air duct without getting stuck. The conjurer rolls for Agility to maintain his balance and not breach the pentagram.

## Strength (STR)

*With a roar, the beast throws itself against the chain-link fence. It bends and falls down. The beast bares its fangs.*

*The burglar wedges himself against the walls of the shaft, slowly pulling himself up, away from the threatening blades of the fan that whirs below.*

*The nosferatu grips the man's neck and slowly closes his fist. There is a cracking sound as bones break.*

The Strength score determines your ability to use muscle-power to achieve a purpose. A Strength score of 20 means you have trained yourself to the limit of your capacity.

### When to Roll for Strength

When the beast throws itself against the fence in an attempt to break it, a Strength roll is required. Any difficult action than requires brute force rather than technique or a specific skill, is resolved with a Strength roll. For example, when you try to lift a heavy boulder or climb a rope with only one hand.

## **Constitution (CON)**

*The beast is hit by a slug from somebody's handgun. The pain is excruciating, but it struggles on.*

*The vampire's victim lies weakened by the massive loss of blood, fighting to survive.*

*The running man bears inhuman growls behind him and forces himself to keep running, mile after mile.*

Your Constitution determines your ability to withstand pain and illness, exhaustion, hunger and thirst. A person with a Constitution score of one lives at the brink of death. The least effort saps all his power. A Constitution score of twenty means that you are incredibly tough and can endure terrible hardships and injuries without dying.

### **When to Roll for Constitution**

When the beast is hit by a bullet from its pursuers, a Constitution roll is made to see if it manages to stay conscious. The man who lost a lot of blood needs to make a Constitution roll to stay alive. The runner rolls to see if he can keep on running.

## **Comeliness (COM)**

Comeliness is a measurement of your beauty. If your score is very high or very low, you attract people's eyes. Beautiful people usually have more success in dealing with the opposite sex. Rolling for Comeliness is unusual. It may be needed to determine the first impression you make when you meet other people. A successful roll indicates that they are interested. Of course, a good first impression may easily be ruined by bad behavior...

## **Mental Abilities**

The mental abilities describe personality and psyche. Think of what your character is like, as a person, when you distribute points for mental abilities.

### **Ego (EGO)**

*The conjurer studies the faded signs that have been scratched on the mortar. 'It's the same signs as on the murder scene, but turned mirrorwise,' he suddenly says.*

*The burglar is trying to remember the path through the winding labyrinth. He makes a wrong turn at an intersection, but notices it, retraces his steps and gets back on the right way. Finally he reaches the office where faint voices can be heard through the ventilation outlet.*

*Petrified, the woman stares into the jaws of the raging beast. She feels like she is fainting, but with a massive effort she manages to stay on her feet. Slowly, she creeps toward the unconscious baby near the monster's paws.*

Ego measures intelligence, memory and willpower. It determines whether you can solve a difficult problem, recall a vague memory, or withstand fear and temptations.

### **When to Roll for Ego**

The conjurer who studies the carved signs may roll for Ego—but it's usually better to let the player's intelligence determine such problems. The burglar rolls to see if he can find his way. The woman rolls to control her fear of the grinning monster.

## **Charisma (CHA)**

*The private investigator smiles and looks the police lieutenant in the eye. 'Surely it won't hurt if I have a look at the scene of the murder, lieutenant,' he says.*

*The priest looks out over his congregation. 'And I tell you,' he exclaims, 'that it is the chosen of Exxus ye shall follow, and his words shall be your law.'*

*She smiles at him across the table. 'You're handsome,' she says. He lowers his eyes and blushes.*

Charisma is a measurement of your charm and ability to influence people. Characters with high Charisma scores can persuade others that they are right, incite a crowd to follow them, or seduce their poor fellow men.

### **When to Roll for Charisma**

The investigator uses his Charisma to persuade the police lieutenant to let him look at the scene of the crime. The priest rolls for Charisma when he is trying to preach an inflammatory message to his followers. The woman uses her Charisma to seduce the young man.

## **Perception (PER)**

The beast listens for the soft steps of the hunter. It crouches down and waits for the right moment to attack.

The burglar discovers the alarm wire at the last moment. He pulls back his hand and takes out the tools he needs to disarm it.

The investigator is talking to the policeman about the murder when his eyes suddenly fall on a weird sign, drawn in blood on the sidewalk.

The Perception score determines your ability to use your senses, discover things that aren't obvious, like a half-hidden object or a faint smell.

## When to Roll for Perception

The Perception roll is made when the character is not actively looking for something, but has a chance to notice it by chance. The beast rolls to hear the hunter's steps, the burglar to discover the thin wire. The investigator isn't actively looking for signs written in blood on the sidewalk, but a Perception roll is made to see if he notices the one that is there.

## Education (EDU)

*'Cambrium,' the student mutters silently to himself, 'a geological era somewhere close to the silur period, unless I'm mistaken.' His friend suggests, 'Let's look it up, so you won't have to go brooding about it'.*

Education is a measurement of your general knowledge. The Education roll determines what you know. If you have a high Education score, you are used to find information in libraries, databases and among people. Up to 15, the Education score is also equal to the number of years you went to school. Over 15 every step represents two years. That means most people have an Education score of at least ten, probably twelve or more.

## When to Roll for Education

The student rolls for Education to see if he remembers what cambrium is. It's part of his general knowledge. His friend rolls to see if he finds the required information about the cambrium era in a dictionary or some other book.

## Secondary Abilities

The secondary abilities depend on your physical abilities. They determine how much you can carry and how far you can run. They provide the players and the Gamemaster with guidelines to what the character can and cannot do. No ability points are expended on the secondary abilities.

## Simplified Characters

Simplified characters calculate secondary abilities in the normal way.

## Load capacity

Walking at a leisurely pace, you can carry your Strength score in kilograms without risking exhaustion. It is not normally possible to carry more than three times your Strength score in kilos for any longer distance. When you run, you can only carry half your Strength score in kilos without significant encumbrance.

If you carry more than your Load capacity, your Constitution score is lowered by three points per hour for every kilo above your Load capacity. This is on top of what you lose through the movement itself (see Time and Movement).

The maximum weight you can lift is ten times your Strength in kilos.

**Example:** Gilbert's Strength score is 15. He can carry 15 kilos without tiring. If he carries 25 kilos he loses 30 points of endurance per hour (3x10), one point per kilo above his Load capacity. After a little more than two hours he must rest. He can lift a maximum of 150 kilos.

## Movement

During one combat round, any person can move a distance equal to one half of your Agility, in meters. A well-trained person can run up to six times as far in the same time (AGL x 3 meters). See "Time and Movement".

**Example:** Gilbert has an Agility score of 18. He can move 9 meters (18/2) in five seconds. At top speed, he can run 54 meters in five seconds.

## Actions

In one combat round, every person may perform a fixed number of actions. Your Agility controls the number of actions. Every character can perform at least two actions in one combat round. An Agility of 16-19 gives you an additional action. An Agility of 20-29 gives +2 actions. After that you can perform an extra action for every ten in Agility, up to a maximum of 9 actions. No creature can perform more than 9 actions in one combat round. The meaning of actions and the combat round are explained further in the Combat section.

**Example:** Gilbert's Agility score is 18. He can perform three actions in one combat round.

## Initiative Bonus

When several people act in combat, some are quicker and others slower. Part of this depends on luck, part depends on Agility.

To determine who acts first, second, and so on, every participant rolls 1d10, with the highest result acting first. The Initiative bonus affects the die result. Characters with an Agility score between 8 and 12 have an Initiative bonus of zero. For every step above 12, the character adds one to the die result. For every step below 8, he subtracts one.

**Example:** Gilbert's Agility score of 18 gives him a +6 Initiative bonus. He may add 6 to his initiative throw.

## Damage Bonus

A character who is strong and fast does more damage in melee. To simulate this, a Damage bonus is added to the effect when you strike an opponent with your fist or a melee weapon. The Damage bonus is based on Strength and Agility. The table below shows what to add or subtract from the effect in melee combat.

The Damage bonus is only used in melee and with throwing weapons. It does not apply to firearms or any other missile weapons. For throwing weapons, the Damage bonus is halved (rounded down).

| STR+AGL | Bonus |
|---------|-------|
| 3-6     | -3    |
| 7-10    | -2    |
| 11-14   | -1    |
| 15-20   | 0     |
| 21-24   | +1    |
| 25-28   | +2    |
| 29-32   | +3    |
| 33-40   | +4    |
| 41-46   | +5    |
| 47-54   | +6    |
| 55-60   | +7    |

For scores above 60, the Damage bonus increases with one for every ten points of Strength+Agility.

**Example:** Gilbert's Strength plus Agility makes a total of 33. This gives him a Damage bonus of +4. It is added to the effect when he is fighting with melee weapons or his bare hands. With throwing weapons, +2 is added to the effect.

## Damage Capacity

The character can stand a certain amount of injury without dying. Small and frail people die easier than strong, tough ones. Damage consists of four different types of wounds: scratches, light wounds, serious wounds and fatal wounds.

Scratches are abrasions, light cuts, small bruises and blisters. Light wounds are bigger incisions, big bruises and burns. Serious wounds are deep gashes, crushed

or broken bones, lacerated muscles and sinews, or major burns. Fatal wounds are such that kill immediately or after a very short time.

When a character suffers a number of smaller wounds, these are added up and become one wound of a more serious type. Enough scratches count as one light wound, enough light wounds count as one serious wound, and enough serious wounds will add up to a fatal wound. This simulates that the accumulated pain, loss of blood and exertion from several lesser wounds may be as dangerous to the body as a more serious one.

As you can see in the table below, the Constitution score determines how many wounds of any type that are needed to make up a more serious wound.

Fatal wounds always kill. This means that no one can have more than one fatal wound since the first one will kill him or her.

## Damage Capacity & Constitution

### CON 1-5

3 scratches = 1 light  
2 light = 1 serious  
2 serious = 1 fatal

### CON 6-10

4 scratches = 1 light  
3 light = 1 serious  
2 serious = 1 fatal

### CON 11-15

4 scratches = 1 light  
3 light = 1 serious  
3 serious = 1 fatal

### CON 16-20

5 scratches = 1 light  
4 light = 1 serious  
3 serious = 1 fatal

### CON 21-25

6 scratches = 1 light  
5 light = 1 serious  
3 serious = 1 fatal

### CON 26-30

7 scratches = 1 light  
6 light = 1 serious  
4 serious = 1 fatal



**Example:** Gilbert's Constitution is 11. Four scratches on him equal one light wound, three light wounds make up one serious wound, and three serious wounds will make up a fatal wound (and kill him).

## Endurance

Endurance determines how long you can fight, run, make love, or stay awake without collapsing. It is calculated as the character's Constitution times five, plus 30 ( $CON \times 5 + 30$ ). Your endurance decreases by three points per hour for every kilo you carry above your Load capacity. It also decreases when you exert yourself.

Three minutes rest restores one point of endurance. That makes five points for 15 minutes and 20 points for one hour's rest.

**Example:** With a Constitution of 11, Gilbert's endurance is 85.



# Dark Secrets

**T**he heroes of **Kult** are touched by darkness. Some event in your past, something you inherited from your ancestors or which arises from your own traumatic brush with dark powers, has opened a channel to the forces of destruction and madness. Such a dark event has formed part of your personality and is the key to most of your disadvantages. The secret can be used by the Gamemaster to create adventures and events. It can suddenly surface and haunt you in the form of a curse, relatives you thought were long dead, tasks you must perform, crimes which must be atoned.

Secrets resemble disadvantages, but in fact disadvantages are the effects that secrets have on the characters. The secret explains how the person came to be the way he or she is. Instead of saying "I can't stand the sight of blood", without any further explanation, the secret allows you to give it a background, e.g., "When I was seven years old, I saw my mother torn to pieces by a creature that my evil stepfather had conjured up with a pentagram in our basement. All these years, I have repressed the memory, but I guess that is why I can't stand to see blood."

All characters with a negative mental balance must have a dark secret. Something has caused the darkness within the character's soul. Characters with a positive mental balance may also have secrets. It's up to you.

You can invent dark secrets of your own, that fit in with the character's background and with the type of adventures the Gamemaster is planning. Below, you will find some suggestions and examples to help you on the way and provide inspiration.

Choose a secret that is in line with your archetype and may have some relation to your disadvantages. In the descriptions of archetypes, we give suggestions about types of secrets that may suit each archetype, and about disadvantages which may be in line with those secrets. The secret may also be the root of advantages, such as magical intuition, or a sixth sense.

The Gamemaster decides which backgrounds and secrets are acceptable in his game campaign. **Kult** should be about heroes who fight against darkness, both within themselves and in their world. Characters should not be too destructive or have too gruesome crimes on their consciences. Such people are difficult to play, and in our experience they may seriously warp the game. This is particularly important if there are young players in your campaign.

Decide what caused the secret, and incorporate it into the character's background history. There is nothing to stop you from having more than one dark secret, especially if they are interrelated and plausible.

Several of the examples of dark secrets below are tinged with occult experiences. In those cases, the characters have encountered supernatural powers before the game begins. If the Gamemaster wants the characters to be more ordinary and "innocent", such secrets may be disallowed. In that case, the remaining secrets are: Family secret, Forbidden knowledge, Responsible for medical experiments, Victim of medical experiments, Guilty of crime, Victim of crime, and Insanity.

"...the fiercest survivor—

the purest warrior...

glaring, hating...

claiming me as his own.

Dreaming...

I was only six years old.

when that happened.

When I first saw the cave..."

— Frank Miller, **Simplified Characters**  
"The Dark Knight Returns"

Choose one of the dark secrets under your archetype, if you want to. You can choose not to have a dark secret, even if your mental balance is negative.

**Example:** Gilbert's family is cursed. The oldest son is destined to kill his younger brother. The family members never talk about this. They don't even admit it to themselves, but they all know the curse exists. Gilbert was 8 years old when his younger brother Simon was born. When the brother was a few months old, Gilbert was sent to be educated at a boarding school in Paris. His parents said it was because it was a better school, but he could sense that it had something to do with his brother. Whenever he was with the family during holidays, he was kept under strict surveillance, especially when he was near his brother. He grew

more and more irritated at Simon and began to tease him and scare him. One afternoon when Gilbert was 12 years old, he chanced to be alone with his brother in the house. He lured him into the cellar and locked him in there. It took five hours before the family came back, began to look for the brother, and finally found him. He was severely bitten by rats and had lost a lot of blood. A few hours later, he died. The matter was covered up within the family and no one ever spoke of the accident or of Simon again. But Simon feels a silent accusation which makes him reluctant to visit his parents. He doesn't believe in curses, but none the less panicked when his own first child was a boy. When his wife wanted another child, he was scared witless and divorced her.

Under "Dark secrets" on the character form you write "Curse." The more detailed description of the curse is written on a separate paper.

In the background story, you note that Simon's birth and death activated the family curse:

19 April -61 Rouen general hospital: Gilbert's brother Simon born. Curse activated

21 August-61 Paris: Gilbert sent to boarding school in Paris

17 April-65 Parental home, Rouen: Gilbert's brother Simon killed in accident. The curse is fulfilled.

## Dark Secrets

- Curse
- Family secret
- Forbidden knowledge
- Guilty of crime
- Insanity
- Occult experience
- Pact with dark powers
- Possessed and haunted
- Responsible for medical experiments
- Supernatural experience
- Victim of crime
- Victim of medical experiments

### Curse

*"This is especially for you," said the shopkeeper in broken French and handed over the tape. It was an ordinary cassette tape. There was a label on the cover that looked almost, but not quite, like it was written in Arabic. I brought it home with me and listened to it, time after time, winding melodies and a hollow rhythm in the background. I couldn't bring*

*myself to turn it off. The doorbell rang. It was the police. "Are you Bertrand Fresnan? I'm sorry to have to inform you that your wife is dead." She had jumped in front of an underground train. Suicide. And that was only the beginning. Louise died next. Then Patrick. I ran away from it all, from home and friends, but I took the tape with me. I play it every night, and the accidents seem never to end."*

You and/or your family are victims of some terrible curse. Your eldest son may have sold his soul to the devil. Your youngest son may be destined to kill his father, without knowing it. Your character may be personally cursed or suffering from a curse that has struck against another family member. You may live your life in constant attempts to escape the curse.

**Disadvantages:** Depression, Death wish, Phobia: death/occult events/supernatural beings, Curse, Paranoia, Haunted, Nightmares, Drug addiction, Habitual liar, Bad luck, Schizophrenia, Rationalist, Mental compulsion

## Family Secret

*"When I began school I realized that something was wrong. None of the other kids in my class used to go with their grandparents to the cemetery at the full moon. They had never seen newly-buried corpses exhumed, limbs sawed off and brought home to the kitchen. No other grandmother had a copper axe hanging over the stove for chopping up meat. They had never mumbled the secret words and torn the flesh from the bones with their teeth. When I hinted at these things, they looked at me as if I was mad. So I shut my mouth and assumed that all families had similar secrets but they just didn't like to talk about it."*

In your family, there is some well-kept secret into which you were initiated in early childhood. They may be cannibals, worshippers of dark gods with animal sacrifices in the basement, or perhaps half the family are vampires.

**Disadvantages:** Depression, Bad reputation, Death wish, Phobia: blood/animals/corpses/ fire/darkness/occult events/supernatural beings/subterranean places, Mental constriction, Paranoia, Persecuted by your family, Nightmares, Drug addiction, Habitual liar, Schizophrenia, Rationalist, Sexual neurosis, Mental compulsion

## Forbidden Knowledge

*"When I reached adulthood, I assumed that the fragmentary memories from my childhood were fantasies; the beautiful woman who came to my father and gave him shimmering playing cards where the figures moved and talked. The men with tattooed faces and crooked swords who were hiding in our basement.*

The stench of the unthinkable that appeared in my father's study and left a white spot in my memory. When I used these things in my novel, I believed that they were a child's dreams and inventions. But when the tattooed men appeared, when *one day a card with my dead father's living face appeared in my mailbox and whispered a warning—then I realized that my memories were real.*

Somehow, you have come across knowledge that you were not supposed to have. It might be connected to a secret occult society or even to a supernatural being. Perhaps even without realizing it, you may know the secret of immortality or how to open the gates to the nether world. The knowledge does not need to be occult. It can just as well be industrial, military or political information, or secrets belonging to organized crime. On account of your knowledge, your enemies are after you.

**Disadvantages:** Depression, Death wish, Mortal enemy, Oath of revenge, Phobia: blood/death/ darkness/occult events/supernatural beings, Mental constriction, Paranoia, Persecuted, Nightmares, Drug addiction, Bad luck, Rationalist, Mental compulsion

## Guilty of Crime

*"I hid the axe under my coat and knocked on the old lady's door. She opened it just a little and warily peered out. She was very suspicious and I had to talk her into letting me come in. She asked what I wanted to pawn and I gave her the false package I had made of out old newspapers. While she was fiddling with the strings, I took out the axe and struck her hard in the back of the head. She fell to the floor in a pool of blood, her skull cracked open like a broken pitcher. I retched. As if it was all in a dream, I made myself take her keys and walk over to the safe."*

Some time in your life, probably when you were very young, you were tempted to perform or take part in some horrible crime like murder, rape or a fatal brutalization. You are constantly tormented by a bad conscience. It may also be a memory of some lesser crime, which you have magnified out of proportion in your imagination. You think that you hurt someone, and the guilt is always in your mind.

**Disadvantages:** Depression, Bad reputation, Death wish, Phobia: claustrophobia/death/crowds/ policemen, Mental constriction, Paranoia, Wanted, Habitual liar, Nightmares, Drug addiction, Bad luck, Schizophrenia, Mental compulsion

## Insanity

*"I pressed myself hard against the padded wall. My hands were bound. I was sure they were going to kill me. A cracking noise from the corner made me turn around. The wall bent inward and then burst open.*

*A grinning face with glowing eyes came into the cell. I screamed and screamed until everything went black. When I woke up, I was strapped down on a bench. 'I really don't know what to do about you, Benny', the doctor said."*

You have been mentally ill or you have lived close with a relative who was insane. If it is yourself who has suffered this disease, you may very well have a relapse at some time. The experience of having been close to an insane person may have contributed to that you developed the disease. It is also possible that your mental disorder is connected to occult or supernatural experiences.

**Disadvantages:** Depression, Death wish, Phobia: any you can think of, Mental constriction, Paranoia, Haunted, Mania, Nightmares, Drug addiction, Schizophrenia, Sexual neurosis, Mental compulsion

## Occult Experience

*I didn't believe in demons. Not until the air started to tremble and the room was filled with a darkness that poured out and obliterated all light. I never saw Jonathan die, only heard him screaming and felt the warm blood splash onto my face. When the darkness was lifted the only that was left of him was blood and entrails. In the middle of the chalk circle there was a primitive sign painted in blood, a sign I would come to fear...*

You have participated in or been a witness to occult proceedings. It might be conjuring demons, sacrificial rites, the opening of portals to different world or rites that transform a human being beyond recognition. The experience may be connected to your family, friends or your own interest in the occult.

**Disadvantages:** Depression, Death wish, Phobia: blood, claustrophobia, animals, death, darkness, occult events, supernatural beings, Mental constriction, Paranoia, Haunted, Wanted, Nightmares, Drug addiction, Bad luck, Rationalist, Schizophrenia, Sexual neurosis, Mental compulsion

## Pact With Dark Powers

*"There was very little time left. I drew the signs on the floor, on the walls and the ceiling, with a piece of crayon. The whole apartment was covered with thin Cyrillic and Hebrew characters, winding like snakes over the paint. The drunk was still unconscious. I shook aside the last remnants of doubt. This was my last chance. They were coming to get me. Already I could hear the rhythmic steps on the roof. But I was going to fool them. A cut from the jagged copper knife slit the victim's jugular vein. The drunkard opened his eyes in surprise, just for a couple of seconds, before he passed out with a white film over his eyes. I held my breath. The steps were right on top of*

me now. They stopped for a moment. Then they continued on across the roofs, away from me. I had fooled them, this time..."

You have made a pact with the powers of darkness. Perhaps you have pledged your soul to the demons of the underworld. Or you may have forsworn the right to a life after death, in exchange for power and wealth in this life. The person in the example escapes a killer by sacrificing someone else's life. Of course, the sinner ultimately has to pay for such a crime, ten times over. Anyone who has made such a deal with dark forces is constantly terrified at the thought that his past will catch up with him.

**Disadvantages:** Depression, Death wish, Phobia, Curse, Mental constriction, Paranoia, Greed, Haunted, Persecuted by evil powers, Habitual liar, Drug addiction, Bad luck, Schizophrenia, Sexual neurosis, Egotism, Mental compulsion

## **Possessed & Haunted**

*"It began when I moved to this apartment in Soho. From the first night I spent there, I felt that there was a tension, like an alien presence in the room. The first night I woke up and found that I was on the floor in the stairwell. The next night, a sound woke me. When I turned the light on, I saw that all the furniture except the bed had been smashed to pieces. An other night, I had torn long scratches on my arms and chest with my nails. I started to get really frightened on the morning I woke on the bathroom floor, naked, covered with gray-green slime, and with all my joints stiff as ice. There was a bloody knife on the floor beside me. I quickly moved out, without telling anybody. But I still feel that presence at nights before I fall asleep.*

You have at some time been the victim of a spirit or demon. This being may have possessed you (taken over the control of your body), or it may chase you and haunt you wherever you go.

**Disadvantages:** Depression, Death wish, Phobia: claustrophobia/dreams/ death/darkness/occult events/loneliness/supernatural beings, Mental constriction, Paranoia, Haunted, Nightmares, Drug addiction, Unwilling medium, Rationalist, Mental compulsion

## **Responsible For Medical Experiments**

*"Earlier experiments had been ruined by various disturbances. One of the volunteers tore the electrodes off and beat his hands and head against the wall until they bled. I should have realized the dan-*

*ger before it was too late. I had paid a student and drugged him with preglanadine. He slept soundly for two hours, then his E.K.G. went haywire. I thought it was a cerebral hemorrhage and ran into the room. He wasn't dead, but his body was twisted and gnarled like a corpse, his skin had a greenish yellow hue with dark spots. I interrupted the experiment and never repeated it. The boy never came out of his coma, and died a few weeks later. But he came back in my dreams and has been with me every night since then."*

In the name of science, you have performed some dubious experiments in medicine, psychology or some other similar field of research. You are constantly troubled by a bad conscience for the people who were hurt, crippled or killed. You may also be persecuted by people whose lives you ruined, and their relatives.

**Disadvantages:** Depression, Bad reputation, Death wish, Phobia: death/guinea pigs/sounds/modern technology/darkness/hospitals/sleep, Mental constriction, Paranoia, Persecuted, Nightmares, Drug addiction, Bad luck, Schizophrenia, Rationalist, Mental compulsion: cleanliness/diligence

## **Supernatural Experience**

*"When the rescue team arrived, I was the only one left. A whole block had been devastated, furniture broken, doors blown out. Hugging my teddy-bear, I sat on the floor in the closet, as far back as I could get. All the others were gone, 346 people had just vanished without a trace. I was humming a nursery rhyme and staring at the floor. At least, that's what I was told later. Myself, I have no memory of it."*

You have been witness to something that did not quite fit into the human mind. An event that contradicted the normal framework of reality. Perhaps, as a child, you disappeared for several days and were found naked in a forest glade with a smile on your lips. Or your home town was suddenly emptied of people and you alone were found by the rescue forces. Your family may have disappeared, been devoured by supernatural beings, torn to pieces by demons or sunk into the earth, leaving only yourself.

**Disadvantages:** Depression, Death wish, Phobia: blood / claustrophobia / animals / death / darkness / occult events / supernatural beings, Mental constriction, Paranoia, Haunted, Wanted, Nightmares, Drug addiction, Bad luck, Rationalist, Schizophrenia, Sexual neurosis, Mental compulsion

## **Victim of Crime**

*"Keith and Kevin were always cruel to me. They were twins and my elder siblings, but as different from me as they could get. Short where I was tall,*



*dark where I was blond. Some memories are more painful than others; when they killed my dog Sparky, and put his severed head in my bed. Or the time they bound me in the stable and beat me with the horse whip. And when they forced me to watch as they slit the belly of our pregnant cat and let her bleed to death. They locked me in the basement with the cat's body that attracted the rats. When I grew older, Kevin forced me to do things with him, that he said everybody did with their elder brothers. I was terribly confused and ashamed, and thought of killing myself. It was a big relief when Kevin was put away in an asylum for having murdered the old gaffer Barnard. A week later, Keith helped him break out and I haven't heard from either of them since. But I know they are still around somewhere."*



You have been the victim of some horrible crime or forced to take part in disgusting rituals and events that marked you for life. It may have been rape, brutalization, or some other type of severe humiliation. You never dared tell anyone about it.

**Disadvantages:** Depression, Death wish, Oath of revenge, Phobia: blood/claustrophobia /animals/ death/fire/noises/modern technology/darkness/ persons of the opposite gender, Mental constriction, Paranoia, Nightmares, Habitual liar, Drug addiction, Bad luck, Split personality, Sexual neurosis, Mental compulsion

## **Victim of Medical Experiments**

*"My earliest memory is having blood samples taken from my arm. There were many tests and samples. Mommy said it was so that I shouldn't get ill. Later, I realized that "mommy" was not my real mother. I have no parents. The men in the green cloaks and face masks created me. In my teens, I understood that I was not quite human, that something was wrong with me. My sinewy muscles, the retractable claws and the sharp fangs were not human. They called me a 'foul-up' and tried to kill me, but I fooled them and escaped."*

You have taken part in, or been exposed to, dubious medical, psychological or genetic experiments. The research may have been about dreams, drugs, stress, or the effect of certain microorganisms on the human mind. You may also be the result of genetic manipulation that your parents were subjected to. You may have to explore your own past to learn and understand what is going on.

**Disadvantages:** Depression, Bad reputation, Death wish, Mortal enemy, Phobia: blood/claustrophobia/animals/death/noises/modern technology/darkness/hospitals, Mental constriction, Paranoia, Persecuted, Drug addiction, Split personality, Schizophrenia, Sexual neurosis, Mental compulsion



# Advantages & Disadvantages

*"...the reality of human life is made up of a complex structure of absolute opposites—day and night, birth and death, happiness and misery, good and evil. We cannot even be sure that any of the sides will ever triumph..."*

—C G Jung

**T**hey had always hated me. As long as I could remember, I had been blamed for every bad thing

that happened. And now Lucy had been murdered. The police let me go because they had no evidence. 'But we'll soon get you!' they said before releasing me. I stood on the street and didn't know what to do with myself. People looked at me as if I was a freak. Suddenly somebody began shouting. 'There he is, the murderer! Get him!' A crowd started to form around me, hateful faces. I noticed someone had a rope. I hastily went through the crowd and jogged

*away. They followed, a howling pack. At the last moment I managed to jump over a wall and landed behind some bushes in the cemetery. They lost their track. 'Set Jacob's dogs on 'im!' someone screamed, and I could hear barking. I smiled inwardly. As opposed to the treatment I had often received from humans, no dog had ever hurt me. They understood me. I was right. Jacob's three schnauzers sniffed around the cemetery, allowed themselves to be scratched behind the ears, and went away. I sighed with relief as the crowd seemed to disperse. It was*



advantages and disadvantages represent the light and the darkness within a person. The disadvantages make life difficult. They hinder and scare you, and takes time and energy to struggle against. The advantages make it easier for the character to make friends, learn things, understand and accept. The man in the example above suffers from the disadvantage "Bad reputation." People suspect him of all sorts of evil. But he has the advantage "Animal friendship," which saves him when the mob turns the dogs on him. When he meets his dead girlfriend, he does not believe his eyes since he has the disadvantage "Rationalist."

Advantages and disadvantages are balanced against each other by a system of points. Disadvantages give you points which can be used to acquire advantages. The points can also be used to acquire more skills.

There is no need to balance out advantages and disadvantages against each other. A surplus of points for disadvantages may be used to get more skills. The drawback is that a surplus of points makes you more sensitive to terror and destructive forces. Your mental balance deteriorates.

It is also possible to get a surplus of advantages, by using more points than you get for your disadvantages. Any missing points must then be taken from your skills. A person who is balanced toward the light side will have fewer skills, but also a better mental balance and a better chance to withstand the powers of darkness. (The dark road is easier, but more treacherous...)

Both advantages and disadvantages should be played and used in the game. They aren't just words and numbers on a piece of paper. If you have a Phobia against darkness, you will collapse if you are shut in a dark room. If you have Chivalry, you will not harm a woman regardless of the circumstances.

There is no limit to the number of advantages and disadvantages any character may have, but remember that you are going to play this role. Too many and too powerful enemies may shorten your lifespan. Too severe mental

*dusk now. But then I discovered the pale shape standing beneath the tree, watching me. At first I thought it was someone from the crowd, but when she approached I recognized Lucy, in spite of the dark spots on her skin and the putrefaction that was spreading around her left eye. 'Rick, It's me', she said and extended her hand to me. I shook my head. 'You are dead. You don't exist, you're dead', I mumbled. She took my hand in hers. It was stiff and cold. But I still refused to believe that this was really happening."*

problems may get you locked up in an asylum.

Begin by noting which advantages and disadvantages you want, and the number of points they cost or yield, respectively. Add up the scores, and subtract the costs for advantages from the points for disadvantages. The result, if greater than zero, is the number of extra skill points you get. Try to choose skills that are connected to your advantages and disadvantages—that makes for a more coherent character. If the total is negative, you lose that number from your 150 skill points.

The result of this calculation is also used to determine the character's mental balance.

## **Simplified Character Generation**

You have 1d5 each of advantages and disadvantages. Choose from those listed under your character's archetype. Note them and the points given with them. The points are used to calculate your mental balance. They have no effect on your skills. You pay nothing for advantages and get no points for disadvantages.

**Example:** You have chosen some disadvantages for a secret agent. All of them can be explained by Gilbert's curse. Sum up how many points you get for them. You get 85 points and note this under "Total points for disadvantages."

The Death wish was sowed in Gilbert when his kid brother died. He has felt guilty ever since, and always sought danger. As secret agent, he has developed a tendency to take unnecessary risks, which seizes him in pressing situations. *Gives 10 points.*

The Mental constriction began when Gilbert denied to himself that he ever had a kid brother. The family never spoke of Simon, and Gilbert denies that he ever existed. He has continued with this type of behavior as an adult. He cannot admit to himself that he ever killed anyone in cold

blood. He either forgets all events where he caused other people's deaths, or he explains them away as accidents where he had no guilt. *Gives 10 points.*

In his Nightmares, Gilbert is chased by his brother and hordes of large rats, through winding sewer tunnels. He wakes up trembling, in a cold sweat. *Gives 5 points.*

The Curse which is on Gilbert's family means that the eldest son always kills the youngest. Gilbert doesn't know about this, but he still harbors an irrational fear of having two sons. He rarely visits his son and former wife, and keeps women at a distance. (The gamemaster and the player know that the curse will still be fulfilled in one way or another. Gilbert will have another son, and his oldest son will kill him.) *Gives 20 points.*

Gilbert has become a Drug addict partially through the pressure of his work, partially out of sorrow after his divorce. He suppresses all uncomfortable feelings, and the liquor is an efficient way to do so. *Gives 15 points.*

Gilbert also has made an Oath of revenge. Three of his colleagues and friends were tortured to death by Turkish intelligence agents, during a mission on the border between Turkey and Greece. Gilbert spends a lot of his time tracking down the responsible persons in Turkish intelligence. *Gives 15 points.*

Gilbert has an irrational fear of rats and dark rooms, partially because of his nightmares. He can suppress his fear by a successful ego throw. *The two Phobias give him 2x5 points.*

Next, you decide how the disadvantages are to be fitted into Gilbert's life story, and you make notes of this:

April 19, 1961, Rouen General Hospital. Gilbert's brother Simon is born. The curse is activated.

August 21, 1961, Paris. Gilbert is sent to a boarding school in Paris.

April 17, 1965, Rouen. Gilbert's brother Simon dies in an accident. The curse is fulfilled. Gilbert is seized by guilt and wants to follow his brother and save him. Death wish.

April 22, 1965, Rouen North Cemetery. Simon is buried.

August, 1965. Gilbert returns to school and begins to deny that Simon existed. Mental constriction.

September, 1965, Paris. Gilbert starts having nightmares and is forced to sleep alone because he screams in his sleep. The headmaster forbids him to sleep with the lights on. Nightmares, Phobia: darkness.

Summer, 1966, Rouen. Gilbert locks himself in the basement and waits for the rats. When they come

and sniff him, he panics. Phobia: rats.

Winter, 1981, Oran, Algeria. Gilbert is forced by blackmail to participate in a dirty mission involving torture and murder of prisoners. It shocks him, and he begins to drink. Drug addiction.

December 19, 1982, London. Booze and nerves wreck Gilbert's marriage and his wife divorces him.

1983, Eastern Turkey. On a mission in Turkish Armenia, Gilbert's companions are tortured to death by double agents who work for Turkish intelligence. The perpetrators are protected by contacts in the Turkish CIA. Oath of revenge: Kemal Asir.

## Disadvantages

These are part of what makes characters in **Kult** different from the average game. They also provide rich opportunities for role-playing. Work with the GM to come up with a list of disadvantages which can be woven together to create a believable persona.

## Disadvantage Cost Summary

| Disadvantage         | Points  |
|----------------------|---------|
| Animal enmity        | 5       |
| Bad luck             | 15      |
| Bad reputation       | 10      |
| Curse                | 10/20   |
| Death wish           | 10      |
| Depression           | 15      |
| Drug addiction       | 15/20   |
| Egotist              | 5       |
| Fanaticism           | 10      |
| Forgotten            | 10      |
| Reckless gambler     | 15      |
| Greed                | 10      |
| Habitual liar        | 5/15    |
| Haunted              | 10      |
| Persecuted           | 10      |
| Innocently blamed    | 15      |
| Intolerance          | 10      |
| Maimed               | 15      |
| Mania                | 15      |
| Manic-depressive     | 20      |
| Mental compulsion    | 5/10/15 |
| Mental constriction  | 10      |
| Mistaken identity    | 5/15    |
| Mortal enemy         | 15      |
| Nightmares           | 5/10    |
| Oath of revenge      | 5       |
| Paranoia             | 15      |
| Phobia               | 5/10/15 |
| Rationalist          | 15      |
| Schizophrenia        | 20      |
| Sexual neurosis      | 5/10/15 |
| Sexually tantalizing | 10      |



|                   |         |
|-------------------|---------|
| Split personality | 15      |
| Touchy            | 5       |
| Unwilling medium  | 15      |
| Wanted            | 5/10/15 |

### **Animal enmity**

**Points: 5**

All sentient animals hate you. Dogs bark, growl and bite, horses kick and throw you off, cats jump at your face, trying to scratch your eyes out. You do not throw animals into a rage, they simply try to get you when the opportunity allows. If you try to feed a pet or an animal in a zoo, they are more likely to go after your hand than after what you offer them.

### **Bad luck**

**Points: 15**

The powers aren't on your side. Betting on horses or buying shares is a bad idea for you—it always fails. In situations where the outcome is determined by chance (as opposed to skills and abilities), the Gamemaster rolls 1d20. If the result is 5 or less, the worst possible thing will happen. A character with bad luck is either out of grace with the enigmatic deities of fortune, or they have a mental disposition that draws them into hopeless situations where they must fail. Characters with bad luck feel incompetent and usually suffer from an inferiority complex.

### **Bad reputation**

**Points: 10**

You are not well liked. For some reason, people think badly of you. No one who knows who you are would lend you a cup of sugar or help you in any way. If you do anything foolish in public, people are inclined to start looking for ropes and trees...

### **Curse**

**Points: 10/20**

You cannot escape your destiny. As in a Greek drama, you are inexorably driven to fulfill the prophecy. The more you try to avoid it, the more you are dominated. The Gamemaster or you should determine the exact nature of the curse you are suffering from. You get 10 points for a curse that does not dominate your life, or 20 points if the curse controls your entire destiny.

Together with the Gamemaster, you should also determine if the character knows about the curse or not. If you want, the Gamemaster can invent a curse which not even the player knows the exact nature of. It may also be possible to lift the curse, but only with extreme effort. It is usually necessary for someone else to lay down his life unselfishly for the cursed person.

The curse is not always "operative" in the game. It may be triggered by specific circumstances, e.g., when the character comes to a certain place, reaches a certain age, gets to an important event in life (marriage, childbirth), reaches a certain mental balance, at full moon or a time dominated by a certain part of the zodiac.

Curses may be inherited, or be caused by cursed objects in one's possession, or by the character breaking a pact with dark powers. Consult with the gamemaster before selecting a curse, since there is every chance that it may affect the story of the game.

### **Some Possible Curses:**

- All your good intentions have evil results
- You always hurt or kill the one you love
- Doomed to lose all riches and become destitute
- Friends and loved ones die
- Cursed to go to hell after death (will do anything to stay alive)
- Wherever you go, wars/epidemics/natural disasters happen.
- Incapable of staying in any one place for more than a month or two
- Predestined to die at a certain event in life, e.g., at the birth of your first child or on your wedding night. Or to die in a certain way, e.g., a car accident, a plane crash, falling off a bridge, etc. (will avoid this at any cost)
- Evil alter ego—a character with a positive mental balance can have an alternate personality (with equally large negative mental balance) which surfaces at certain times: at night, full moon, emotional moments, etc.
- No merits. All glory and honor for what you have done will be given to other people.
- Your soul belongs to an angel of death, azghoul or other creature which will collect it when your mental balance goes under -50.

### **Death wish**

**Points: 10**

You don't know what fear is. Death is something that happens to others, not to you. But deep down, without wanting to admit it to yourself, you always seek out and challenge death. You are not the sort of person who willingly commits suicide, but you never avoid danger and you are careless with taking risks. A death wish may originate in the death of someone dear to you, or a severe disease that you suffer from.

### **Depression**

**Points: 15**

You are always fighting against depression, often feeling down and gloomy. You have a tendency to see only the bad side of any situation, and you often want to quit when the going gets too tough. If life gets complicated, you anguish and resort to drink or medicines. Depressions may be caused by various adversities and unpleasant events in the past.

### **Drug addiction**

**Points: 15/20**

You are addicted to a drug. It can be alcohol, narcotics or medicine. The drug makes you introverted



and dulls your senses. If you cannot get the drug, you suffer withdrawal problems. Getting hold of (and using) the drug occupies a large part of your life and your thoughts. Everything else comes second. An addict who can't break out of his habits will eventually be destroyed. The section "Drugs and poisons" describes how the drug affects your ability and skill scores.

Choose which drug you are addicted to. Illegal narcotics are expensive and bring the added problem of having to cough up a lot of cash every day. When this is the case, the disadvantage gives 20 points.

### **Egotist**

**Points: 5**

You always think of yourself first. Your own happiness is the most important priority. Compassion and helpfulness are only a put-on which smart people can see through and ignore. You cannot understand why you should stick your neck out for anyone else. Other people often regard you as an insufferable schmuck. But you fail to understand that your behavior harms yourself, and ought to be changed.

### **Fanaticism**

**Points: 10**

You are fanatically committed to some idea, religion or ideology. You interpret everything according to this creed, which is always right. If reality suggests differently, reality is wrong. Those who disagree are your enemies and must be exterminated or at least indoctrinated until they understand the One and Only Truth. Fanatics have a tendency to often erupt in long sermons, filled with slogans and platitudes. They rigidly refuse to re-evaluate their opinions, and desire to have an ordered, understandable world around themselves.

### **Forgotten**

**Points: 10**

Your personality is so bleak that people never care about you or what you think. No one seems to remember you distinctly for more than a few weeks at a time. You can't get any close friends, everyone treats you as a stranger. Not even your own family (parents and siblings, of course you do not have a spouse) think highly of you or ever gets in contact with you. You must not have a Charisma score exceeding 5 to have this disadvantage.

### **Reckless gambler**

**Points: 15**

You are a compulsive gambler and simply cannot pass a casino or a horse track without entering. Once inside, you cannot stop until you have gambled away all your money. Determine if the character has a favorite game, such as horses, roulette or poker.

*This disadvantage may not be combined with the advantage "Luck".*

### **Greed**

**Points: 10**

You are dominated by an unending craving for money and wealth. You are prepared to sacrifice

health, family and friends to get a large fortune. "Generosity" does not exist in your dictionary.

### **Habitual liar**

**Points: 5/15**

The five point liar is not a mythomaniac. He just has a habit of telling a lie instead of the truth whenever it seems practical or provides an easier way out of a situation, at least for the moment. Of course, he usually has to lie again to protect his first lie from being found out—and soon he is entangled in a web of little untruths and finds himself unable to extract himself without being exposed. He is regarded with some distrust by other people.

The fifteen point liar is worse, a real mythomaniac who invents incredible stories about his own past, of imaginary relatives and friends, of jobs he claims to have had and events he says he experienced. The mythomaniac is a very convincing liar, because he wraps his whole life in lies so that finally, he comes to believe them himself.

### **Haunted**

**Points: 5/10/15**

You are haunted by supernatural powers. It can be the souls of deceased people who want revenge or seek to urge you to do or finish something that is needed for them to rest in peace. It can be a poltergeist that has taken a liking to you, or even a demon or a beast from the abyss that wants to devour you.

Haunting by small, harmless spirits gives five points. Serious haunting by demons and other dangerous creatures gives 15 points... and a short life expectancy.

### **Innocently blamed**

**Points: 15**

Whenever anything bad happens near you, everyone thinks you did it. For example, when something falls down and breaks, everyone in the room immediately looks at you. In court, no hard evidence will of course lie, but witnesses will seem to remember you as the culprit and the judge will interpret all circumstantial evidence to your disadvantage. People around you will inevitably form an opinion of you as unreliable, clumsy, and/or malignant.

### **Intolerance**

**Points: 10**

Most other people are wrong. Their opinions are wrong, they behave wrongly, or their background is wrong. An intolerant person is like the xenophobe, but his intolerance is not directed only against people from other cultures. He also disapproves of people of the wrong sex, age, economic status or profession. They all act and think stupidly. In short, most people probably regard you as a sort of fascist.

### **Maimed**

**Points: 15**

Your appearance has been seriously distorted by some terrible event, (e.g., a car accident). Your Comeliness score is 3, no matter what it was before you acquired this disadvantage. You are, in other

words, horribly disfigured. Your original Comeliness score must be 10 or higher for you to have this disadvantage.

**Mania** **Points: 15**

You are always in top gear and unnaturally cheerful. You make big plans and are often a workaholic, with a tendency to fix your attention on some detail in your work which you then think about unceasingly. You overreact to all impressions and rush off without thinking. Manic people have no sense of proportion, cannot distinguish between what is important and what is trivial, what is central and what is peripheral. They rush ahead on impulses without looking behind them or to the sides.

**Manic-depressive** **Points: 20**

You alternate between deep depressions and manic cheerfulness. Each phase in this roller-coaster ride takes 2-3 months. The change comes suddenly; the hard-working enthusiast is suddenly a hopeless, dejected grumbler, unable to do anything. And this may just as suddenly turn into a fearless person who thinks he is capable of anything. Manic-depressive insanity is a very complex disease which usually demands perpetual medical treatment or therapy to make life bearable.

**Mental compulsion** **Points: 5/10/15**

You have a fixation with a particular idea or act. It can be anything from a small quirk, like always stepping in the middle of the tiles on the pavement (hardly worth 5 points) to really troublesome fixations like changing clothes once per hour or feeling that it is absolutely necessary to memorize the names on all street signs you pass. The Gamemaster determines how many points the compulsion gives. A mental compulsion does not need to have a direct connection to anything in your past. It can be a seemingly inexplicable result of tensions in your personality.

**Some possible mental compulsions:**

- Anorexia/bulimia—food fixation
- Cannibalism—fixation about human flesh
- Cleanliness—you wash and tidy up all the time
- Kleptomania—compulsive stealing
- Clothing—always wearing a particular type of clothes
- Collecting—an abnormal desire to keep everything forever
- Mantras—you endlessly recite certain words and phrases
- Memorization—a compulsion to learn useless facts
- Numeromania—counting things and juggling numbers
- Nymphomania—sexual fixation
- Personal fixation—you identify with or worship a person, hero, idol

- Pettifogger—abnormal attention to details
- Pyromania—a compulsion to set fire to things

**Mental constriction** **Points: 10**

You have pushed some unpleasant event in your past into the subconscious part of your mind. It may be a crime or some horrible act that you have performed, witnessed, or been the victim of. It was so terrible that your mind could not handle it, and the only defense was to push the memory aside and refuse to acknowledge it. However, the memory is still there and affects your life. Only through psychotherapy, hypnosis or other extensive treatment can you get the constricted memories back and deal with them. While these thoughts are constricted, they surface as phobia and neuroses. If, as a child, you came down into the basement and saw your mother lying dead and swollen in a sea of snakes, you may become phobic against snakes and/or cellars, and you are unable to remember how your mother died. Any such phobia counts as a separate disadvantage and gives the normal number of points.

**Mistaken identity** **Points: 5/15**

People you meet always mistake you for someone else, e.g., a celebrity or a criminal, and treat you accordingly. You do not necessarily have to resemble a specific person, but your personality type makes people think they've seen you on TV.

5 points is a mistaken identity of a popular personality, 15 points means people are wary and scared, thinking you're some sort of a terrorist they've seen pictures of in connection with demands for the re-introduction of the death penalty. Inevitably, people will keep calling the police to report they have seen you, and whenever you enter a bank office everyone, and most definitely the guards, will be tense as a coiled spring.

**Mortal enemy** **Points: 15**

Someone is out to get you. This is a ruthless person who will do anything to get his hands on you. Your enemy may hire assassins, send letterbombs, tamper with your car, frame you for a crime, try to ruin your business, or lay in ambush. The enmity is mutual, and you are doing everything to get your foe before he gets you.

**Nightmares** **Points: 5/10**

Your sleep is disturbed by terrible dreams, probably originating in a dark secret. You wake up screaming, soaked in sweat. You are constantly tired because of lack of sleep. In serious cases, the dreams may glide over into reality and provide a path for unhuman creatures to move into our world.

**Oath of revenge** **Points: 5**

You have sworn a sacred oath to avenge some evil that was done to you. Determine who is the target of

your vengeance, and the reason for it. You cannot avoid trying to get back at the hated person or persons if there is an opportunity. A substantial part of your time is consumed by your constant planning for how to execute your oath.

### **Paranoia**

**Points: 15**

You believe that people are secretly in league against you. There is a conspiracy to harm you. Individual people, groups and powers are out to get you. Your telephone is bugged. Your letters show clear signs of having been opened before they reach you. Your home is full of hidden microphones. The car in the street outside is full of people who are watching you. It is best not to go out. But on the other hand, while you are at home they know where to get you... Anything bad that happens to you has been engineered by the conspiracy. Anyone who tries to tell you there is no conspiracy thereby proves himself to be part of it.

Paranoid people have usually been exposed to abandonment or misunderstanding early in life. Perhaps the character's parents disappeared mysteriously, or he was persecuted.

### **Phobia**

**Points: 5/10/15**

You are unreasonably scared of something. It may be a certain type of object, or a situation. The phobia may be insignificant in most situations, e.g., if you are afraid of heights. Or it may make your life a constant hell because it relates to very common things (e.g., fear of animals, people of the opposite gender, or germs).

A slight phobia (5 points) can be overcome by making a simple ego throw. A successful die roll means you control your fear. An uncontrollable phobia gives 10 points. In this case you cannot confront the object of your fear without fainting, breaking down, or running away. A 15 point phobia is one that is not only uncontrollable but also dominates your life, e.g., a fear of the opposite gender or of being outdoors.

A phobia was usually caused by some unpleasant event when you were confronted with that which later became the object of your terror.

#### ***Some possible objects of a phobia:***

Altitude (acrophobia)

Animals, choose type: dogs, rats, etc.

- Blood
- Children
- Closed rooms (claustrophobia)
- Crowds (demophobia)
- Darkness (skotophobia)
- Daylight
- Death (necrophobia—corpses, cemeteries, skulls, symbols of death)

- Dirt (rupophobia)
- Fire (pyrophobia)
- Germs, viruses, any conceivable infection
- Holy places (hagiophobia)
- Insects (entemophobia)
- Loneliness (monophobia)
- Modern technology (technophobia)
- Music
- Noises, sudden or loud (brontophobia)
- Occult events
- Open places (agoraphobia)
- People of the opposite gender
- Plants, choose kind, e.g., mushrooms, creepers
- Sex
- Snakes
- Spiders (arachnophobia)
- Strangers and strange habits (xenophobia)
- Subterranean places (troglophobia)
- Supernatural beings
- Water surfaces, deep water

### **Persecuted**

**Points: 10**

For some reason, you are persecuted by people in general and the authorities in particular. You may belong to an oppressed minority (homosexual, immigrant, political extremist) or you may have done something that caused the persecution. You are subjected to repeated arrests, your house is searched, you have difficulties getting the necessary paperwork done at public agencies, foreign countries refuse to give you a visa, and if you ever speak out publicly, you are ridiculed or criticized in the tabloids.

### **Rationalist**

**Points: 15**

You firmly refuse to believe anything that is not acceptable to modern science. Magic and religion are just superstition or humbug. Demons and creatures of darkness cannot exist. There has to be a natural explanation. You also find it very hard to believe that there are secret societies which sacrifice to dark powers—they are just a few crazed lunatics who should be taken care of by the police. In other words, your outlook is pretty much that held by the authors of this game, and most other modern, secularized people. The problem is that the world isn't quite as you think...

### **Schizophrenia**

**Points: 20**

You have an uncontrollable ability to see through the veils of reason which most people surround themselves with to fend off madness.

### **Sexual neurosis**

**Points: 5/10/15**

You have a weird sexual behavior. Perhaps you are mortally scared of any contact with the opposite sex,

or you may be grossly oversexed. Often the two are combined to make up a truly screwed-up personality. Characters with sexual neuroses may be frigid, nymphomaniac, abnormally frightened of sex, sado-masochists, or have some other aberration that affects their sexual functioning. The Gamemaster decides what is permissible. Sex murderers and pedophiles should not be allowed as player characters.

**Sexually tantalizing** **Points: 10**

Persons of the opposite sex (or same sexual persuasion) are so fascinated by your beauty or personality that they cannot stop thinking about how to get in bed with you. All communication is disturbed by their infatuation, they keep losing their concentration when you speak to them, and keep their gaze fixed at your breasts/groin.

Eventually, all persons of the opposite sex with whom you meet more than a fleeting moment will try to make advances if the situation so permits. A Comeliness or Charisma score of 15 or more is demanded for you to have this disadvantage. Note that this really is a disadvantage, even though everybody of the opposite sex will be favorably disposed towards you, they will not care a whit about what you want or say.

**Split personality** **Points: 15**

You have two (or in extreme cases more) different personalities within you. It is usually opposite aspects of your personality which have split and are kept apart. One of the personalities may be strong and active, while the other is feeble and ineffective. Or perhaps one is violent and the other is peaceful. The player and the Gamemaster should decide together how the two personalities get together in the character. A usual way of doing it is to let one personality be active under normal circumstances, while the other one comes into action in crisis situations, when the character has been shocked. Or one personality may be active at work while the other comes out in leisure times.

People who have committed evil acts may develop split personalities to protect themselves from the guilt and the dark secret.

**Touchy** **Points: 5**

You have a short fuse. The least irritation is enough to make you furious and ready to use force. Anything that can be interpreted as criticism of you or your actions is particularly sensitive. In situations of stress, it is probable that you will lose control.

**Unwilling medium** **Points: 15**

Your disposition makes you vulnerable to possession. You are an open vessel for spirits and demons who desire a channel of communication, or a body that they can use for their purposes. Your resistance

against possession is only half of what it would normally be. In addition, spirits of various kinds have an uncanny ability to sniff out people like you...

**Wanted** **Points: 5/10/15**

You are sought by powerful enemies. It may be dark cults, industrial leaders, cannibals from the forgotten cities, or others. Even the police may be after you. Your enemies are probably armed. They are out to capture or kill you, and they will appear when the Gamemaster decides it is appropriate.

If you are chased by a single person or some not-too-powerful enemies like a small coven of cultists, the disadvantage gives 5 points. 15 points are given if your enemies are powerful, well-organized, armed and determined to pursue you relentlessly. The Gamemaster decides how many points the disadvantage gives in every individual case.

## **Advantages**

The advantages are of course fewer than the disadvantages. There are more things out there which threaten your balance than things which can restore it. Advantages are things that help you understand the world and people, and make it easier for you to learn things.

Some of the advantages may not be obviously useful to a character. For example, a code of honor, honesty and unselfishness may sometimes have a negative effect on your economy or limit your options in a struggle against enemies. But they will help you preserve your mental balance. They are traditional virtues which give you self-confidence and a sense of being a good and decent person. Since darkness comes from within, you will become evil only when you feel guilt. These virtues also make it easier for you to make—and keep—friends, maintain favorable business contacts, and be a respected citizen. So they have their values, too...

**Example:** You have chosen some advantages that are suitable for a secret agent. We sum up the points and get 65.

Gilbert has acquired his Code of honor in the service. It's a way to stay sane in a job where innocent lives are sacrificed in the diplomatic power-play. Gilbert never kills unarmed people or children. he doesn't use painful interrogation methods and refuses to carry out missions he feels are morally questionable. *The cost is 5 points.*

Gilbert has also acquired some Influential friends through his work. He knows people in the foreign ministry, the army general staff and the ministry of defense. He also knows criminals and people who work for intelligence organizations in other countries. *The cost is 15 points.*

Body awareness is a thing Gilbert was born with. *Cost: 20 points.*

In his work, Gilbert has developed a Sixth sense. he needs it to survive in a harsh, unpredictable reality. *It costs 15 points.*

Finally, Gilbert has learned how to Endure torture. *This costs 10 points.*

You now note how and where Gilbert got his advantages, on the character background sheet:

Paris 1970, the Military Academy. Gilbert shares a room with the future French minister of defense. They remain friends after Gilbert leaves the academy.

Chad 1972, the Foreign Legion. Gilbert makes friends with Bertrand Bonneville, who came to work on the French general staff from the end of the '70s.

Paris 1974, Intelligence training. Gilbert learns to endure torture.

North Africa 1975-77, in active service. Gilbert develops a sixth sense.

Algeria 1975-77, in active service. Gilbert gets to know colonel Mahmoud Aziz and other agents of the Algerian intelligence.

Paris, 1983. After a period of heavy drinking, Gilbert makes a silent promise never again to take part in anything like what happened in Oran. Code of Honor.

Paris, 1984. Gilbert begins to work as undercover agent in extremist movements and organized crime. He meets and befriends Marie Tardieu, an influential dealer in illegal weapons.

## Advantage Cost Summary

| Advantage            | Cost |
|----------------------|------|
| Altruism             | 5    |
| Animal friendship    | 15   |
| Artistic talent      | 10   |
| Body awareness       | 20   |
| Chivalry             | 5    |
| Code of honor        | 5    |
| Cultural flexibility | 10   |
| Empathy              | 15   |
| Endure cold/heat     | 10   |
| Endure hunger/thirst | 10   |
| Endure pain          | 15   |
| Endure torture       | 10   |
| Enhanced awareness   | 10   |
| Forgiving            | 5    |
| Gift for languages   | 10   |
| Good reputation      | 10   |
| Honesty              | 5    |
| Influential friends  | 15   |
| Intuition            | 15   |
| Largesse             | 5    |

|                       |    |
|-----------------------|----|
| Luck                  | 20 |
| Magical intuition     | 20 |
| Mathematical talent   | 10 |
| Motherliness          | 5  |
| Pacifism              | 5  |
| Resistance to illness | 15 |
| Sixth sense           | 15 |

### Altruism

**Cost: 5**

True unselfishness is a rare virtue. You help those who are in need, you give up your own advantages, abstain from pleasure and gain in order to do good to others.

### Animal friendship

**Cost: 15**

You are a natural talent at handling animals. They become calm and friendly when you are near. No carnivore will attack you except in self defence. No mount attempts to throw you out of the saddle. All the nasty bloodhounds around the bandit's headquarters become docile like lambs. Animal friends are also good with wolfmen and other humans who have lost control over their animal instincts.

### Artistic talent

**Cost: 10**

You have a flair for drawing, painting, dancing, singing, playing musical instruments, or some other artistic pursuit. You only expend half the normal number of skill points to acquire such skills.

### Body awareness

**Cost: 20**

Your body and your mind are one. Most people have inhibitions, tensions and hang-ups which separate body and mind. Not you; the unity between your body and your mind is total, and it gives you an unusually precise control over your body. People with body awareness only expend half the normal number of skill points to learn dancing, meditation and martial arts. This applies to the basic cost for martial arts—the cost for special techniques and ki-forces is not affected.

### Chivalry

**Cost: 5**

You are a true gentleman who always aids ladies in distress, regardless of the situation. Who qualifies as a lady is of course up to the player, but the definition should encompass at least half of the females in the world. A chivalrous character finds it almost impossible to harm or insult a woman, and will gladly expose himself to mortal danger in order to save a woman.

### Code of honor

**Cost: 5**

You believe in, and follow, a strict code of honor. It may originate in a religion which prohibits you from harming others, from lying and acting selfishly. It may be a chivalrous code that says you must be upright, bold, never deny yourself or yours, always avenge an insult and help family and friends. Write down which rules you mean to apply.



**Cultural flexibility** **Cost: 10**

You are the opposite of a xenophobe. You are easily compatible with people of any race, creed, social status or cultural background. You can mingle with them without feeling uneasy and without feeling any desire to criticize their ideas, traditions or habits. This does not mean that you automatically have any special knowledge of foreign cultures (that belongs under the skill "Man of the world"). You simply have a basic humility and respect for others which help you avoid any conflict based on cultural differences.

**Empathy** **Cost: 15**

The ability to know what other people and even animals feel. You always know what others think about you. Empathy also means that others find it easy to like you. It doesn't mean that everybody loves you, but in normal circumstances you make a favorable impression.

**Endure cold/heat** **Cost: 10**

You are unusually good at coping with extreme temperatures and only take half the normal losses from cold or heat.

**Endure hunger/thirst** **Cost: 10**

You are better than most people at enduring hunger and thirst. You only take half the normal losses from starvation and thirst.

**Endure pain** **Cost: 15**

You can endure terrible pain without flinching. You never need to make a constitution throw to avoid fainting—you are just as easily hurt or killed as anyone else.

**Endure torture** **Cost: 10**

You can stand an unusual amount of pain. You only need to roll under half your Constitution not to faint. You also have a psychologic resistance to terror, confusion and humiliation which makes it possible for you to endure torture without breaking down.

**Enhanced awareness** **Cost: 10**

You have an ability resembling that of schizophrenic people, to see into other dimensions, see fragments of the past and the future, and speak to the dead. The difference is that a person with an enhanced awareness knows how to handle this ability, and will not be damaged by it.

This does not mean that you can switch this ability on and off like a radio, and say "I am now trying to see into the future." The visions appear without asking, but you aren't terrified by them. The Gamemaster decides what form the visions take and when they appear. You may be able to provoke them into appearing, but you have no control over them.

**Forgiving** **Cost: 5**

A forgiving person is the opposite of the vindictive

type who takes an oath of revenge. You are prepared to forgive and forget insults and even very evil deeds against yourself. Other people perceive you as exceptionally magnanimous.

**Gift for languages** **Cost: 10**

You have a flair for languages, and only expend half the normal number of skill points to learn a foreign language. You also learn it twice as fast as other people.

**Good reputation** **Cost: 10**

You are generally liked and known as a nice person. You find it easy to get bank loans, make contacts and get recommendations and praise.

**Honesty** **Cost: 5**

In the long run, it pays to be honest. You always speak the truth and have a reputation for trustworthiness and truthfulness.

**Influential friends** **Cost: 15**

You have friends with power and influence. They can be businessmen, politicians, civil servants, celebrities or others who can get you in touch with the right people or help you out of a fix. Make a list of friends you could plausibly have, considering the character's background. Few people have more than 2-3 close friends, but you may also have some important acquaintances.

**Intuition** **Cost: 15**

You have an ability to "read" other people's body language, choice of words and other minute, subconscious signals, and understand what their real purpose is. It is impossible to lie to a person with intuition. With this advantage, you are also able to interpret the signals from several people and foresee what will happen in a group. You can feel when a riot is about to start, when a robber is going to attack and when you can frighten him off with a scream. It is even possible to interpret large bodies of people and feel when a war is about to start and when a political upheaval is coming.

**Largesse** **Cost: 5**

All my things are yours. Material possessions are unimportant, people are the only thing that really matters. You willingly part with your possessions to those who need them better. You give to charity and invest in beneficial foundations. Generous people make friends easily.

**Luck** **Cost: 20**

Destiny is on your side. In situations where the outcome is determined by chance (not skills or abilities), you are usually lucky. The Gamemaster rolls 1d20 in such situations. If the result is 10 or lower, you escape the falling brick/don't fall into the shaft/aren't recognized by the assassin/whatever.

The advantage "Luck" does not work in combat or when skills and abilities are used, except for gambling.

### **Magical intuition**

**Cost: 20**

This is a knack for controlling the inner and outer forces which are used in magic and occult sciences. Magical intuition is required for learning any ritual magic that may work. This is described further in the section "Magic".

You also work like a sort of magical compass needle and are able to sense the power of people, places and objects. You often notice small arcane events that other people's minds just rationalize away. You can literally see kirlian auras with your naked eyes. The color of an aura tells you something about the nature of the man or beast. See the table below for how to interpret the colors. To choose the advantage "magical intuition", the character must have a mental balance of lower than -25 or higher than +25.

#### **Kirlian Auras**

*(surround all people and creatures)*

|                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Bluish white    | dead material                                    |
| White           | purity, high positive balance or life near death |
| Yellowish white | weak life  |
| Yellow          | fear, terror                                     |
| Orange          | life, positive balance                           |
| Red             | aggression                                       |
| Dark red        | sex, sensuality                                  |
| Violet          | psychosis, confusion, negative stability         |
| Blue            | rage, negative balance                           |
| Bluish black    | sadism, evil                                     |
| Grey            | sickness, fear                                   |
| Black           | rage, extremely low balance (-100 or lower)      |
| Turquoise       | jealousy, hatred, envy                           |
| Gold            | extremely high balance (+100 or higher)          |

### **Mathematical talent**

**Cost: 10**

An unusual knack for numbers and logic. You work like a living calculator and are able to do difficult mathematical operations very quickly, in your head. You only need to expend half the normal number of points for the skills mathematics, statistics, logics and physics.

### **Motherliness**

**Cost: 5**

You have a knack for making children, younger women and all men feel safe and cared for. Crying children become silent and smiling when you are near. Worried, frightened or irritated men grow calm and contented. This has nothing to do with sex; rather, everyone tends to think of you as his mother. No man except the most callous or mentally warped will attack you or insult you.

### **Pacifism**

**Cost: 5**

Violence is evil and never leads to anything else than more violence. There is no right use of force, only uncontrolled outbursts of vindictiveness and aggression. A pacifist does not use force even in self defence, regardless of what he or others are subjected to. It is a virtue which inspires awe, admiration and sometimes, angered frustration.

### **Resistance to illness**

**Cost: 15**

Your health is unusually strong. You virtually never become ill. You only take half the normal losses from poisons and drugs.

### **Sixth sense**

**Cost: 15**

You often have a feeling about things, and it usually turns out to be right. Your premonitions are both about good and bad things. There is a cold running along your back if someone is hiding behind the door with a large axe. You sense that you should not take this particular plane (and for good reason: it later flies straight into a mountain). A sixth sense only applies to what happens to yourself. It is not the same thing as the general feeling a person with intuition has.

# **Mental Balance**

**Y**our mental balance determines how well you stand up to terrible experiences and what happens if you are shocked. The mental balance depends on your advantages and disadvantages. For nonhuman characters, the balance is also affected by their limitations.

Mental balance is the sum of all points for disadvantages, minus the sum of all points for advantages and,

when applicable, limitations. If the result is a negative number, you have a negative mental balance.

When a character experiences a terrifying event, he or she makes an ego throw. If this fails, characters with a large negative mental balance are in trouble. They may lose control over their feelings, and their actions are controlled by their disadvantages. The lower mental balance, the more time it takes for the character to

get a grip on himself and start acting rationally again. A very low mental balance increases the risk of incurable psychosis. Below -75, a severe shock will contort the character's body.

A high mental balance protects the character against terrifying events. He or she will not lose control easily, even if a shock results. Characters with a very high mental balance are hardly affected at all by terrifying events.

Rules about terrifying events, possession and mental illness can be found in the section *Meeting With Terror* (pg 83)

## **Simplified Characters**

You calculate mental balance in the usual way, by subtracting the points for disadvantages from the points for advantages.

## **Negative Balance**

A very low mental balance changes your personality. Your body and your psyche deviate from the firm, balanced personality that all "normal" people try to maintain. Below we will describe these effects briefly. In the section "The Awakening", you will find more details about very low stabilities (under -100). We recommend that no player starts with a balance lower than -25.

- 15 You emit a weak negative aura which makes children and animals uneasy in your presence.
- 25 Disturbed. You may have magical intuition. You are so ill that a health control would single you out as abnormal.
- 50 You are so warped that a mental examination would classify you as mentally ill.
- 75 Psychotic. When shocked, your body changes. These effects are described in the section "Meeting with terror." You may begin to get limitations as well as disadvantages. You are getting problems with maintaining emotional contact with other people and will break off any relationship that gets too intimate.
- 100 Your advantages drop by one point for every balance point under -100. You are permanently losing control of your disadvantages, just like you could do temporarily at higher balance levels. Your light sides take the form of a light shadow that follows you and attempts to contact you (see *The Awakening*).

## **Positive Balance**

A very high positive balance also gradually changes the character away from what is normal among

humans. The effects of high positive balance levels are described in "The Awakening."

- +15 You emit a weak positive aura which makes children and animals feel comfortable in your presence.
- +25 You may have magical intuition. You are known to be a harmonious and stable person, whom everybody likes.
- +50 You have a natural empathy. People feel safe in your company.
- +75 Beings with a negative mental balance down to -100 avoid you if they can. You cannot be possessed by creatures with a higher mental balance than -250.
- +100 You automatically get the advantage "body control" if you didn't have it already. Creatures with a negative balance of -200 or lower avoid you if they can. For every balance point over +100, your disadvantages disappear by one point. You are no longer able to use force or to feel a destructive aggression in any situation. You will meet your own dark shadow, a materialization of your repressed dark sides (see *The Awakening*).

## **Changes in Mental Balance**

The balance will change during the game, as the character gets new disadvantages or gets rid of old ones. The balance may also change as a result of events that the characters experience, or you can change them by expending experience points. This is described in the section *Experience and Practice* (pg 72)

**Example:** Gilbert has paid 65 points for advantages and received 85 points for disadvantages.  $65 - 85 = -20$ . You write down -20 under Mental balance on the character sheet. This means that Gilbert is a rather unstable person. In a terrifying situation he may lose control of his disadvantages. If his balance drops another five steps, he will no longer be in acceptable mental health.

**Background:** If you look at when Gilbert got his various advantages and disadvantages, you will see that his mental balance was dangerously low in his youth. At the age of twelve it was down to -40. It then gradually improved up to the 1980s, when it was close to zero about two years before his divorce. Then it dropped again, to the present level. It's good for the gamemaster to know this because it tells him what kind of an impression Gilbert made earlier in life. People who met him in his teens probably thought he was wacko. Those who knew him in the late 70s or early 80s saw a stable and harmonious man.



# Skills

**I** had been working all night on the program. Dawn was approaching when I finally found the bug. Just one final test, and it would work. Or so I thought. I ran the program. It worked perfectly at the beginning. It sorted the data, the first calculations were OK. Then, the screen went black and the hard disk started making a strange whirring noise. I tried to reboot the machine—no result. I turned off the power, but it kept on humming. Suddenly all the lights in the office went out, and I found myself in total darkness.

Damn. A fuse must have blown. But the computer was still making the same noise. I fumbled my way across the room and found the door to the generator room, but it was locked. Strange... the alarm system must have cut in and engaged the magnetic locks. I stumbled out into the garage and found a flashlight. There was a whirring noise, and I turned the flashlight on—just in time to avoid the power drill that was flying straight toward my face! I ducked, parried an electric screwdriver that was hurtling toward my throat. I leapt out of the



*garage and slammed the door shut behind me.*

*With trembling hands, I began to disconnect the automatic lock on the door to the generator room. A tingling in my fingers warned me, and I jerked my hands away just in time to avoid what must have been a lethal shock. But the*

*door was unlocked. I opened it with a pair of isolated pliers, jumped inside, grabbed the fire axe and cut off the main power cord from the generator.*

*"The humming noise stopped."*

**T**here are three kinds of skills: basic, general and academic. Everyone has a chance to succeed with basic skills.

The default score is 3. General and academic skills are such that you have learned in your profession or otherwise trained earlier in your life. To get academic skills, you must have an education score of 13 or more.

Choose the skills that you want, and that are appropriate for your character's background, and note them on the character sheet. The basic skills are already noted, and all you need to do is write down if you want higher scores than 3 at some of them.

## **New Skills**

We have provided a selection of possible skills. If you want to create new skills, feel free to do so. The Gamemaster decides what abilities control the new skill. You then expend skill points to acquire them in the regular way. A profession often demands the creation of new skills. Jobs like game designer, computer hacker or sect leader will call for skills which do not appear in our list.

## **Skill Points**

The skill points are used to determine your skill scores. You have 150 skill points to distribute among the skills you choose, plus any modifications for advantages and disadvantages. That is the sum recommended for ordinary characters. If you and your Gamemaster want to create weaker or more powerful characters, you may agree on distributing more or less points. An average "non-heroic" character has 100 skill points, a very experienced and skilled person gets 200 points, and a truly powerful and knowledgeable character may distribute 250 points. If you and your GM so wish, you may have even more powerful characters.

Every skill point expended increases your score in the skill by one. However, every skill is controlled by one of the basic abilities. You cannot raise your skill score above your score for that ability. Example: By expending 15 skill points, you may get a score of 15 in the skill "Dancing"—but only if you have a score of at least 15 in the basic ability "agility", which controls "dancing." The description of each skill states which ability controls it.

If you want to increase the skill score above your score in the controlling ability, every step costs 3 skill

points. Thus, for a person with a score of 15 in agility to get a score of 20 in "dancing", he or she needs to expend  $(15 + 5 \times 3 =) 30$  skill points.

This reflects that it is very difficult to learn something you lack the natural talent or physical requirements for. Someone with an agility of 20 will easily learn acrobatics to get a skill score of 20. But a stiff-jointed person with an agility of 7 will have to practice and work a lot more to become equally skilled. This takes time and energy, and detracts more from that person's chances of learning other things, i.e. it costs a lot of skill points.

We recommend that no character starts the game with a score over 20 in any skill. It is possible to increase skills to over 20, however, and specially trained scientists or elite athletes may, as an exception, be allowed an extremely high score in one skill.

## **Simplified Characters**

You have two skills with a score of 18, two with a score of 15, and eight skills with a score of 10. Choose skills according to the archetype, and write them down with the scores. You don't have to worry about which abilities control the skills. You are free to choose a score of 18 in a skill where your controlling ability score is only 12. But later, when you want to improve your abilities, you will find this more difficult when your controlling ability score is lower than the skill score.

Martial arts cost extra. A martial art on pupil level costs one skill with a score of 18. At teacher level, it costs you two skills, scores 18 and 15. At master level, it costs three skills, scores 18, 15 and 15. Apart from the martial art, a master martial artist will only have one other skill with a score of 18 and eight skills with a score of 10.

## **Basic Skills**

Even if you haven't spent any skill points on basic skills, you still have a chance to succeed with them. All characters automatically have a skill score of 3 in basic skills. If you want a higher score, you expend skill points from 3 and up (not for the first 3 steps). Make a note of the score of 3 for all basic skills that you haven't increased.



## Academic Skills

To get any academic skill, you must have an education of 13 or higher. That approximates having at least begun a university education. In all other respects, academic skills work like other skills.

In every academic skill, there are various specialties. These cost one skill point per step. But in order to learn a specialty, you must have a score of at least 5 in the basic field of skill to which it belongs. For example, to learn Physics, you must first learn the academic field "Natural science".

Nothing stops you from having academic skills that do not fit in with your profession. You might have attended evening classes or studied some subject as a hobby.

## Weapon Skills

Detailed descriptions of the weapon skills will be found in the sections about Combat and Weapons and Armor. The skill table only mentions which basic ability governs each weapon skill. Every type of weapon belongs to a separate skill, e.g., the skill "Handgun" contains any type of firearms designed to be used with one hand (revolver or pistol). Skills with weapons for melee, and with throwing weapons are governed by Strength. The weapon types for melee and throwing weapons are: Dagger, Throwing Weapons, Impact Weapons, Pole Arms, Sword, Whips and Chains, and Axe. Skills with projectile weapons are controlled by Agility. The types are: Automatic Weapons, Rifle and Crossbow, Bow, Handgun, and Heavy Weapons. A special type of weapon skill is for natural weapons such as fists and feet, which are governed by either of the skills Unarmed combat or Martial arts. If you have skill with a type of weapon, you can use all weapons belonging to that type without penalty.

All weapon skills are basic skills. This means all characters automatically have a score of 3 with any weapon.

## Weapon Maneuvers

Weapon maneuvers are specialized weapon skills that require that you can handle a weapon. For instance, they can allow you to shoot twice during an action or draw a gun unusually fast. The weapon maneuvers are not basic skills and are treated like general skills.

## Martial Arts

Martial arts are a special kind of combat skills, which are described in a separate section. You expend a number of skill points for each martial art, and get a set of skills which belong to that form. By adding more points you can acquire special maneuvers and forces

which belong to that martial art. To acquire a Budo maneuver you must have a skill score in the martial art in question. Ki-forces you can only have if you are a master or grand master in a martial art. Ki-forces and Budo maneuvers work like ordinary skills in other respects, and they are described in the section on Martial Arts.

## Languages

All characters speak their mother tongue fluently. They are also able to read that language. Your chance of successfully deciphering or producing a difficult written message in that language is equal to your education score.

All other languages are separate skills. Speaking, reading and writing a language are all part of a single skill—if you can speak a language, you can also read and write it. If, for some reason, you decide to be illiterate, you simply decide that the character cannot read and write. This does not affect any points or scores.

## The Skill Score

The skill score is your chance to successfully use a skill. It is normally a number between 1 and 20. When you use the skill, you roll 1d20, and a result equal to or lower than your skill score means you managed to do what you were attempting. If the result is higher than your skill score, you failed.

## The Effect

If you succeeded with the skill throw, you subtract the throw from your skill rating to see how well you succeeded. This is known as the effect. An effect of 0 means you only barely achieved the desired effect, or only a part thereof. If the effect is 20, you did superbly.

The effect is used to create suspense in the game. If you get a result of 30, you may have achieved something you hadn't even thought possible, like looping a helicopter. A result of 0 is a narrow escape, e.g., if the roll is for flying a helicopter, you barely avoid crashing.

The GM may prescribe a minimum effect that you must get in order to achieve what you wanted. For example, if you are searching for information, some of the facts you might have found out will remain unknown if you don't get a sufficient effect. Or your elegant acrobatic maneuver with a rope between the roofs in Paris ends on the wrong house. Or your disguise might pass the first tests, but is revealed when you reach the inner circle of the azghouls—if you didn't get a sufficient effect on your die roll for the skill "disguise".

There are seven levels of quality which determine how well you succeed. The GM uses them as a guideline, not a firm rule. If you are uncertain of how much it takes to achieve your aims, you can see in the table

below how three different types of skills work with the effect. Determine how difficult the task is, and set the minimum required effect accordingly.

*The examples below are for three types of skills:*

Investigative—e.g., Forensics, History, Information retrieval, Computers, Occultism.

Mobility maneuvers—e.g., Dodge, Sneak, Swim, Acrobatics.

Creative—e.g., Disguise, Crafts, Journalism, Sketching/painting/sculpture, Acting.

When two skills are pitted against each other, for example the nepharite's "Search" against you "Hide", the GM will subtract your effect from your opponent's. As a rule, the GM subtracts the effect of the "passive" skill from that of the "active" one.

| Effect | Quality lvl   | Investigative skills  |
|--------|---------------|---|
| 0      | Very poor     | Almost no information found.  |
| 1-4    | Acceptable    | Some interesting facts. You sense that there is more.   |
| 5-15   | Normal        | You find the most important data, the things that you really need                                 |
| 16-20  | Good          | You find most of the sought information, and you know if there is anything more to look for.      |
| 21-25  | Very good     | You find almost everything there is to know, and you know where to look for the rest.             |
| 26-29  | Extraordinary | You find everything there is to know.   |
| 30+    | Outstanding   | On top of finding all existing knowledge, you also uncover some new facts that nobody knew about. |

| Effect | Quality lvl   | Mobility Maneuvers   |
|--------|---------------|--|
| 0      | Very poor     | You stumble and make a fool of yourself.   |
| 1-4    | Acceptable    | Small obstacles are no problem. With a little help, perhaps you can do something heroic. |
| 5-15   | Normal        | Most obstacles are overcome. You can do a heroic act.                                    |
| 16-20  | Good          | You overcome all normal obstacles, and heroic deeds are no problem.                      |
| 21-25  | Very good     | You overcome even very difficult obstacles. Heroic deeds are routine.                    |
| 26-29  | Extraordinary | A world class performance. Anything that is at all pos-                                  |

sible for humans is within your reach.  
 30+ Outstanding You are simply the best. Nothing is impossible, no obstacle too difficult.

| Effect | Quality lvl   | Creative skills   |
|--------|---------------|---|
| 0      | Very poor     | Not even your friends will praise you for this one.   |
| 1-4    | Acceptable    | Looks good to most ordinary people. Your friends approve.                                       |
| 5-15   | Normal        | Even more qualified people are fooled/impressed. Your friends love it. A professional piece.    |
| 16-20  | Good          | Many professionals are fooled/impressed. Your friends are ecstatic.                             |
| 21-25  | Very good     | Even the professionals are impressed. It is very difficult to unmask/understand/copy your work. |
| 26-29  | Extraordinary | You fool everyone or impress all except the very best in the world.                             |
| 30+    | Outstanding   | You are unique. Nobody can unmask/understand or copy your work.                                 |

**Example:** Gilbert sneaks across the roof toward a sentry at the headquarters of the German arms smugglers. He has a score of 15 in Sneak. You roll 1d20 and get 8. The difference between 8 and 15 is 7. Gilbert's effect is 7. This is Gilbert's effect; a normal result. The sentry senses that something is wrong. The Gamemaster makes a Perception throw for him. His Perception is 12 and the roll gives 11, so he only just makes it. The difference between 12 and 11 is 1. That is the sentry's effect. But Gilbert had an effect of 7, which is now subtracted from the sentry's effect, giving -6. The sentry does not notice Gilbert. Gilbert gets all the way up to the sentry and makes an attempt to knock him down with a karate blow to the head. His score for Punch is 15, you roll 1d20 and get 8. This indicates that he hits the sentry. Since Punch is a weapon skill, you don't calculate the effect in the normal way. Instead, you roll 1d20 for damage. The result is 18, and you consult the weapons table for Punch and read the result: 18 is a light wound.

## Automatic Success

In most ordinary situations, there is no need to roll a die to determine whether you succeed. Anyone with 5 or more in car driving is able to handle a car without

steering into the ditch. It is only when you have to zigzag between freight trucks while simultaneously defending yourself from the axe murderer in the back seat, that you need to do a skill throw to see if you manage to stay on the road.

This applies to a lot of skills, particularly professional ones. Skill throws are only made in special, demanding or critical circumstances. Sometimes it is enough to make an effect throw, as in combat, to see how well you manage. For example, most people are able to cook a meal if they have a stove and some ingredients—but what it tastes like might be a different matter.

The GM should use his common sense to determine when a die roll is called for. Too much die rolling only interferes with the roleplaying.

## Perfect & Disastrous Throws

Very high and very low results of the skill throw will modify the effect. With a very low roll you succeed better than expected. A roll of 20 means that something has gone wrong.

If you roll less than 1/10 (rounded up) of your skill score, you have achieved a perfect throw. You may add +10 to the effect.

A roll of 20 *always* means that something has gone completely wrong. For those with a skill score of 20 or less, it is a disaster, e.g., the driver crashes the car, the climber falls. The GM uses his imagination to decide what happens. If your skill score was 21 or more, a roll of 20 means a failure, but not always a complete disaster. You may then roll 1d20 a second time. If you roll under your skill score minus 20 you have then simply failed. If your skill score was 40 or more you fail disastrously only if you roll two 20s in a row. But if your skill score is 4 or less you fail disastrously also on a roll of 19.

For weapons skills, there is a table which shows what should happen when you make a disastrous throw. See under Combat.

**Example:** Gilbert has 170 points to distribute on skills; 150 basic points, and 20 points for having a mental balance of -20. You consult the archetype and choose some skills that seem appropriate. Note Gilbert's scores for the abilities that control these skills, and choose how high his skill scores should be. Then you write them on the character sheet, and describe in the character background where and how Gilbert acquired them.

Remember to note a score of 3 in those basic skills on which you don't expend any points.

You will need to look up the individual karate

skills in the section "Martial arts." Gilbert is a karate student, and he pays 15 points for this since he has the advantage "body awareness." Note the basic scores for karate skills at student level, and distribute 10 points to increase them.

| Ability Skill       | Skill score         | Point cost score | (mod)      |
|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|------------|
| Arabic              | 15                  | 5                | 5          |
| Auto. weapons       | 18                  | 13               | 10         |
| Bugging             | 15                  | 10               | 10         |
| Dagger              | 15                  | 14               | 11 (basic) |
| Spanish             | 15                  | 10               | 10         |
| Interrogation       | 12                  | 10               | 10         |
| Hide                | 10                  | 3                | 0 (basic)  |
| Burglary            | 10                  | 10               | 10         |
| Throw               | 15                  | 3                | 0 (basic)  |
| Climb               | 18                  | 3                | 0 (basic)  |
| Net of contacts:    |                     |                  |            |
| Intel. services     | 12                  | 12               | 12         |
| Drive vehicle: car  | 10                  | 10               | 10         |
| Search              | 10                  | 3                | 0 (basic)  |
| Read/ write French  | 11                  | 11               | 0 (basic)  |
| Melee &             |                     |                  |            |
| thrwng wpns         | 15                  | 3                | 0 (basic)  |
| Handgun             | 18                  | 18               | 15 (basic) |
| Swim                | 11                  | 3                | 0 (basic)  |
| Firearms            | 18                  | 3                | 0 (basic)  |
| Unarmed             |                     |                  |            |
| combat              | 15                  | 3                | 0 (basic)  |
| Sneak               | 18                  | 15               | 12 (basic) |
| English             | 15                  | 5                | 5          |
| Dodge               | 18                  | 3                | 0 (basic)  |
| Man/world           | 15                  | 15               | 15         |
| Martial art: karate |                     |                  |            |
| Student level       | 15 (body awareness) |                  |            |
| Punch               | 15                  |                  |            |
| Kick                | 15                  |                  |            |
| Parry               | 18                  |                  |            |
| Dodge               | 16                  |                  |            |
| Stick               | 6                   |                  |            |
| Budo maneuvers:     |                     |                  |            |
| Disarm              | 18                  | 10               | 10         |
| Flying kick         | 15                  | 10               | 10         |

Background: All of Gilbert's skills are clearly connected with his profession as secret agent, or his previous career in the French Foreign legion. You note approximately when he learned the various skills; the military ones in the Legion and the agent ones while in Intelligence.

## Basic Skills

### AGL-BASED

Climb

### Projectile weapons

Automatic weapons

Rifle and crossbow

Bow

Handgun

Heavy weapons

Sneak

Dodge

### STR-BASED

Throw

### Melee and Throwing weapons

Dagger

Throwing weapons

Impact weapons

Pole arms

Sword

Whips and chains

Axe

Unarmed combat

### CON-BASED

Swim

### PER-BASED

Hide

Search

### EDU-BASED

Read/write your native language

## Skill Descriptions

### Climb

**Ability: AGL**

The GM decides what effect is needed, taking into account that it's more difficult to scale a smooth wall than to climb up a scaffolding. A long climb may mean that you have to roll several times. An insufficient effect means you hang where you are without getting either up or down. You can make a new attempt, but each attempt takes ten minutes. A disaster means you fall down. The GM consults the section *Falling Damage*.

Climbing equipment such as ropes and pitons will add +5 to the skill score when appropriate.

### Projectile Weapons

**Ability: AGL**

This is the skill to hit things with some sort of projectile-launching weapon. There are five types of such weapons, and each type is a separate skill which must be learned by expending skill points, and is not affected by any other projectile weapon skill you may have.

The types are: Automatic Weapons, Rifle and Crossbow, Bow, Handgun, and Heavy Weapons. More

details about weapon skills will be found in the Combat section, *Weapons*.

Since these are basic skills, everybody has a basic chance to hit. But in order to be able to fire the weapon at all, someone must have shown you the basic mechanics—such as how to release the safety catch, or where to put the arrow on the bow. There are technicalities about all projectile weapons which are not obvious to a person who never handled one. If you must figure out by yourself how the weapon works, you need to make an Ego throw. This takes a few minutes—so it's not a very good idea in a combat situation.

### Sneak

**Ability: AGL**

For every two kilos of load the character is carrying, subtract one from the effect. The GM decides what effect is necessary to avoid detection. The difficulty depends on many external circumstances such as creaky floors, darkness, debris on the floor, background noise, and so on. If you roll higher than the required effect, the number you rolled above the limit are subtracted from the effect for all those who are actively searching for you.

A high effect means that not even mice and birds notice your passage. A low effect means you make some noise, but not enough to be spotted directly.

### Dodge

**Ability: AGL**

Dodging is the art of avoiding an attack. Success means you step out of the way, and your opponent misses. Dodging is only fully effective in melee. Throwing weapons can be dodged, but the chance is only half your normal skill score. It is not possible to dodge projectile weapons. The effect determines how well you manage to avoid the attack. You subtract your effect from the effect for your opponent's attack. If you succeed with the dodge but his effect was higher, you are hurt—but not as seriously as you would have been if your dodge had failed.

Dodging counts as an action. The skill "Dodge" is part of many martial arts.

### Throwing

**Ability: STR**

This skill entails throwing an object as far as possible and hitting what you are aiming at. How far you can throw depends on the size and weight of the object. No character can throw anything that weighs more than his load capacity.

A high effect indicates a long and well-aimed throw. A low effect may mean that the thrown object has too little power when it hits the target to do any effect. Throwing weapons are controlled by separate skills—not "Throwing".

### Melee Weapons & Throwing Weapons

**Ability: STR**

Not all weapons are controlled by the same ability.

You must acquire knowledge about every type of weapon separately. There are six different types of melee- and throwing weapons: daggers, clubs, pole arms, swords, axes and throwing weapons. A skill means you can handle all weapons belonging to one type. Since all these skills are basic, everyone has a small chance to succeed with a weapon, regardless of training and weapon type.

The weapons and weapon skills are described in detail under "Weapons" in the Combat section.

### **Unarmed Combat**

**Ability: STR**

The art of boxing, kicking, throwing and wrestling. Detailed rules for this type of combat will be found in the Combat section under "Martial arts." Characters with skill at unarmed combat have probably learned a martial art. You can choose to have simply "unarmed combat" as a skill, but this gives you none of the advantages that the martial arts confer, with greater damage and special maneuvers. "Unarmed combat" is the type of skill you might find in a person who has often been in fights, but has received no formal training—simple punches and kicks. The skill includes kicking, punching and wrestling. Damage for kicks, punches and wrestling techniques will be found in the weapons tables.

Unarmed combat is counted as a weapon skill, so the effect is a separate die-roll, just as for weapon skills.

### **Swim**

**Ability: CON**

If your score is 5 or higher, you can normally swim for a number of minutes equal to your CON+STR, without having to roll any dice. After that, you must roll under your skill score not to sink. A successful throw means you stay afloat for another CON+STR minutes.

For every throw you make, your Endurance drops five points. When it reaches zero, you begin to sink. You are totally exhausted, and the GM nastily consults the rules about drowning. If you get ashore before that happens, you can be on your feet after half an hour. Characters with a score of less than 5 must roll immediately when they get into the water to determine whether they stay afloat.

It is normally possible to swim five meters during one combat phase, provided that your effect is at least 5. A lower effect indicates that you missed a couple of strokes. An effect lower than 3 means you took an involuntary gulp of cold water. The effect is reduced one step for every kilo you are carrying.

When there are high waves or very cold water, the GM may demand a higher effect for the swimming to be successful.

### **Hide**

**Ability: PER**

In order to avoid being seen, you must have somewhere to hide. The more open the terrain, the higher effect is needed to avoid detection. If the player rolls higher than the required effect, subtract the extra points rolled from the effect of any pursuers looking for him (i.e. using the skill *Search*).

### **Search**

**Ability: PER**

The GM decides how high an effect you need to find something. If you are looking for someone who is hiding, the effect is modified by how well your target manages to hide. If he rolls over the minimum required, the extra points rolled are subtracted from your effect.

A high effect means you find everything there is. A low effect may mean you only find part of what you might have found.

### **Read/Write Native**

#### **Language**

**Ability: EDU**

In this skill, all characters begin the game with a skill score equal to their EDU.

A good effect means you manage to read/write without errors, or that you express yourself well, or that you interpret a difficult text. You do not normally need to roll any dice in order to read/write or speak. It is only when you need to do something difficult involving the language that you must roll. It might be



to read a very old text, or a complicated one, or to produce a literary text that meets high demands.

If you fail to decipher a difficult text, you can try again. How long it takes depends on the length and difficulty of the text. It can take hours, days, months...



## General Skills

### AGL-BASED

Acrobatics

Budo maneuvers:

Disarm

Lightning attack

Break grip

Break weapon

Circle cut

Circle kick

Flying kick

Iaido

Kiai

Combine

Soften attack

Knock out

Strangling grip

Tiger leap

Tiger paw

Evasion

Uppercut

Whirlwind

Dancing

Parachuting

Falling technique

Craft

Sport

Martial art (AGL/STR)

Play instrument

Scuba diving

### WEAPON MANEUVERS

Change targets

Double shot

Feint

Combine

Quick draw

### STR-BASED

Budo maneuvers:

Circle kick

Flying kick

Knock out

Tiger paw

### EGO-BASED

Astrology

Bugging

Accounting and book keeping

Budo maneuver: Kiai

Computers

Electronics

First Aid

Poisons and drugs

Hypnosis

Information retrieval

Ki-forces

Cryptography

Cooking

Meditation

Numerology

Motor mechanics

Occultism

Parapsychology

Radio communications

Seamanship

Written report

Languages

Demolition

Security systems

Pictorial arts

Estimate value

Man of the world

Survival

### CHA-BASED

Diplomacy

Etiquette

Seduction

Interrogation

Disguise

Net of contacts

Riding

Singing

Acting

Fortune telling

Rhetoric

### PER-BASED

Forensics

Photography

Forgery

Burglary

Drive vehicle

Piloting

Shadow

Gambling

Night Combat

Without ability base

Two-handed combat

## AGL-based Skills

### Acrobatics

#### Ability: AGL

You can do somersaults, climb ropes, swing like Tarzan in trapezes and do other acrobatic feats. A high effect means you move perfectly, a low effect means you risk losing control over your muscles.

### Budo Maneuvers

#### Ability: AGL

Budo maneuvers are special maneuvers taught within the different martial arts. A skill score is bought for your skill points, just like ordinary skills. These maneuvers are described in the section *Martial arts*. You must be versed in the appropriate martial art to be allowed to buy a budo maneuver.

### Dancing

#### Ability: AGL

You know the basics of dancing, not just the kind everyone can do in a club, but the kind people might even want to watch. You are trained in two specific types of dancing—classical ballet, jazz ballet, Latin

American showdancing, rock n'roll, folk dancing (specify culture), or something else. Choose two categories.

A high effect means that your dance is well executed and enjoyable to watch, a low effect means you barely manage to stay in the rhythm.

### Parachuting

#### Ability: AGL

You know how to use a parachute, jump, land, and fold the chute. A high effect means you manage to land exactly where you want, and do it quickly. If your score is 10 or higher, you are able to perform tricks and patterns with others.

### Falling Technique

#### Ability: AGL

If you fall or are thrown, you can roll with it and get back up on your feet without getting hurt. In this respect, the skill is identical to falling as taught in various martial arts. But "falling technique" is a little more. You also have the ability to slow a fall from high alti-

tude, if there is a wall or something nearby to use for breaking. Your effect is subtracted from the effect of the injuries you receive from such a fall.

### **Craft**

### **Ability: AGL**

Determine which craft you have mastered. It can be anything from sewing to jewelry or bookbinding. This skill is used primarily to control things you have learned as hobbies. If you are trying to make something of professional quality or difficulty, the GM may demand a minimum effect for success. A high effect means you managed to make exactly what you had in mind, a low effect indicates a less sensational result.

### **Sport**

### **Ability: AGL/STR/CON**

Determine which sport you are good at. Every sport is a separate skill.

AGL-based sports are e.g., sprint running, jumping, wrestling, golf, alpine skiing, gymnastics, ice hockey and all ball games except American football.

STR-based sports are e.g., weight lifting, discus and other throwing sports, tug-of-war, American football.

CON-based sports are e.g., swimming, long distance running, rowing.

Any sport that involves riding on animals is based on COM.

Motor sports are based on PER.

A high effect means you achieve something good, exactly what depends on the sport; you score a goal, jump very far, run fast, etc. The GM must determine from case to case what you can achieve.

### **Martial Art**

### **Ability: AGL/STR**

There are four martial arts in **Kult**: jujutsu, karate, kendo, and commando training. Each art has four levels of knowledge: student, instructor, master, and grand master. You expend a lump sum of skill points to get a level in the art: 20 points to be a student, 30 to be an instructor, 50 to be a master, and 75 to be a grand master. Every martial art contains several different skills. The higher your level, the better scores you get in the skills involved.

On top of the basic martial art skills, you can also acquire special maneuvers and ki-forces by expending skill points. The martial arts are described further in a chapter of their own.

### **Play Instrument**

### **Ability: AGL**

The player chooses which instrument to play. Every instrument is a separate skill, though of course anyone

who can play the piano can also play other keyboard instruments (organ, synthesizer, cembalo) almost as well, a trumpeter will probably be able to handle other brass instruments reasonably well, and so on. The skill also means you can read music and you know some pieces.

A high effect means you play well and the audience wants to hear more. A low effect means you only manage to play without obvious errors, but without feeling.

### **Scuba Dive**

### **Ability: AGL**

You know how to handle all normal diving equipment. You know how fast you can ascend without getting the Bends, how to find your way under the water, and where it is dangerous to dive.

A high effect means you swim fast, know where you are and can do whatever you set out to do underwater. A lower effect may mean that you get problems, the work takes longer than you anticipated, etc.

### **Weapon Maneuvers**

### **Ability: AGL**

The term maneuvers refers to special tricks and techniques you can learn to use in combat. You can only use one maneuver at a time unless you have the maneuver Combine. To succeed with a maneuver you must first succeed with your

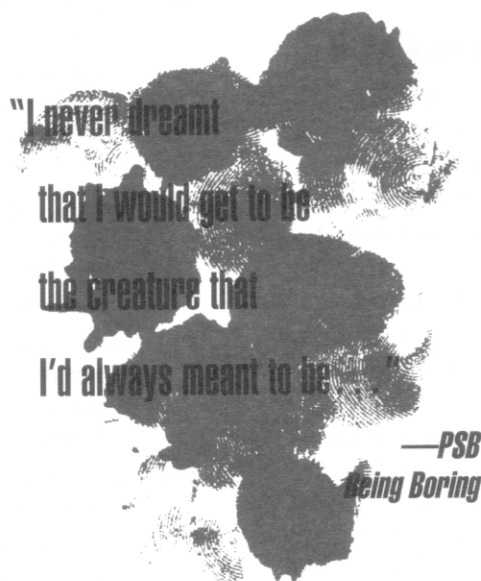
weapon skill throw, and then with the maneuver. Each maneuver is a skill which is bought in the ordinary way.

**Change targets:** Normally it takes an action to change the target of your attack. If you know Change targets it takes no action at all; you can attack your new opponent at once.

**Double shot:** You can fire so rapidly with your handgun that it only takes one action to fire two bullets. There are no penalties and both bullets hit the same body part.

**Feint:** You are able to fool your opponent with a feint. Feints work against all kinds of weapons. Your opponent gets +5 on his attack throw and you get -5 on yours.

**Combine:** You are able to do several things simultaneously. You may perform one extra action in an action phase than you normally are allowed to. However, this action is deducted from those available to you in the combat round.



**Quick draw:** You are able to draw your weapon extremely fast. This takes no action, you can attack immediately from having the weapon sheathed/holstered. The maneuver is valid for handguns, melee and throwing weapons. Note that the weapon must be within easy reach and not, e.g., in your bag.

## **Strength-based Skills**

### **Budo Maneuvers**

**Ability: STR**

Budo maneuvers are special maneuvers taught within the different martial arts. A skill score is bought for your skill points, just like ordinary skills. These maneuvers are described in the section "Martial arts." You must be versed in the appropriate martial art to be allowed to buy a budo maneuver.

## **Ego-based Skills**

### **Astrology**

**Ability: EGO**

The art of interpreting astronomical phenomena in relation to events on Earth. The astrologer can make horoscopes to see the future of a person, and can calculate an individual's possibilities and personality from the time of birth. He believes there is a correlation between astronomical constellations and events in the past and the present. An astrologer automatically has some knowledge of astronomy; 1/4 of the skill score for astrology.

A high effect means that the astrologer believes himself to see correlations and truths. Astrology in this game does not work like magic. It normally doesn't "work" at all. The GM can allow the astrologer to make a true prediction, if this serves the plot. But normally, astrology is very bogus and has little or no relevance for reality (even though the astrologer may believe in what he is doing).

### **Bugging**

**Ability: EGO**

Knowledge of how to plant hidden microphones, cameras, receivers and other equipment for secret surveillance of other people. You can use and repair such equipment. A high effect means that you hear and/or see everything clearly in the place you have bugged. A low effect may mean that reception is poor, or the devices are detected after a short time.

### **Accounting & Bookkeeping**

**Ability: EGO**

You have knowledge of how to manage the ledgers and other accounts of a company. The skill can be used to check that a company's books are in order, and detect any frauds or fishy numbers. The lower you roll, the more you understand about the company's business deals, or the better you manage your company's accounting.

### **Budo Maneuvers**

**Ability: EGO**

Budo maneuvers are special maneuvers taught within the different martial arts. A skill score is bought for your skill points, just like ordinary skills. Kiai is the only maneuver governed by Ego. It is described in the section "Martial arts." You must be versed in the appropriate martial art to be allowed to buy a budo maneuver.

### **Computers**

**Ability: EGO**

Knowledge of how to use computers. You are familiar with the most common operating systems and can use some programs. With a high score, you are able to write your own programs. Here are some guidelines for the GM:

- 1-5 Use a personal computer, write text, play games. Use simple software/applications.
- 6-9 Use a personal, mini, and to some extent a main-frame computer. Use most applications that do not require special knowledge. Write some useful programs in C, Pascal and possibly one or two other languages.
- 10-12 Use all common types of computers. Use difficult programs like CAD and complicated spreadsheets. Write large programs in most common languages. Write simple routines in Assembly language.
- 13-18 At this level, you are something of a hacker. You are able to use all computers, use, modify and write advanced programs, even in Assembly language. Repair some hardware.
- 19+ You can do almost anything with computers. Write and modify programs in any language, debug binary core dumps, bypass copying protections and passwords, etc. Repair hardware.

### **Electronics**

**Ability: EGO**

You can repair, assemble and handle electronic systems and machines. You understand how electric machines work and can build simple devices.

High effect means a good repair or construction. A low effect means some small errors have crept in.

### **First Aid**

**Ability: EGO**

You can apply bandages, put an injured person in the right position so that he can breathe, prevent shock, and perform resuscitation (mouth-to-mouth, etc.). If the injuries are severe, the Gamemaster can require a minimum effect for your efforts to do any good. Success means you stop the bleeding, restart respiration in someone who almost drowned, etc.

High effect means you have done as much good as first aid can do. Low effect means you barely prevent the damage from becoming worse.

### **Poisons & Drugs**

**Ability: EGO**

You can recognize, make and use poisons and drugs. You are also able to make and use antidotes and

serum, when possible, and identify a drug from the symptoms it has caused.

High effect means that you were right; the drug or poison works as you expected. Total failure can produce interesting results if (for instance) someone is exposed to the drug you just made. Poisons and drugs are described in a separate chapter.

### **Hypnosis**

**Ability: EGO**

The hypnotist can place a willing person in hypnotic trance, a state of mind where subconscious thoughts and images rise to the conscious level. This can be used to reveal memories which the person has constricted. It's not possible to hypnotize anyone against his will. High effect means the person quickly goes into deep trance and you find what you were looking for.

### **Information Retrieval**

**Ability: EGO**

You are skilled in using libraries, books, databases, catalogs and registers to find out something you need to know. Of course, you can only find such information that really exists in a place to which you have access. The skill only means you know where to look.

A high effect means you find the information quickly. Lower effects indicate that the search takes longer time, and/or you may not find exactly what you were looking for.

### **Ki-forces**

**Ability: EGO**

Special powers that the most prominent masters with a martial art discipline may control. Only masters and grand masters can learn how to manipulate ki-forces. They are bought for a lump of skill or experience points. A description is to be found in the section "Martial arts".

### **Cryptography**

**Ability: EGO**

A cryptographer is trained to solve codes and puzzles. He knows the most common techniques for encrypting information. He can tell which type of code system that has been used to encrypt a coded message. Certain codes cannot be broken without a key, but the cryptographer will have a good idea of what sort of key is needed. High effect means the code is quickly solved, or the cryptographer quickly realizes that it's useless to work with it unless the correct key is supplied.

### **Cooking**

**Ability: EGO**

You can cook the usual types of food that are eaten your country, and perhaps from some other countries as well. The higher effect, the better your food tastes. If your task is to prepare a difficult dish, or if your raw materials and tools are not perfect, the Gamemaster may require a certain effect for the food to be edible. A higher than normal effect will also be required if you are about to prepare food that you are not used to.

### **Meditation**

**Ability: EGO**

You have learned some technique to meditate and regain your strength and endurance. A person who meditates regularly can get along with only 3-4 hours of sleep per night. To do this, you need a skill score of 10 or more. Successful meditation can also be used to restore your balance after being shocked. If your mental balance is negative and you fail your ego throw in a terrifying situation, meditation can help you cancel the effects of the shock. Meditating successfully for at least 2 hours, increases the chance to succeed with this by 1d5 steps.

### **Motor Mechanics**

**Ability: EGO**

You are interested in motors and mechanical things. You can fix motors and simple machines. Specify to the Gamemaster what type of motor or machine you are used to working with.

A high effect means you can repair a complicated breakdown, or work out how a complicated machine works. A low effect means you only succeed if the device is really simple—otherwise it just gives off a cough, but won't work.

### **Numerology**

**Ability: EGO**

This is an occult tradition which is related to mathematics and cryptography. A numerologist can look for connections by comparing figures and equations. He might compare the measurements of a building with the years or dates for large disasters, or the birthdates of certain one-egg twins, and arrive at amazing coincidences. Sometimes his conclusions are right—this is a good source of ideas for adventures. High effect means the numerologist has found a plausible connection between different numbers and mathematical formulas.

### **Occultism**

**Ability: EGO**

You have theoretical knowledge of various occult practices and teachings; kabbala, spiritism, magic, demonology, tantrism, satanism, occult societies and theories. Occult traditions are described in the section about magic.

High effect means that your knowledge of some theory, occult object, ritual or group, is helpful in the present situation.

### **Parapsychology**

**Ability: EGO**

You have knowledge of the hidden forces which modern science denies—telepathy, telekinesis, kirlian auras, pendulums, divining-rods, ley lines and different types of clairvoyance.

You recognize these phenomena and you can perform parapsychological experiments and measure various kinds of non-measurable energies. Parapsychology does not cover occult phenomena. At high effects, you discover whatever phenomena there are to discover, and you are able to give some sort of explanation.

**Radio Communications      Ability: EGO**

You can use advanced radio equipment. You know common frequencies and call signals. High effect means you quickly and smoothly send and/or receive a message.

**Seamanship      Ability: EGO**

You can handle a sailing boat or motor boat of normal size. You can read sea charts, navigate, and assess the weather so that you know if it's good enough for your vessel. Maneuvering a submarine, or large vessels like oil tankers, are separate skills. If you try to handle a large vessel, you have half your score in Seamanship.

High effect means you safely control the vessel and quickly get where you are going.

**Written Report      Ability: EGO**

You are skilled at expressing yourself in writing. You know various styles of written expression and can write formal letters, speeches, magazine articles and simple prose. The higher effect, the better text you produce.

**Languages      Ability: EGO**

All characters speak their native tongue fluently, but foreign languages must be learned. Every language is a separate skill, so you must expend experience points on each language you wish to know.

The Gamemaster decides if you need to get a certain minimum effect, depending on what you are trying to say or understand. A simple guideline:

**Score      Level of knowledge**

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| 5  | You can make yourself understood, but your grammar is lousy |
| 10 | Your grammar is decent, but your accent is very foreign     |
| 15 | You speak the language very well                            |
| 20 | You speak the language as well as any native                |

Anyone who can speak a language can also read and write in it.

**Demolition      Ability: EGO**

You can make and use explosives. You can make signal rockets, smoke bombs, time bombs, and you know how to apply the explosives to get maximum effect.

A high effect means that you achieve the blast effect you wanted. A lower effect can mean that the blast became stronger or weaker than you intended. You can probably imagine what a total failure means...

**Security Systems      Ability: EGO**

You can install a security system, e.g., to protect a house from intruders. These systems consist of TV cameras and various sensors, alarms, human guards and schedules, codes, locks and types of construction materials. You are also able to analyze an existing security system and find any weak spots. If you want to get

into someplace, "security systems" is the theory; "burglary" is the practical reality.

**Pictorial Arts      Ability: EGO**

You can create objects of art with various techniques. Most people specialize in one type of technique, and only have a basic knowledge of the others. Decide if you are a painter, sculptor, textile artist or something else.

High effects mean that the object is original, thought-evoking, beautiful or whatever you wanted it to be. Lower effects indicate that it may be technically well made, but not artistically perfect.

**Estimate Value      Ability: EGO**

You know what things are worth. This is an advantage when bargaining. Decide which type of goods you primarily want to master; real estate, jewelry, cars, antiques, art, or something else. Your knowledge is full in one field only; when estimating the value of other goods you have half your skill score.

When you get a high effect, your estimate is very close to the real market value, and you may be able to tell whether the goods is worth more or less in other places around the world, and what the prospects are for future values.

**Man of the World      Ability: EGO**

You are a man of the world and know how to handle any situation you can expect to get into among strangers and in alien environments. You aren't panic-stricken if you suddenly find yourself in the Chinese countryside where nobody speaks English and nobody can tell you where the nearest city is. You melt into the social environment and are at home in luxury hotels as well as in the slum.

High effect means you instinctively know how to behave among strangers. Low effects mean you are less certain and behave more like an ordinary, but adaptable tourist.

**Survival      Ability: EGO**

You know how to survive in hostile environments, deserts, arctic areas, the polluted wastelands of Eastern Europe, etc. You know the edible plants, how to find water, trap small game, find edible insects, and protect yourself against storms and cold. The worse circumstances, the higher effect is needed to survive.

**CHA-based Skills****Diplomacy      Ability: CHA**

The diplomat is a professional negotiator. Diplomacy is the art of getting everyone as satisfied as possible and solve conflicts that may seem insoluble, through compromises, power pressure and skilful lying. These things cannot be simulated with die rolls in the game; you must act them out between the play-



ers and the Gamemaster. Good role-playing may give a bonus to your effect.

High effects indicate that you managed to convince your opponents of the solution you wanted, or that you reached an acceptable compromise for both parties.



### **Etiquette**

**Ability: CHA**

The art of behaving correctly in polite society. You can take part in dinners and cocktail parties with Nobel laureates, old-fashioned European nobility, rich and powerful people anywhere in the western world, and you will know how to handle yourself. Etiquette is to dress right, eat and drink at the right time and with the right tools, bring presents when expected, and generally melt in with the cream of society.

High effect means you make no mistakes and appear to have been born among the upper classes.

Since cultural traditions are so different, it may be wise to specify in which areas your etiquette applies. Japanese nobility or African-American city culture can be separate etiquette skills.

### **Seduction**

**Ability: CHA**

You know how to be charming to the opposite sex, and you lack the natural shyness that most of us have. Your chance to succeed depends on how interested the other party is. If the victim is just waiting to be seduced, your throw may be modified. If the object of your desire is completely indifferent, you need a very high effect.

If the Gamemaster wants, your chances may be modified by the quality of your role-playing. The environment and circumstances may also affect your

chances, and so can your age and looks. A high effect may indicate that the victim becomes madly enamored with you. A lower effect may mean that he or she accepts your dinner invitation, but will not go further than that.

### **Interrogation**

**Ability: CHA**

This skill is not equal to "torture"! Interrogation means you are skilled at manipulating, fooling or threatening people into revealing things they don't want to tell you. It usually takes a lot of time to break a person's resistance. You try to make him gainsay himself and entangle himself in a hopeless web of lies. Or trick him into thinking that revealing the desired information is going to be of benefit to himself, that it will not be treachery against his friends at all, and so on. The level of success is determined by subtracting the victim's effect on an ego throw from your effect on the Interrogation roll.

A successful test (5 or more) means that the interrogated person quickly reveals everything he knows. Lower effects (0-4) may mean that the interrogation takes a long time and perhaps the victim keeps something back.

### **Disguise**

**Ability: CHA**

You can dress like someone else, apply makeup and imitate someone's pattern of movement and speech, to avoid being recognized for who you really are. It is much more difficult to imitate a specific person than just disguising your real identity, or pretending to belong to a certain category. The more difficult a disguise you attempt, the higher effect will be needed.

### **Net of Contacts**

**Ability: CHA**

This is the art of knowing the right people in the right places. Net of contacts is a common headline for several skills, one for each group where you have contacts. For example, "Net of contacts: criminals" means you know whom to get in touch with if you need a hit man, an illegal weapon, or drugs.

Other nets of contacts can be scientists, politicians, businessmen, etc. A high effect indicates that you happen to know precisely the right person. A low effect may mean that you only know vaguely who might be able to help you, and you may need a go-between to get assistance from that person.

### **Riding**

**Ability: CHA**

Choose which animal you can ride. Most people ride horses, but in some cases it might be a camel. If your score is 5 or more, you only need to roll in extreme situations like jumping a difficult obstacle or hanging on to the mount during a chase over rough terrain. The higher effect, the more complete control you have over the animal.

**Singing****Ability: CHA**

The ability to control your voice and sing beautiful music. Choose which type of singing you are skilled at: opera, rock, jazz, ballades, or something else. A high effect means your audience is pleased and want to hear more. If you fail utterly, the tomatoes and the rotten eggs may come a-flying...

**Acting****Ability: CHA**

You can play a role convincingly. You are used to learning lines and improvising. The Gamemaster can require a minimum effect if the part is particularly difficult. A high effect indicates that you make an outstanding performance. You really are the person you play. Low effect means that your interpretation is okay, but less convincing. A total failure occurs when you forget your lines, enter the stage at the wrong time, and stumble over your own feet.

**Fortune Telling****Ability: CHA**

You are familiar with the most common methods of fortune telling; tarot cards, astrology, palm reading, mirror looking, crystal ball and such. You can read people's faces and interpret their questions much in the same manner as a person with natural empathy, and you can produce answers that seem plausible. This does not mean that you otherwise function as a person with empathy. You have specifically learned to interpret people's questions and anxieties over their future. High effect means you make a correct interpretation of the person whose fortune you tell. You can tell him something about himself that he thought you didn't know, and make a plausible guess about his future.

**Rhetoric****Ability: CHA**

You can speak before an audience and argue convincingly in a debate. You never lose your tongue and always find the most brilliant arguments. High effect means you managed to say exactly what you meant in a convincing manner. Lower effect means there were some flaws in your argumentation.

Successful Rhetoric doesn't automatically mean that you convince those who hear you—this also depends of what you are saying, and what your audience knows. Convincing a group of astronomers that the sun is an enormous lemon will not succeed simply because the dice went your way.

**PER-based Skills****Forensics****Ability: PER**

The skill of knowing what to look for at the scene of a crime. You can handle fingerprint powder, you know where to look for fingerprints, you can identify fibers from a person's clothes, and examine a bullet to see if it matches a certain weapon (i.e., ballistics), etc. You must describe to the Gamemaster what you are doing,

but he may give you hints about which things to examine and what you should avoid. The higher effect, the smaller and more subtle traces you will find.

**Photography****Ability: PER**

You can handle a camera and develop films. With a high score, you can choose different lenses and arrange artistic pictures or make special effects. You can also do retouching and editing.

The more difficult the motif, and the worse light conditions, the higher effect will be required for a good result. Otherwise, a high effect simply means the picture turns out like you wanted it.

*Combined with computer skills, this could allow the analysis and sophisticated editing of photographic images.*

**Forgery****Ability: PER**

The art of making faithful copies of documents, banknotes, identity papers, contracts, or whatever. You know where to get the right sort of paper and ink, and how to use copiers, repro cameras and such equipment. It takes rather a long time to make a good forgery, and you must have access to good equipment.

High effects yield a perfect copy which can only be exposed by a thorough testing. Lower effects mean there are flaws in your forgery which may turn up at close inspection.

*Combined with computer skills, this could allow the sophisticated reproduction of documents.*

**Burglary****Ability: PER**

You can get past fences, doors, windows and even walls, without raising an alarm. You know the best ways of getting into various buildings, and what tools are required. You also know where to look for surveillance cameras and alarm sensors, but you have no special skill at disabling them.

High effect means you quickly and silently get into the desired place. At lower effects it takes a bit longer, and you make some noise.

**Drive Vehicle****Ability: PER**

This skill applies to either cars or motorcycles, you choose which. They are separate skills, and if you want to drive both, you need both skills. If your skill is 5 or more, you don't need to roll for normal everyday driving. Only in difficult situations and when you need to make a dangerous maneuver will the dice be necessary.

A high effect indicates a smooth and safe ride. Particularly difficult maneuvers may require a minimum effect.

**Piloting****Ability: PER**

This skill applies to either gliders, propeller planes, jet planes, fighter aircraft or helicopters. Choose

which type you can pilot. You then have half your skill score with all the other types.

If your piloting score is 5 or higher, you can fly under normal circumstances without having to roll the die. High effect means a smooth and safe ride. Particularly difficult maneuvers and air combat will require a minimum effect.

### **Shadow**

**Ability: PER**

The skill of following someone without being noticed. It may involve such things as spending eight hours in a hotel lobby or hanging around outside a building without arousing suspicion. If the person you are following turns around and suspects the presence of a follower, your effect for shadowing is subtracted from the effect of the followed person's PERception roll.

High effect means you don't lose the object of pursuit and you are not detected.

### **Gambling**

**Ability: PER**

You can play most common games of chance; poker, roulette, blackjack, craps, baccarat, etc. You know how to devise simple systems, and to estimate the probability of winning. You also have some experience at detecting people who try to cheat. You know the most common tricks. High effect means you win a lot of money—unless of course you are not playing to win a lot (you might attract attention). If several people are playing against each other, cards for example, the highest effect wins. Player characters always have 25% chance to win in a game of chance, regardless of their effect.

### **Night Combat**

**Ability: PER**

The art of fighting in bad light conditions, from twilight down to total darkness. You are guided by other sense than sight—sound, smell and vibrations. For unhindered combat in weak light, you need a minimum effect of 5 or more. If the effect was lower, 5 is subtracted from your skill score with your weapon. The same thing applies in total darkness, except that a minimum effect of 10 is required, and 10 is subtracted at lower effects.

This skill is also helpful if you are temporarily blinded for some reason.

## **Without Ability Base**

### **Two-handed Combat**

**Ability: none**

This is a special skill which enables you to fight with one weapon in each hand, or to switch if one hand is injured. A character who fights with one weapon in each hand gets one extra action per combat phase. The skill costs 10 points and has skill score. You can use any one of your hands or both at the same time.

## **Academic Skills**

All of the academic skills consist of several specialties. The basic skills indicate a thorough general knowledge in one area of knowledge; Natural science, Humanistic scholarship, Medicine or Social sciences. A score of 10 or more in the basic skill means you are a college graduate in that area. In Natural science you are an engineer, in Humanistic scholarship you are a Bachelor of Arts, in Medicine you are a Bachelor of Medicine (which is not the same as a fully trained doctor), and in the Social sciences you are a Bachelor of Arts or of Law.

Specialization is a new skill which costs as much to acquire as the primary skill. Having a speciality means you are something of an expert in that area. In order to specialize, you need a minimum of 5 in the primary academic skill. You cannot specialize in an unrelated field, e.g., the primary skill Medicine does not allow you to specialize in Arabic literature.

In the descriptions below, we suggest some specializations, but you are free to invent others.

All academic skills are based on education.

### **Humanities Scholarship**

You have a good general knowledge of history, languages, religion and other cultural subjects. Specializations may be Anthropology, Archaeology, Philosophy, History, Art, Linguistics, Literature, Psychology, Religion.

### **Medicine**

You have a medical degree and a good general knowledge of the human anatomy and various diseases. You are able to perform simple surgical operations, make a diagnosis of common diseases, and suggest treatment. This does not mean you have any practical experience with treating sick people—such experience is covered by the "first aid" skill. Specializations can be Anatomy, Toxicology, Pharmacology, Physiology, Neurology, Pathology, Psychiatry, Surgery.

### **Natural Science**

You are more or less an engineer. This gives you a basic knowledge of mathematics, physics and chemistry. You can perform various types of calculations and have a general knowledge of Electronics and Chemistry. Without specialization, you only have superficial knowledge of Astronomy, Biology and Geology. Specializations can be Astronomy, Biology, Computer science, Electronics, Geology, Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics.

### **Social Sciences**

You have knowledge in fields such as economics, law, political science and sociology. Specializations can be Economics, Law, Sociology, Political science.

# Living Standard

**T**he living standard is a measurement of your economic and social situation. In the archetypes, we suggest suitable living standards for each type of character. Look at the level your archetype bought and note the monthly income and savings. All sums are in U.S. dollars (\$) and the value of the dollar is as per early 1993. You will probably need to compensate for inflation as the years go by.

Note that a person who is poor in the US might be considered very rich in some other parts of the world; average living standards vary a lot between countries.

All characters have loose property to the value of one year's pay for their living standard. This can be cars, furniture, technical equipment and other things they have gathered during their lives. There is no need to describe in detail exactly what you own. Just note things that are relevant for the game, e.g., if you own a car, an expensive computer, a large collection of books about some subject, etc.

Illegal or restricted equipment such as heavy weapons should not be permitted unless it is reasonable in view of the template and profession of the character. In most countries (except, of course, most of the United States), it is illegal to own firearms and getting a license is difficult. In Europe, usually only criminals, officers and intelligence agents can be assumed to have automatic weapons at home. The gamemaster has the final say on what equipment any player character may have. The Gamemaster should also keep in mind how difficult it is to transport weapons on commercial airlines.

## Simplified Characters

You note down income and savings based on the middle one of the living standards indicated for your archetype. Decide what equipment the character has. Special equipment is described in the chapter on Equipment.

**Income:** This is the monthly income, after tax has been paid. You own loose property for 12 times this figure. In order to have an income at all, you must either have a job or an endowment that yields profit. If the adventure prevents you from working, you must live off your savings.

**Net available/month:** This is how much money you have left when all the bills (rent, electricity and other fixed costs) have been paid.

**Savings:** Cash in the bank, bonds and shares, valuable art, real estate and other investments which can be converted to cash when needed.

**Credit value:** How much money you can borrow in a bank with no other collateral than your own property. If your credit value is low, you can go to loan sharks or the mafia, who will probably lend you money at high interest rates and without any other collateral than your life...

**Home:** For the poorer characters, this indicates the type of living quarters you most probably inhabit. For the better off, we also give a likely estimate of the value of the home.

**Example:** As secret agent, Gilbert has living standard 6. He makes \$2,000 per month (after taxes) and enjoys an upper average standard. But for various reasons having to do with the situation in your campaign, you think this is not reasonable for Gilbert. So you ask the gamemaster to increase the level. The GM is in a generous mood and lets Gilbert have level 8 without any penalties. You note a monthly income of \$5,000.

Monthly income: \$5,000

Net available/month: \$3,000

Savings: \$50,000

Credit value: \$100,000

Home: condo/house worth \$300,000

### 1. Destitute

Monthly income: \$300

Net available/month: \$200

Savings: none

Credit value: none

Home: homeless

### 2. Poor

Monthly income: \$700

Net available/month: \$400

Savings: none

Credit value: none

Home: public housing/share

### 3. Low income

Monthly income: \$900  
Net available/month: \$550  
Savings: none  
Credit value: \$2,000  
Home: small rented apartment

### 4. Lower average

Monthly income: \$1,100  
Net available/month: \$800  
Savings: \$500  
Credit value: \$5,000  
Home: rented apartment

### 5. Average

Monthly income: \$1,500  
Net available/month: \$1,000  
Savings: \$1,500  
Credit value: \$20,000  
Home: rented apartment/townhouse

### 6. Upper Average

Monthly income: \$2,000  
Net available/month: \$1,200  
Savings: \$5,000  
Credit value: \$50,000  
Home: condo/house worth \$70,000

### 7. Well-off

Monthly income: \$3,000  
Net available/month: \$2,000  
Savings: \$20,000  
Credit value: \$150,000  
Home: condo/house worth \$150,000

### 8. Very High Income

Monthly income: \$5,000  
Net available/month: \$3,000  
Savings/Investments: \$50,000  
Credit value: \$100,000  
Home: condo/house worth \$200,000

### 9. Rich

Monthly income: \$10,000  
Net available/month: \$6,000  
Savings/Investments: \$800,000  
Credit value: \$2,000,000  
Home: condos/houses worth \$1,500,000

### 10. Very Rich

Monthly income: \$17,000  
Net available/month: \$10,000  
Savings/Investments: \$4,000,000  
Credit value: \$3,000,000  
Home: condos/houses worth \$5,000,000

# Equipment

It would be pointless to give you a price list for all possible types of equipment in a game like **Kult**. It's easy to calculate the cost of ordinary, everyday things that the characters may need to buy. In this book we will provide prices and other data for special equipment, weapons and vehicles. Full descriptions of weapons, ammo and protective equipment are provided in the section "Weapons and armor." How vehicles are used in the game is described in the section "Car chases and air combat." In this sections, we only give an average price, measurements of size and weight, and an index of availability, i.e. how difficult it is to get the weapon or vehicle. We have left heavy weapons out of this section since they are described in the weapons section, and no one is likely to actually go and buy a howitzer. We may safely assume that no player character has any anti-tank missiles available when the game starts.

Any equipment you own should have some logical connection to your background. Policemen and secret agents are more likely than students to own special equipment. The Gamemaster has the final word on what is allowable.

**Example:** Gilbert owns some illegal and exotic equipment because he is a secret agent. He also has an advanced computer at home and a Porsche Carrera in his garage.

- Desert Eagle with various types of ammo
- Silencer
- Shoulder holster
- Wilkinson dagger
- Kevlar vest
- 68030 computer with laser printer
- Light amplifying glasses
- Electronic lock cracker
- 1 pound of plastic jelly explosives
- Infrared/light amplifying binoculars

## Availability (AVA)

The table also lists how difficult it is to find a salesman who can provide the item. After each object in the list, an availability number is given. This indicates how high effect you need with Man of the world or Net of contacts: criminals, black marketers or something similar, as shown in the table below. A dash in the table means you cannot find the item. A zero in the



table means you can buy the item in almost any shop.

If you don't have either the skill Man of the world or a useful Net of contacts skill, the Gamemaster will have to decide if there is some other way for you to get the item illegally.

*Effect requirements for items, per availability*

| Availability | Man o/t world | Net/contacts |
|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| 1            | 5             | 0            |
| 2            | 7             | 5            |
| 3            | 10            | 7            |
| 4            | 15            | 10           |
| 5            | —             | 15           |
| 6            | —             | 20           |

### Caliber

This is a measurement of the diameter of the ammunition used with a firearm. In general, large caliber weapons are more dangerous than small caliber, though the nature of the bullet and the muzzle velocity also affect the weapon's ability to inflict damage. The caliber is given in millimeters or hundreds of an inch.



The table states the largest caliber usable with the weapon. Some weapons can use other types of ammo than the one they were primarily designed for. When a weapon is used with different ammo, use the damage number for the most similar weapon. For example, if a .44 magnum is used with .45 ammo, it's treated as a colt .45

### Magazine

The number of rounds you can load at one time. Some weapons have several types of magazines of different capacity.

### Length/weight

Length and weight are given in centimeters and kilograms. The weight refers to a loaded weapon.

### Licensed/Illegal (L/I)

An "L" in the table indicates that the item requires a license in most countries. The gun laws vary widely between states and countries. In Europe, the laws are generally much more restrictive than in most states in America. But we can assume that almost anybody except an ex-convict can get a license for a pistol or a shotgun. It's much more difficult to get licenses for heavier weapons. Of course, there are a few states in the USA where it's legal to own virtually anything but a nuclear bomb. The Gamemaster decides if your character can have a licensed weapon.

The availability of licensed weapons refers to how difficult it is to get the weapon on the black market. If you have a license you can ignore the availability number, just go straight to the gun shop and order the thing. The cost of weapons refers to legal purchase—buying a licensed weapon illegally may cost you twice the amount. It's also possible to get hold of cheap stolen weapons, but it's always dangerous to do business like that.

An "I" in the table means that it's completely illegal to own the item in most countries. The Gamemaster will decide whether you can obtain it illegally. For illegal items, the availability number refers to illegal purchase. The prices for illegal weapons are market prices, i.e. what the military would pay. If you buy it on the black market, you may expect to pay up to five times that amount.

Many objects are legal to possess but illegal to use. Bugging equipment are an example; you can own them, but bugging people is not legal.

### Cost

The prices are given in US dollars (\$). They are market prices for legal purchase. Double the amount for licensed weapons bought on the black market, and multiply the amount by five for illegal weapons bought on the black market.

# Equipment

| Revolvers           | ava | cal    | mag      | length | wt   | L/I | cost |
|---------------------|-----|--------|----------|--------|------|-----|------|
| Colt python         | 2   | .357M  | 6        | 25.0   | 1.1  | L   | 580  |
| Colt Detectives Sp. | 2   | .38S   | 6        | 15.4   | 0.7  | L   | 240  |
| Ruger Redhk         | 2   | .44M   | 6        | 27.9   | 1.8  | L   | 300  |
| S&W Bodyguard       | 2   | .38    | 6        | 16.2   | 0.4  | L   | 350  |
| S&W CBT Magnum m19  | 2   | .357M  | 6        | 23.8   | 0.99 | L   | 350  |
| S&W CBT Magnum m27  | 2   | .357M  | 6        | 28.3   | 1.3  | L   | 350  |
| S&W CBT Magnum m29  | 2   | .44M   | 6        | 30     | 1.33 | L   | 380  |
| Derringers          | ava | cal    | mag      | length | wt   | L/I | cost |
| Am. Derringer Cop   | 2   | .357M  | 4        | 13.8   | 0.67 | L   | 400  |
| Am. Der. Semmerling | 2   | .45    | 5        | 13.0   | 0.67 | L   | 900  |
| Pistols             | ava | cal    | mag      | length | wt   | L/I | cost |
| Beretta m 92F       | 2   | 9mm    | 15       | 21.6   | 0.95 | L   | 420  |
| Beretta m 93        | 2   | 9mm    | 15       | 24.0   | 1.1  | L   | 480  |
| Browning Hi-Power   | 2   | 9mmN   | 14       | 19.7   | 0.90 | L   | 350  |
| Colt m 1911 A7      | 2   | .45    | 7        | 21.6   | 1.1  | L   | 450  |
| Colt Commander      | 2   | .45    | 7        | 20.0   | 1.0  | L   | 450  |
| Desert Eagle .357   | 2   | .357M  | 9        | 25.4   | 1.9  | L   | 570  |
| Glock m 17          | 2   | 9mm    | 17       | 18.8   | 0.7  | L   | 550  |
| Glock m 19          | 2   | 9mm    | 15       | 17.5   | 0.6  | L   | 510  |
| Llama Omni          | 2   | .38sup | 9        | 20.3   | 0.9  | L   | 490  |
| Makarov             | 2   | 9mmR   | 8        | 16.1   | 0.7  | L   | 200  |
| Sig-Sauer P226      | 2   | 9mm    | 15       | 19.3   | 0.8  | L   | 440  |
| S&W m5904 9mm       | 2   | 9mm    | 14       | 17.8   | 1.0  | L   | 320  |
| Tokarev             | 2   | 7.62mm | 8        | 19.6   | 0.85 | L   | 150  |
| Uzi Pistol          | 4   | 9mm    | 32       | 22.9   | 2.3  | I   | 450  |
| Walther PPK         | 2   | 7.65   | 7        | 14.7   | 0.6  | L   | 350  |
| Submachineguns      | ava | cal    | mag      | length | wt   | L/I | cost |
| H&K MP5             | 5   | 9mm    | 10/15/30 | 68.0   | 2.9  | I   | 650  |
| H&K MP5 SD3         | 5   | 9mm    | 10/15/30 | 78.0   | 3.4  | I   | 750  |
| H&K MP5 K           | 5   | 9mm    | 15/30    | 32.5   | 2.0  | I   | 650  |
| Ingram m 10         | 5   | .45ACP | 30       | 54.8   | 3.8  | I   | 480  |
| Ingram m 11         | 5   | 9mm    | 30       | 26.9   | 8.4  | I   | 400  |
| Kalashnikov AKR     | 5   | 5.45R  | 30       | 68.6   | 3.3  | I   | 420  |
| Carl Gustaf m45b    | 5   | 9mm    | 36       | 80.8   | 4.2  | I   | 400  |
| Mini Uzi            | 5   | 9mm    | 20/25/32 | 60.0   | 2.7  | I   | 500  |
| Skorpion m 61       | 5   | 7.65   | 10/20    | 26.9   | 2.0  | I   | 400  |
| Uzi                 | 5   | 9mm    | 25/30    | 65.0   | 4.1  | I   | 525  |
| Machineguns         | ava | cal    | mag      | length | wt   | L/I | cost |
| Car 15              | 3   | 5.56   | 30       | 78.7   | 3.2  | I   | 350  |
| Colt M16            | 5   | 7.62   | 30       | 99.0   | 3.64 | I   | 600  |
| FN FAL L1A1         | 5   | 7.62   | 20       | 114    | 5.0  | I   | 500  |
| FN FNC              | 5   | 5.56   | 30       | 99.1   | 4.4  | I   | 450  |
| FN MAS              | 5   | 5.56   | 25       | 75.7   | 4.0  | I   | 450  |
| Galil ARM           | 5   | 5.56   | 35       | 97.9   | 3.9  | I   | 500  |
| H&K 33 A2           | 5   | 5.56   | 20/40    | 100    | 3.5  | I   | 350  |
| H&K G3 A3           | 5   | 7.62   | 20       | 102    | 4.4  | I   | 450  |
| H&K G11             | 5   | 4.7cl  | 2x50     | 75.0   | 3.95 | I   | 900  |
| Kalashnikov AK47    | 5   | 7.62   | 30       | 86.9   | 4.3  | I   | 330  |
| Kalashnikov AKM     | 5   | 7.62R  | 30       | 87.6   | 3.2  | I   | 300  |
| L85 IWS             | 5   | 5.56   | 20       | 77.0   | 4.2  | I   | 600  |
| Steyr AUG           | 5   | 5.56   | 30       | 79.0   | 4.09 | I   | 750  |

| <b>Sniper rifles</b>  | <b>ava</b> | <b>cal</b> | <b>mag</b> | <b>length</b> | <b>wt</b> | <b>L/I</b> | <b>cost</b> |
|-----------------------|------------|------------|------------|---------------|-----------|------------|-------------|
| Dragunov SVD          | 3          | 7.62LR     | 10         | 122.5         | 4.38      | L          | 650         |
| WA 2000               | 3          | .300M      | 6          | 90.5          | 6.9       | L          | 800         |
| <b>Hunting rifles</b> | <b>ava</b> | <b>cal</b> | <b>mag</b> | <b>length</b> | <b>wt</b> | <b>L/I</b> | <b>cost</b> |
| Ruger m 77            | 3          | 22-250     | 5          | 105.5         | 3.1       | L          | 3500        |
| Savage 99 CD          | 3          | .308       | 5          | 104.8         | 3.2       | L          | 3500        |
| Weatherby mark V      | 3          | .460       | 3          | 116.8         | 4.8       | L          | 8500        |
| Winchester 70 XTR     | 3          | .30-06     | 5          | 106.8         | 3.4       | L          | 3500        |
| <b>Shotguns</b>       | <b>ava</b> | <b>cal</b> | <b>mag</b> | <b>length</b> | <b>wt</b> | <b>L/I</b> |             |
| Sawn-off shotgun      | 1          | 12         | 2          | 50.8          | 3.1       | I          | 100         |
| Heckler&Koch CAW      | 2          | 12         | 10         | 76.2          | 5.8       | L          | 850         |
| Mossberg Bullpup      | 2          | 12         | 6/9        | 72.4          | 4.7       | L          | 250         |
| Spas m12              | 2          | 12         | 8          | 93.0          | 4.2       | L          | 500         |
| Spas m15              | 2          | 12         | 6          | 78.0          | 5.0       | L          | 600         |

## Other weapons

| <b>Bows</b>             | <b>ava</b> | <b>length</b> | <b>wt</b> | <b>L/I</b> | <b>cost</b> |
|-------------------------|------------|---------------|-----------|------------|-------------|
| Crossbow                | 1          | 100           | 5.0       | L          | 250         |
| Automatic crossbow      | 1          | 100           | 5.0       | L          | 300         |
| Longbow                 | 0          | 180-200       | 0.6-1.0   |            | 300-500     |
| Compound                | 0          | 110-140       | 1.8-3.0   |            | 150-600     |
| <b>Daggers/Knives</b>   | <b>ava</b> | <b>length</b> | <b>wt</b> |            | <b>cost</b> |
| Bayonet                 | 0          | 50            | 0.6       |            | 100         |
| Dagger                  | 0          | 40            | 0.5       |            | 50          |
| Ceramic kniv            | 2          | 20            | 0.3       |            | 100         |
| Switchblade             | 0          | 25            | 0.3       |            | 20          |
| <b>Swords</b>           | <b>ava</b> | <b>length</b> | <b>wt</b> |            | <b>cost</b> |
| Broadsword              | 0          | 80            | 1.6       |            | 150         |
| Katana                  | 0          | 100           | 1.2       |            | 500         |
| Sabre                   | 0          | 70            | 1.4       |            | 100         |
| Rapier                  | 0          | 80            | 0.8       |            | 250         |
| Axe                     | 0          | 80            | 1.2       |            | 250         |
| <b>Impact weapons</b>   | <b>ava</b> | <b>length</b> | <b>wt</b> |            | <b>cost</b> |
| Blackjack               | 0          | 25            | 1.5       |            | 15          |
| Hammer                  | 0          | 50            | 1.2       |            | 20          |
| Nunchaku                | 0          | 2x40          | 1         |            | 20          |
| Steel pipe              | 0          | 60            | 2         |            | —           |
| Baseball bat            | 0          | 80            | 1.5       |            | —           |
| <b>Pole arms</b>        | <b>ava</b> | <b>length</b> | <b>wt</b> |            | <b>cost</b> |
| Spear                   | 0          | 200           | 1.5       |            | 100         |
| Staff                   | 0          | 120           | 1.5       |            | 25          |
| <b>Whips and chains</b> | <b>ava</b> | <b>length</b> | <b>wt</b> |            | <b>cost</b> |
| Bolas                   | 0          | —             | 3         |            | 50          |
| Chain                   | 0          | —             | 3         |            | —           |
| Lasso                   | 0          | —             | 0.5       |            | —           |
| Whip                    | 0          | —             | 1.5       |            | 50          |
| <b>Throwing weapons</b> | <b>ava</b> | <b>length</b> | <b>wt</b> |            | <b>cost</b> |
| Throwing knife          | 0          | 0.15          | 0.2       |            | 25          |
| Shuriken                | 0          | 0.5           | 0.1       |            | 15          |
| Javelin                 | 0          | 1.5           | 1.0       |            | 80          |

| Hand grenades    | ava | length | wt  | L/I | cost |
|------------------|-----|--------|-----|-----|------|
| Shockbomb        | 3   | 0.1    | 0.3 | I   | 75   |
| Molotov cocktail | 0   | 0.2    | 0.2 | I   | —    |
| Smoke grenade    | 1   | 0.1    | 0.3 | I   | 20   |
| Shrapnel grenade | 4   | 0.1    | 0.3 | I   | 50   |
| Blast grenade    | 4   | 0.1    | 0.3 | I   | 50   |
| Teargas grenade  | 1   | 0.1    | 0.3 | I   | 20   |

## Ammunition

Ammo costs somewhere between \$20 for 100 rounds of caliber .22 up to \$200 for 100 rounds type .50 AR or .460 rifle ammo. Generally the cost is somewhere between \$40 and \$50 for 100 rounds.

### Special ammunition extra cost/100 rounds

|                         |             |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| dumdum                  | (home made) |
| full metal jacket       | +25         |
| hollow point            | +15         |
| teflon (armor piercing) | +75         |

## Weapon Accessories

| Holsters                          | ava | length | wt   | L/I | cost |
|-----------------------------------|-----|--------|------|-----|------|
| Ankle holster                     | 0   | 0.15   | 0.3  | L   | 75   |
| Shoulder holster                  | 0   | 0.2    | 0.3  | L   | 50   |
| Concealed shoulder holster        | 0   | 0.2    | 0.25 | L   | 80   |
| Side holster                      | 0   | 0.25   | 0.4  | L   | 50   |
| Sights and silencers              | ava | length | wt   | L/I | cost |
| Flame muffler for pistol/rifle    | 3   | 0.15   | 0.2  | L   | 400  |
| Telescopic sight for rifle/pistol | 0   | 0.15   | 0.2  | L   | 300  |
| IR sight for rifle/pistol         | 3   | 0.15   | 0.3  | L   | 500  |
| Laser sight for rifle             | 2   | 0.15   | 0.3  | L   | 100  |
| Silencer for pistol/revolver      | 2   | 0.1    | 0.2  | I   | 300  |
| Night sight for rifle             | 3   | 0.15   | 0.3  | L   | 900  |
| Armor                             | ava |        | wt   |     | cost |
| Army helmet (steel)               | 0   |        | 1.1  |     | 50   |
| Kevlar helmet                     | 1   |        | 0.5  |     | 100  |
| Kevlar vest                       | 1   |        | 3.0  |     | 500  |
| Kevlar overall                    | 1   |        | 10.0 |     | 1500 |
| Riot armor (police)               | 3   |        | 16.0 |     | 1500 |
| Bulletproof vest                  | 1   |        | 12.0 |     | 300  |
| Combat suit                       | 2   |        | 3.0  |     | 200  |
| Protective suit                   | 3   |        | 12.0 |     | 5000 |

| Cars                    | pass/type | cyl/hp        | cost   |
|-------------------------|-----------|---------------|--------|
| Alfa spider Veloce      | 2/cab     | 4 cyl/120 hp  | 25,000 |
| Aston Martin Virage     | 5         | 8 cyl/335 hp  | 33,000 |
| Audi 100 2.0 e          | 5         | 5 cyl/115 hp  | 32,000 |
| BMW 850 i               | 4         | 12 cyl/300 hp | 55,000 |
| Cadillac sedan de ville | 5         | 8 cyl/200 hp  | 35,000 |
| Chevrolet Corvette      | 2         | 8 cyl/245 hp  | 38,000 |
| Ferrari 348 TB          | 2         | 8 cyl/300 hp  | 80,000 |
| Ford Sierra 2.0i        | 5         | 4 cyl/120 hp  | 12,000 |
| Honda Civic 1.3         | 5         | 4 cyl/75 hp   | 8,700  |
| Jaguar XJS              | 4         | 12 cyl/270 hp | 53,500 |
| Jeep Cherokee           | 5         | 6 cyl/171 hp  | 23,000 |
| Lotus Esprit turbo SE   | 2         | 4 cyl/264 hp  | 60,000 |



| <b>Cars</b>                  | <b>pass/type</b> | <b>cyl</b>   | <b>cost</b> |
|------------------------------|------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Mercedes 300 SE              | 5                | 6 cyl/180 hp | 50,000      |
| Opel Vectra GL               | 5                | 4 cyl/115 hp | 12,500      |
| Pontiac Firebird trans am    | 2                | 8 cyl/240 hp | 23,000      |
| Porsche 911 turbo            | 2+2              | 6 cyl/320 hp | 75,000      |
| Rolls-Royce Silver Spirit II | 5                | 8 cyl/243 hp | 150,000     |
| SAAB 9000 turbo 16 2.3/CD    | 5                | 4 cyl/200 hp | 32,000      |
| Toyota Celica GTi 16V        | 4                | 4 cyl/156 hp | 25,000      |
| Vector W2 Twin Turbo         | 2                | 8 cyl/600 hp | 250,000     |
| Volvo 740 GLT                | 5                | 4 cyl/116 hp | 27,000      |
| <b>Vans</b>                  | <b>pass/type</b> | <b>cyl</b>   | <b>cost</b> |
| Dodge Caravan                | 6                | 6            | 22,000      |
| Pontiac Transport            | 6                | 6            | 18,000      |
| <b>Motorcycles</b>           | <b>cc</b>        | <b>cyl</b>   | <b>cost</b> |
| Honda CB 250 T               | 249              | 2 cyl        | 2,500       |
| Honda CB 400 T               | 395              | 2 cyl        | 4,000       |
| Honda CB 750 F2              | 736              | 2 cyl        | 6,500       |
| Honda CB 900 F2              | 901              | 4 cyl        | 7,500       |
| Honda CBX                    | 1047             | 6 cyl        | 19,000      |
| Honda Goldwing               | 1000             | 4 cyl        | 12,000      |
| Honda 450 offroad            | 431              | 2 cyl        | 6,000       |
| Kawasaki 225 Scorpion        | 248              | 2 cyl        | 3,000       |
| Kawasaki 1200 Ninja          | 1180             | 4 cyl        | 8,000       |
| Suzuki GSX 1100              | 1075             | 4 cyl        | 8,000       |
| Suzuki GS 650                | 673              | 4 cyl        | 5,000       |
| Yamaha XS 1100 Sport         | 1101             | 4 cyl        | 8,500       |

## Other Equipment

| <b>Miscellaneous</b>           | <b>ava</b> | <b>cost</b> |
|--------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Bug microphone                 | 3          | 50          |
| Bugging detector               | 3          | 1000        |
| Bug-proof telephone            | 2          | 500         |
| Parabolic microphone           | 2          | 1000        |
| Tracking device                | 2          | 200         |
| Noise transmitter              | 2          | 1000        |
| Phone bug                      | 3          | 50          |
| <b>Audio-visual equip</b>      | <b>ava</b> | <b>cost</b> |
| Mini tape recorder             | 0          | 300         |
| Mini camera w. telephoto       | 0          | 500         |
| Mini video camera w. telephoto | 0          | 2000        |
| <b>Computer equip</b>          | <b>ava</b> | <b>cost</b> |
| Portable computer              | 0          | 1200        |
| Database program               | 0          | 3,000       |
| Virus                          | 1          | 500         |
| Anti-virus                     | 0          | 0/200       |
| Decrypting program             | 2          | 5,000       |
| Information retrieval progr.   | 2          | 1,000       |
| Passive spy program            | 2          | 5,000       |
| Personal computer, advanced    | 2          | 10,000      |
| Cracker tools program          | 4          | 5,000       |
| <b>Burglar tools</b>           | <b>ava</b> | <b>cost</b> |
| Lock picks, 10                 | 1          | 50          |
| Safe cracker                   | 5          | 2,500       |

|                                |            |             |             |
|--------------------------------|------------|-------------|-------------|
| Laser cutter                   | 5          | 5,000       |             |
| Alarm buster, electronic       | 5          | 1,000       |             |
| Light amplifying glasses       | 3          | 1,000       |             |
| Lock cracker, electronic       | 3          | 1,000       |             |
| <b>Communication equip</b>     | <b>ava</b> | <b>cost</b> |             |
| Scrambled transmitter/receiver | 2          | 500         |             |
| Throat mike/ear shell          | 3          | 500         |             |
| Laser transmitter/receiver     | 4          | 2,500       |             |
| <b>Explosives</b>              | <b>ava</b> | <b>L/I</b>  | <b>cost</b> |
| Dynamite                       | 2          | L           | 25/pce      |
| Liquid explosive, 20 ml        | 5          | I           | 200         |
| Plasti-ex, 100 g               | 5          | I           | 200         |
| Plastic explosive, 100 g       | 1          | I           | 20          |
| Explosives-detector            | 3          | —           | 1,000       |
| Knock-out gas bomb             | 3          | I           | 200         |
| Ignitors                       | 2          | L           | 5/pce       |
| <b>Miscellaneous</b>           | <b>ava</b> | <b>cost</b> |             |
| Distance meter                 | 0          | 80          |             |
| Dosimeter                      | 0          | 100         |             |
| Gas mask                       | 0          | 150         |             |
| IR binoculars                  | 0          | 350         |             |
| Light amplifying binoculars    | 0          | 600         |             |
| Camouflage suit, active        | 6          | 20,000      |             |
| Camouflage suit, passive       | 2          | 200         |             |
| Truth detector                 | 3          | 1,000       |             |
| Movement detector              | 2          | 300         |             |



# Equipment Descriptions

## Weapons Accessories

### Holster

Ankle holsters and concealed shoulder holsters can only be used with small weapons, e.g., Beretta m82, MAB mod D, Walther PPK and Walter m9 pocket. If someone suspects that the person is armed, a successful Perception throw is required to notice the weapon.

### Flame muffler

Screwed on the barrel, hides the flame when firing.

### Telescopic sight

Increases the basic range of the weapon five times.

### IR sight (rifles and handguns)

Gives an infrared image of the target, so the weapon can be used at night with no penalty to the chance to hit. If the darkness is complete, e.g., in a cellar, there is a -3 penalty to the chance to hit. The IR sight also works as a limited telescopic sight, doubling the basic range of the weapon.

### Laser sight (rifles)

A small laser beam is mounted on the weapon, shining a small red dot on whatever you are aiming at. This is combined with a telescopic sight, increasing the basic range of the weapon five times.

### Night sight (rifle)

Uses the same technology as light-amplifying glasses and binoculars. Makes it possible to shoot in very weak light but not in total darkness. No penalties to the chance to hit in weak light. The night sight is also a limited telescopic sight which doubles the basic range of the weapon.

### Silencer (handgun)

Used by assassins who don't want to make any noise when they kill people. With a silencer, the sound of the shot will not be noticeable if the distance is more than ten meters.

## Bugging Equipment

There are several ways to "bug" a room or a place, so that you can listen to what is said there.

The simplest is a wired microphone, connected to an earphone in the next room. The major drawback is that you need a lot of time to install such equipment. Since it entails drilling holes in walls and covering the wire behind wallpaper or some such thing, it's usually impossible unless you have full control over the building you want to bug. Also, you must be at the other end of the wire—usually in the next room. Anyone

who finds the wire will be able to track down the listener by following the cable.

A more advanced variety of this is to connect the wire from the microphone to a radio transmitter outside the bugged room. This thwarts all attempts to find the bug with a bug detector, and to disrupt it with a noise transmitter.

Another common method is the bug microphone which has a small built-in radio transmitter. This enables the listener to be at a distance, and makes him hard to find in case the bug is detected.

Parabolic microphones are most useful outdoors, enabling you to hear what people say from a great distance. The advantage is that it cannot be detected or disrupted electronically. However, you must have a straight line of air from the mike to the targets—a window or a wall that is in the way will block the signal.

A laser microphone is a special device for listening to conversations inside a room with windows. It works with an invisible laser beam which is directed at a window. The sound of speaking people in the room make the window vibrate ever so slightly, like a membrane. The laser beam works much like a laser distance-meter and is sensitive enough to pick up the vibrations in the window. The beam bouncing back from the window is digitally processed, and the sounds inside the room can be extracted and recorded.

### Bug microphone

A microphone the size of a shirt button which can be placed anywhere—on a wall, under a table or behind a painting. It picks up any conversation in an average-sized room, up to 40 square meters. The receiver which picks up the signal from the bug must be within one kilometer from the bug, in open terrain. If there are buildings or hills in between, this may decrease the range to only 100 meters.

### Bug detector

The detector is a machine which detects radio transmitters on all frequencies and can find most types of hidden microphones. It will not spot a parabolic microphone, a wired microphone or a laser bug.

### Bug-proof telephone

A telephone which makes a secure connection. It transmits a control signal along the line, detecting all attempts to intercept the call. If someone is bugging the call, the phone gives a warning signal so that the call can be terminated or the conversation be altered to less sensitive subjects.

### Parabolic microphone

This device consists of a parabolic disc with a microphone at the focal point. It can be used to listen to conversations from a distance of up to 150 meters. The disc should be about one meter in diameter. A

smaller disc means a shorter range. It can be hidden in a car.

### **Tracking device**

The tracking device consists of a small transmitter which attaches magnetically to a car. The receiver can then track the car and show exactly where it is, as long as it doesn't get more than one kilometer away. A bug detector will find the transmitter.

### **Noise transmitter**

This is a transmitter which sends out noise to jam all radio signals. It covers one room and disrupts any bugs placed there.

### **Phone bug**

This is a bug which is mounted inside a telephone. Instead of a transmitter, it can be fitted with a micro tape recorder, making it invisible for a bug detector. The user can call the bugged telephone and activate the phone bug with a special signal, making it play back all recorded calls.

### **How to avoid bugging**

The best way to avoid being overheard is to turn up the stereo or create some other noise to drown what you are saying, and then sitting very close when you talk. It may still be possible to extract the conversation by processing a recording of the sound with a special computer program, but this is expensive, time-consuming and has only a 10 percent chance of success.

## **Audio-visual Equipment**

### **Mini tape recorder**

A miniature tape recorder, about the size of a cigarette pack (can be disguised as such). Has a built-in microphone and uses a micro cassette.

### **Mini camera**

The miniature camera is disguised as a cigarette lighter or some such thing. It can be fitted with telephoto or wide-angle lens. Uses ordinary microfilm.

### **Mini video camera**

Video camera which records picture and sound. Size like a pack of cigarettes (can be disguised as such). Has a telephoto lens and uses a micro cassette.

## **Computer Equipment**

### **Portable computer**

Size like a small attaché case, with a hard disk of 40-240 megabytes, 4-40 megabyte RAM, usable for all normal applications. Battery or AC powered.

### **Database**

A program which stores all available information in a special field, e.g., South American drug trade or the J. F. Kennedy murder. Most large databases reside in

mainframe computers, to which you can connect your personal computer via the telephone lines. You pay for the time you are connected to the database. Some databases have restricted access; the Gamemaster decides if you can subscribe to them.

It's also possible to create a database in your personal computer, by writing information yourself and importing files from larger a mainframe database.

### **Data virus**

A virus is a small invisible program which sneaks into a computer from an external source, writes copies of itself, and then does something to the computer. Some viruses are merely irritating, e.g., there are some that just display a stupid message on the screen every Wednesday. Others are more aggressive; they may erase all information on your hard disk, or otherwise disrupt the function of the computer. Some viruses lie dormant for a long time before activating themselves.

The person who wishes to plant a virus in a computer must transfer it via a telephone line or a diskette.

### **Anti-virus**

There are many programs designed to protect computers from viruses. These work in two ways:

1. They check for known viruses and destroy them when they are found. This is effective against viruses that have been around for a while, but not against completely new ones.
2. They watch over the computer processor and give off a warning whenever something dangerous and virus-like is going on. This is effective against all viruses, but it slows the computer down by about 10%.

### **Decrypting program**

This program is used to decipher coded messages. If the program is given enough time and information, it can solve any code.

### **Information retrieval program**

This program searches through large amounts of data in many files and finds keywords that you are looking for, or numbers and codes specified by the user. Can be used to establish connections in large quantities of data, or to find connections between files in different machines and databases.

### **Camouflage program**

Hides data so that it cannot be found without extensive deciphering. An advanced form of encrypting which makes it difficult for a cracker to see that anything is hidden here.

### **Passive spy program**

The spy program is a sophisticated type of virus. It arrives together with some innocent program that will be installed in a computer. It then copies select parts

of the information in the computer to a secret file which the user cannot see. After some time, the spy sends another diskette or tape with something innocent to be entered into the computer. The spy program installs the stolen data on that diskette or tape, which is then returned to the spy.

Some of these programs are even more clever. Let's say that someone is working with a security system that encrypts all data on his hard disk. In order to work with that data, he still has to convert it to a readable form when he reads and writes in his database. A spy program which has secretly been installed in the computer can intercept the readable data and save it in an invisible file. This saves the spy the work of decrypting what he wants to see.

### **Personal computer, advanced**

The most advanced personal computers you can buy today run with a processor speed 30-40 million instructions per second and are equipped with a 68040 or Intel 80486 processor. They have large hard disks, up to 1.2 gigabyte, and the internal memory is 8 megabytes or more. These computers can run large programs and applications.

### **Hacker tools**

Used to break into the security system in a computer. It gets past various passwords and safeguards. These programs are of varying quality; the Gamemaster determines a skill score for the program, usually 15. Then he decides what effect is required for the program to crack a certain security system. If the program gets a sufficiently high effect, it succeeds. If the skill throw fails, the attempted intrusion is discovered.

## **Burglar Tools**

### **Lock picks**

Common lockpicks are used to open normal locks. Characters with some skill at burglary can open any normal door in a few seconds, using a lock pick. People without this skill need to make a successful AGL throw to get in.

### **Safe cracker**

This is an electronic device used to open combination locks on safes. The cracker is attached to the safe. After a minute or two, the correct combination is displayed. All you have to do is open the safe.

### **Laser burner**

A tool that uses a powerful laser beam to cut through almost any material, including steel, armored glass and concrete. Only certain very expensive ceramic composite materials can resist it.

### **Electronic alarm buster**

Used to defuse various electronic alarms. The

device must be applied on the alarm. It has a skill score, usually 15, and needs a minimum effect to disrupt the alarm—the Gamemaster determines how much is required. A failed skill throw means it sets off the alarm.

### **Light-amplifying glasses**

Amplifies the existing light so that the wearer can enjoy unimpaired visibility in poor lighting conditions. Does not work in total darkness.

### **Electronic lockpicker**

Used to pick electronic code locks. Applied on the lock, which may be a keypad with a number code, a voice detector or a plastic card reader. The lockpicker has a skill score, normally 15, and must achieve the minimum effect determined by the Gamemaster, to open the lock.

## **Communication Equipment**

### **Scrambled radio**

A small radio transceiver which sends a digitally scrambled signal and changes frequency every two seconds, according to a pre-determined pattern. Two of these radios which are synchronized to the same code can be used like ordinary CBs and the communication is virtually impossible for outsiders to penetrate.

### **Throat microphone/earphone**

A thin, skin-colored microphone which is attached to the neck. The wearer does not need to speak loudly to be heard, it's enough to form the words with the vocal cords. The earphone is about the size of a shirt button, and is attached inside the ear so that it cannot be seen.

The most modern throat microphones are surgically implanted and can only be detected with x-rays. They cost five times as much and are hard to get.

## **Explosives**

### **Dynamite**

Nitroglycerin-based explosive which burns relatively slowly and makes a large gas volume. This makes it suitable for jobs when you want to move large volumes of matter, e.g., blasting earth and rock for construction work.

### **Liquid explosive**

Looks like coffee or soda pop but does a lot more than go "pop"! Cannot be found by bomb-sniffer dogs or electronic explosive detectors. Explodes when a strong electric current is led through the liquid.

### **Plasti-ex**

Plastic explosive which is undetectable for bomb-sniffer dogs and electronic explosive detectors. Looks

like cookie dough. Explodes when heated over a certain temperature.

### **Plastic explosive**

Plastic explosive which burns very quickly and makes a small gas volume. Suitable for precision blasts, e.g., to cut off a steel bar, open a safe or breaking a concrete pillar in half. Can only be exploded with an ignitor.

### **Electronic explosive detector**

A device which analyses the air and picks up any molecules of explosives floating around. Just like a bomb-sniffer dog, it recognizes the explosive and gives a warning. Does not work with liquid explosives or plasti-ex.

### **Knock-out bomb**

A small device, the size of a matchbox. Spreads knock-out gas which renders everyone within five meters unconscious.

### **Ignitor**

Used to make explosives explode

## **Miscellaneous**

### **Distance meter**

Hand-held optical device which shows the distance to any object you focus it on.

### **Dosimeter**

Hand-held device that measures radioactivity.

### **IR binoculars**

Sensitive to infrared radiation, usable to see living creatures in complete darkness.

### **Light-amplifying binoculars**

Can be used in poor light conditions. Gives a grainy black-and-white image. Does not work in absolute darkness.

### **Active camouflage suit**

Looks like an ordinary camouflage overall, but changes color and pattern depending on the surroundings. It takes about one minute for the overall to adapt to a new background. Encloses all smell of the wearer. Gives +10 to the skill score for Hide and Sneak.

### **Passive camouflage suit**

An ordinary camouflage overall, with a pattern designed to hide the wearer against a natural background (forest, plants, etc). Gives the wearer +5 to the skill score for Hide and Sneak, in such surroundings.

### **"Lie" detector (Polygraph)**

Measures pulse, blood pressure and heart activity. Used to get some indication of whether a person is telling the truth. Scientists disagree about the validity of interpreting the measured results in this way.

# **Experience & Practice**

**D**uring a long career, the player characters have many opportunities to better their skills and abilities. There are two ways of doing this in **Kult**—through experience, or through practice. They work in the same way regardless of whether the character was created with the normal rules or the simplified character description.

## **Experience**

Every time you have made it through an adventure, you have learned something. Perhaps you succeeded in using a skill, perhaps you outwitted a power-crazed lictor or you managed to lift a heavy steel bar away from the mangled body of a fallen friend. Anything you did during the adventure gives you a chance to increase your scores afterward.

After the adventure, the Gamemaster awards you between one and seven experience points. The sum depends on how difficult the adventure was and how well you played your role. The table below is a guide-

line for the Gamemaster. Of course, he is free to change the awards. For example, he may double them if the players feel that they aren't making enough progress.

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| The character was on an adventure .....                   | 2 points  |
| The adventure was difficult .....                         | 3 points  |
| The adventure was extremely dangerous and difficult ..... | 5 points  |
| Bonus for good role-playing .....                         | +2 points |
| Penalty for lousy role-playing .....                      | -2 points |

The experience points should be awarded after the adventure has been completed—not after every playing session. If you go on a long campaign, the Gamemaster will divide it into shorter adventures and give out points after each of these. Each experience point can be used to increase a skill or ability score with one step, up to your score for the ability that controls the skill. Above that, every step of increased

score costs three points, just like when you “buy” the skill when the character is created.

Experience points can also be used to change your mental balance. If your balance is negative, you can lower it by one step per point, or increase it by one step per two experience points. If your balance is positive, it works likewise: increasing it costs one point per step, lowering it costs two points per step.

The experience points are primarily intended for increasing skills. You should not increase abilities unless you did something really heroic in the adventure—the Gamemaster and no one else has the final say here. It is logical that you spend the experience points to increase those skills (and possibly abilities) which you used in the adventure, but it’s up to your conscience.

The two abilities Comeliness and Education can only be increased under special circumstances. To better your looks, something must have happened to your appearance (plastic surgery, you begin to take care of yourself after having looked like a bum, you quit using drugs, or something like that).

The only way to increase your Education score is by studying. This means that the Education score cannot be increased with experience, only through practice. It takes one year of uninterrupted studying to increase your Education by one step, up to 15. Above that, each step takes two years. This may seem harsh, but on the other hand the studying also gives you knowledge of one or more skills, apart from the increased Education score.

## Practice

It’s also possible to increase your scores through hard training. You can study with a teacher, or you can do it alone. Practice is difficult and expensive. Non-academic skills can only be trained up to a score of 12, abilities (other than Education) only to a score of 15. Above that, you must rely on experience.

Practice takes a long time. After one month of uninterrupted practice (eight hours per day, five days per week) you get one experience point.

These points can then be used just like the points you get for adventures (see above). The exception is Education, which can only be increased by one step per year of studying (details above).

In order to train you must have access to the implements which the Gamemaster thinks are necessary; weapons for weapon skills, a gym for bodybuilding, a computer for programming, etc.

You also need to succeed with an ego throw in order to learn from the practice. This simulates the dedication, willpower and interest needed. If you study more than one month per experience point, your chances increase. For every week of extra train-

ing, you may deduct one from the ego throw. If the Gamemaster so rules, the skill of your teacher may also affect your chances.

Studying and practising are not free. If you train alone, you just need to pay for your own cost of living. If you hire a teacher, the cost goes up. We use a simple stencil fee for all types of practice. Diligent Gamemasters may wish to use the real cost instead—going to a good gym with instruction five days per week is outrageous, taking private kendo lessons is even more so. If your training can be done within a public education facility such as a university, it may be cheaper. In some countries, tuition is free (but you still have to be accepted, which may not be easy due to the number of students applying each year).

We estimate the basic cost for one month of tuition at \$500. To this, add extra costs for the more advanced instruction you need if you are already skilled:

|                          |        |
|--------------------------|--------|
| Present score 1-5.....   | +\$100 |
| Present score 6-9.....   | +\$200 |
| Present score 10-12..... | +\$500 |
| Present score 13-15..... | +\$800 |

## Practice of Abilities

Here are some hints for the Gamemaster, concerning what it takes to increase ability scores. Note that Comeliness cannot be increased through practice.

Agility can be increased through various types of workouts, dancing and gymnastics. Some sports also do it, e.g., fencing, badminton.

Strength is probably the most common thing to train. You lift weights, do push-ups and so on. The best place to do it is in a modern gym where you have access to all efficient training equipment.

Constitution can be increased by running, bicycling, swimming or skiing long distances. A marathon runner is doing a classical type of Constitution training.

Comeliness cannot be trained. Your usual comeliness assumes good grooming and hygiene; Comeliness may actually drop temporarily (e.g., you just crawled out of the sewer).

Ego training focuses on your memory, intellect and willpower. Philosophy, logic and mathematics train the Ego. So does meditation, prayer, fasting and yoga.

Perception is seldom something you actively train. Hunters, ornithologists, mineral collectors and air observers consciously train their Perception. In the game, Perception may be increased by training skills that require good Perception.



Charisma is difficult because it depends on the person's mindset. A charm school may teach you to be polite, but it hardly makes you charismatic. It's possible that some form of training that increases your self confidence and self-insight (e.g., psychoanalysis, meditation, prayer) may increase your Charisma. The Gamemaster will decide this.

Education can be increased through — education. In **Kult**, this is tied to the number of years you spent in school. One continuous year of studying a subject, on a more advanced level than you previously knew, increases your score by one, up to a maximum of 15. Above that, every step takes two years.

## Hero Points

Heroes are known for their ability to survive the most hair-raising situations. Books and films are full of heroes who just manage to get out of the burning car before it blows up, or move their heads just when the sniper pulls the trigger, or gets away with a flesh wound when the terrorist blasts away the whole mag in his MAC-10. Heroes should die heroically and preferably at a heroic moment. They shouldn't get killed by stray bullets or stupid accidents.

In **Kult**, all player characters are assumed to be heroes. In order to give them a fair chance to survive the harsh and hostile environment (so that they can die when Destiny calls), they have hero points (HP).

When a character is created, he or she gets ten hero points. Later, more hero points are awarded after each adventure. The number depends on how brave and heroic you have been. Heroic heroes get more hero points—logical, right? The table below is a guideline for the Gamemaster as to how many points to award:

The character survived an adventure.....1 HP

The character was brave and skilful.....3 HP

For each act of heroism† .....2 HP

†Saving children from burning buildings, risking one's life for the good of others, etc.

How are hero points used? Simple. The points are used to improve your effect, or to counter your opponent's. For every hero point you expend, your effect increases by one, or your opponent's effect is decreased by one. The points may be expended before or after the dice have been rolled. Please note that hero points do not affect your chance to succeed, only the effect if you succeeded with the action.

In this way, you can lower your enemy's effect so that you survive what would have been a fatal hit, or raise your own effect so that you manage to jump over a ravine, get a grip on the edge of the rock and avoid a messy death.

Hero points can also be used to increase your chance to succeed with an ability throw. Every point makes it one step easier to succeed.

When a hero point has been expended, it is gone forever. It is subtracted from your total, and if you expend all your points, you will have to wait until after the adventure to get new ones.

No character can ever have more than 50 hero points. Any points that could have been awarded above that just vanish—you can only get so much help from the Powers.

**Example:** Gilbert begins the game with 10 hero points.



# Beyond Humanity

**W**hen the moon rises above the horizon, I feel a hunger rising inside me.

*My blood runs hot. People seem to change in my eyes. Their souls fade away, and all that I see is the flesh, blood, heat and nourishment in their living bodies. I roam the streets, into the dark alleys where my eyes aren't seared by the light. There I wait, crouching on fire escapes and trash cans in the shadows, I wait for my victim. Always a young man. Always someone I have*

*chosen and followed for some time. When I feel that he is the right one, I strike. I am not cruel. I kill on the first bite. When the blood pours down my throat and my teeth tear at the meat, everything else vanishes. I forget who I am. I have no memory and no future. After that first, blood-soaked bite I never remember anything more until I wake up, stained with blood and dirt, and with a rancid taste in my mouth, in my own bed."*

Among us common mortal humans, there walk creatures who are only half human. Twisted by savage desires, they are the bloodthirsty nosferatu and wolveren, the children of the night, and demons from the other side. Usually, these creatures belong in the Gamemaster's supply of props, used to create excitement—but sometimes, the story will allow for semi-human player characters. This section provides rules for creating these. The Gamemaster decides whether he wants children of the night as player characters. The rules may also be used to create non-player characters, of course.



When we create these creatures, we use powers and limitations which resemble the advantages and disadvantages of normal characters. The powers make the creature stronger and more dangerous, the limitations are either strong urges which make the creature unable to control itself in some situations, or weaknesses which make the creature vulnerable.

Limitations lower the mental balance in the same way as disadvantages. Powers, on the other hand, do not increase the balance. A person with bloodthirst, sensitivity to sunlight, hunting instincts and tomb bondage gets a balance of -35, in spite of that he has the powers regenerate, commanding voice and increased strength. This simulates that most creatures beyond humanity live closer to the dark and more easily get a negative mental balance.

No beyond-humanity creature can have a higher mental balance than -25. Even if the balance should be higher, it automatically drops to that level. This applies as long as the creature has any powers or limitations.

The creature can have ordinary advantages and dis-

advantages, too. But points from disadvantages cannot be used to buy advantages or more skills. Points which are not used to get powers are removed.

These rules are usable for creating beings which are basically human, but with some non-human traits. Use the normal rules to describe the other aspects of the person.

Creatures with the ability to change shape often have different powers depending on their present form. This does not affect the cost. Even if a creature only has claws and tentacles when it changes shape at full moon, it must pay five points for the power "Natural weapons." But limitations which only apply to one shape still yield the normal number of points. The Gamemaster should see to it that limitations and disadvantages apply most of the time, so that they don't become just meaningless numbers on the character sheet.

If you are using these rules to create a player character, you should take care to think up a plausible background. Even creatures with abilities beyond what is normal usually (but not always) have a human background. The creature may have gotten its special traits because it was "infected" by another being of the night. Or perhaps the person's own desires and destructive urges have been sufficient to cause the alterations. There must be something in the person's background that explains how he came to be the way he is. The Gamemaster decides to what degree destructive creatures can be allowed as player characters.

**Note:** As with any aspect of **Kult**, Bloodthirst, Cannibalism and Soulthirst are limitations which should not be used unless you are sure that the players can manage them properly in the game.

The archetype below can be used to create a player character who is a child of the night.

## Child of the Night

You are not entirely human. There is a vast darkness within you which has warped both your body and your mind. When the anger and the fear become too strong, your body is transformed into something that is more like an animal than a man. You go out on the streets to hunt innocent people and tear them apart, and to seek others who share your affliction. In daytime you try your best to hide your unhuman side. You live alone and avoid going out during the day.

Having a child of the night as a player character is subject to the approval of the Gamemaster. In some campaigns it could ruin the plot and disrupt the atmosphere.

**Disadvantages:** Depression, Bad reputation, Death wish, Mortal enemy, Oath of revenge, Curse, Persecuted, Mental constriction, Paranoia, Wanted, Touchy, Manic, Nightmares, Split personality, Schizophrenia, Maimed.

**Advantages:** Enhanced awareness, Intuition, Body awareness, Sixth sense, Endure hunger/thirst/cold/heat/pain/torture

**Dark secrets:** any

**Professions:** Unemployed, anarchist, general laborer, writer, night-porter, student

**Skills:** depending on profession and background

**Example:** Alfred Eldridge is a child of the night, a nosferatu who was born three hundred years ago. We begin by following the normal rules to create him. First we distribute the 100 ability points:

|     |    |     |    |
|-----|----|-----|----|
| AGL | 13 | EGO | 15 |
| STR | 15 | CHA | 15 |
| CON | 11 | PER | 8  |
| COM | 16 | EDU | 7  |

Next, we choose limitations and powers. Alfred will be a classic nosferatu and we choose limitations and powers which are suitable for such a being.

| Limitation                  | Points    |
|-----------------------------|-----------|
| Bloodthirst                 | 15        |
| Scared of religious symbols | 10        |
| Sensitive to sunlight       | 15        |
| Soul thirst                 | 15        |
| Tomb bondage                | 10        |
| Sensitive to silver         | 5         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                | <b>70</b> |
| Power                       | Cost      |
| Eternal youth               | 10        |
| Commanding voice            | 15        |
| Increased strength          | 15        |
| Increased charisma          | 15        |
| Invulnerable to weapons     | 15        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                | <b>70</b> |

Limitations and powers are balanced, so we don't need to take any extra points from normal disadvantages to pay for the powers. Since powers don't increase the mental balance, Alfred now has a very low one of -70. His Strength and Charisma have increased to 25 each and we recalculate his secondary abilities from this.

But we want Alfred to be a bit saner than this. It's very hard to play a character with a mental balance as low as -70. To achieve this, we buy some advantages with Alfred's skill points.

| Advantage         | Cost      |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Artistic talent   | 10        |
| Magical intuition | 20        |
| Sixth sense       | 15        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>      | <b>45</b> |

This brings up Alfred's mental balance by 45 steps, to -25. He is now a very mannerly nosferatu with a flair for magic. He couldn't have a higher mental balance than this anyway, since he is a child of the night.

The Gamemaster feels that a person who has lived for 300 years ought to have more than the usual 150 skill points, and gives Alfred 200 points. This means we still have 155 points to buy skills for (after subtracting 45 points for the advantages). We choose some suitable skills for a 300-year old nosferatu.

| Skill              | Ability | Score | Point cost (mod by)  |
|--------------------|---------|-------|----------------------|
| Etiquette          | 25      | 15    | 15                   |
| French             | 15      | 15    | 15                   |
| Seduction          | 25      | 20    | 20                   |
| Net of contacts:   |         |       |                      |
| nosferatu          | 25      | 10    | 10                   |
| Drive vehicle: car | 8       | 8     | 8                    |
| Cooking            | 15      | 15    | 15                   |
| Paint and draw     | 15      | 20    | 15 (artistic talent) |
| Handgun            | 13      | 13    | 10 (basic skill)     |
| Unarmed combat     | 25      | 20    | 17 (basic skill)     |
| Sneak              | 13      | 13    | 10 (basic skill)     |
| Sword (rapier)     | 25      | 13    | 20 (basic skill)     |
| <b>TOTAL</b>       |         |       | <b>155</b>           |



Now all we have left is to get Alfred some equipment. He is an artist and art dealer. This gives him a higher living standard than ordinary artists. He gets level 6. His 300-year long life story is still missing and we need to fill in the details.

## Limitations

Points for limitations may only be used to acquire powers. Any surplus points are deleted. Mental balance drops by one step per point.

| Limitation                   | Points |
|------------------------------|--------|
| Bloodthirst                  | 5/15   |
| Symbol bondage               | 10     |
| Tomb bondage                 | 10     |
| Hunting instinct             | 5      |
| Cannibalism                  | 15     |
| Controlled by external power | 10/20  |
| Sensitive to fire            | 10     |
| Sensitive to electricity     | 10     |
| Scared of religious symbols  | 10     |
| Sensitive to silver          | 5      |
| Sensitive to sunlight        | 15     |
| Uncontrolled shape change    | 10     |
| Unhuman appearance           | 10     |
| Soul thirst                  | 15     |
| Controlled by stars          | 10     |

### Bloodthirst Points: 5/15

A bloodthirsty person not only has a fixation on drinking blood. He needs the blood to survive physically. The limitation gives five points if the thirst is for any kind of blood (including that of animals). It gives 15 points if the thirst is exclusively for blood of humans who are sexually attractive to the drinker. Regardless of which option you choose, the blood must be fresh and sucked directly from the body of the victim. The creature needs two pints of blood per day. If he does not get this, his constitution drops by one point per day, until it reaches zero and he dies. If he starts drinking blood again before his constitution has reached zero, he regains one point of constitution per day.

### Symbol bondage Points: 10

The creature's life force is bound in a symbol. This can be anything from a piece of jewelry to a building or a tattoo on someone else's body. When the symbol is damaged, the creature is also hurt. If the symbol is destroyed, the creature also perishes. This kind of life-force bondage usually occurs in creatures that have powers which make them difficult to injure, e.g., regeneration, invulnerability to weapons.

### Tomb bondage Points: 10

The creature is forced to spend at least ten hours per day lowered into earth, preferably in his own

grave. This limitation is common among creatures that have died, and are now getting sustenance from their own death. They must constantly return to the grave and die again. Their ego drops by one step for every day they spend outside the grave. They become feeble-willed and finally lose their minds. The ego loss is temporary; the creature's ego is restored entirely as soon as it has rested in the grave for ten hours.

### Hunting instinct Points: 5

The creature is dominated by aggressive hunting instincts. It cannot control the urge to hunt and kill if a suitable prey comes within reach. The hunting instinct is tied to a special type of victim, usually people. Some creatures only suffer the effects of the instinct at certain times, e.g., in the morning, at night. The Gamemaster decides if the creature can avoid killing when it has located and trapped a victim.

### Cannibalism Points: 15

This limitation is not only a sick fixation to human flesh. Like bloodthirst, it is a physical need to eat the meat of humans. The Gamemaster decides if the meat must be taken from a freshly-killed victim or if the cannibal can store it in a freezer. Like the bloodsucker, the cannibal loses constitution when no meat can be found. His constitution then drops one point per day. When he begins eating human flesh again, he regains one point of CON per day.

### Controlled by external force Points: 10/20

The creature is under the control of a non-human, supernatural power. This can be a deity or a demon, impersonal forces or Astaroth himself. The limitation gives ten points if the creature serves the power but retains a will of its own. If the creature is totally dominated by the external force, it gives 20 points.

### Sensitive to fire Points: 10

Fire frightens the creature and hurts it more than normally. Add 10 to the effect to determine how much damage the creature takes from fire. It cannot bring itself to light a fire or hold a torch. If it goes near a large fire, it gets dizzy and nauseated.

### Sensitive to electricity Points: 10

The creature can't stand electricity. If it goes near electrical machines that are switched on, it gets dizzy and nauseated. Even being in a room with electric light makes it feel uncomfortable. If electric current is led through the creature's body, it suffers +10 to the usual damage effect.

### Scared of religious symbols Points: 10

The creature suffers physically when ever it is confronted with religious symbols from its own culture. A demon from Europe will not be affected by hindu symbols, unless it has a history of contact with these. But



the same demon will become dizzy and nauseated at the sight of a cross. Touching the symbol will injure the creature as if it had touched red-hot iron. The creature cannot enter temples and holy places.

### **Sensitive to silver/copper/iron**

**Points: 5**

The creature is not affected by proximity to the metal, but it suffers twice the normal damage from any weapon made of the metal to which it is sensitive.

### **Sensitive to sunlight**

**Points: 15**

The creature can't stand strong sunlight. It gets too much energy and overheats. In full daylight, the creature's endurance drops by ten points per minute. If the sky is overcast, the creature loses one point per minute. When the endurance drops to zero, the creature falls down and its constitution begins to drop by one step per minute in full daylight and one step per ten minutes in overcast weather. If the creature is brought into a dark place, it regains all losses in 24 hours. If the constitution reaches zero, the creature dies.

### **Uncontrolled shape change**

**Points: 10**

The creature has two shapes, usually a human form and an animal form. The animal form breaks through when the creature suffers intense emotions (e.g., ecstasy, rage, etc.). An ego throw is required to return to the human form.

### **Unhuman appearance**

**Points: 10**

The creature looks absolutely non-human, in a way that cannot be hidden with anything less than a completely covering veil. It's not just a distorted human appearance (that is covered by the disadvantage mutilated) but something distinctly un-human, e.g., glowing eyes, tentacles, extra limbs, an extra eye in the forehead or the neck, more than one head, or horns and tail.

### **Soul thirst**

**Points: 15**

Like the bloodsucker thirsts for blood, the soul-eater thirsts for souls. He consumes other people's life force and leaves their bodies as empty shells. This is often closely connected with sex. The creature takes power from its lovers. Every week, it needs to draw points equal to its ego plus its constitution, from other people. In an orgasm, it sucks this many points from the victim's ability scores. Normally, this is distributed so that all the victim's abilities drop, but it's also possible to take from just one score so that it reaches zero and the victim dies. The losses suffered by the victim are permanent. If the soul-eater does not get the necessary sustenance, it loses 1d5 ego and constitution per week, until it reaches zero and dies. Lost points can be regained from new lovers.

### **Controlled by stars**

**Points: 10**

The creature's life is dominated by astronomical events. It can be seized by hunting instincts and change shape at full moon, or come under the domination of an external force when Sirius rises above the horizon, or be stricken by uncontrollable fear and panic at certain star constellations. The Gamemaster decides if the limitation is serious enough to be worth ten points—if not, it only gives five.

## **Powers**

The powers can be "bought" by expending points from disadvantages or limitations, but not for skill points. They have no effect on mental balance.

| Power                         | Point cost |
|-------------------------------|------------|
| Commanding voice              | 15         |
| Eternal youth                 | 10         |
| Increased ability             | 15         |
| Resistant to poison           | 10         |
| Infrared vision               | 5          |
| Natural weapons               | 5          |
| Invulnerable to fire          | 10         |
| Invulnerable to electricity   | 10         |
| Invulnerable to radioactivity | 10         |
| Invulnerable to weapons       | 15         |
| Fast reactions                | 15         |
| Regeneration                  | 10         |
| Protective skin               | 10         |
| Enhanced senses               | 10         |
| Telekinesis                   | 10         |
| Telepathy                     | 15         |
| Infinite endurance            | 10         |

### **Commanding voice**

**Cost: 15**

The creature can speak with a special timbre which makes all people within hearing listen up and obey. This presupposes that they understand the language that the creature is speaking. If not, they just feel that they ought to obey if they knew what to do. In order to resist the impulse to obey, the listeners must roll under their Ego/2. If the command is something they would never do of their own free will, e.g., an order to commit suicide, they must roll less than their Ego. If the creature has failed to get someone to obey, it cannot try again with the same command.

### **Eternal youth**

**Cost: 10**

The creature does not age. Decide when it was born; it could be any time. The power does not give the creature more skills or higher ability scores. The only effect is that it never grows old or dies of natural causes.

### **Increased ability**

**Cost: 15**

One of the creature's abilities is exceptionally well developed. Increase one ability score by ten, and recalculate the secondary abilities accordingly.

**Resistant to poison****Cost: 10**

The creature is not affected by poisonous substances of any kind. The power only affects ingested poisons, e.g., the creature will not die even if it eats plutonium, but it's still sensitive to radioactivity.

**Infrared vision****Cost: 5**

The creature can see heat radiation as a color. This not only gives it the ability to see in complete darkness, it can also see heat sources in daylight. (This is often combined with hunting vision, a sort of tunnel vision which is engaged when its hunting instincts take over, and focuses and enhances the power of sight on one distant object, whereas the peripheral vision is reduced.)

**Natural weapons****Cost: 5**

The creature has claws, fangs, tentacles, tail, horns or some other kind of extremity that works as an efficient weapon. The damages for natural weapons follow:

| Weapon   | scratch | light wound | serious wound | fatal wound |
|----------|---------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| Fangs    | 1-6     | 7-12        | 13-17         | 18+         |
| Claws    | 1-8     | 9-14        | 15-19         | 20+         |
| Tentacle | 1-7     | 8-13        | 14-18         | 19+         |
| Tail     | 1-6     | 7-13        | 14-17         | 18+         |
| Horns    | 1-5     | 6-12        | 13-16         | 17+         |

**Invulnerable to fire****Cost: 10**

The creature is not hurt by high temperatures. It can have a bath in boiling magma with no ill effects. A common power among creatures from burning hells and other dimensions.

**Invulnerable to electricity****Cost: 10**

The creature isn't affected by electricity. You can put a billion volts through it with no effect.

**Invulnerable to radioactivity****Cost: 10**

The creature is unhurt by all types of radioactivity. It could live in a nuclear reactor and sleep on a bed of plutonium.

**Invulnerable to weapons****Cost: 10/15**

The creature can only be hurt by some special type of weapon, and is unaffected by all other types. It might be hurt normally by swords and daggers, but untouched by firearms—or vice versa. For ten points, the creature gets half the normal damage from those weapons it is protected from. For 15 points, it is completely protected from some weapons. There must be a reasonably large group of weapons that can hurt the creature, e.g., all sharp melee weapons, all firearms, or

all impact weapons. It must not be a single weapon, e.g., ceramic daggers. No creature is safe from all weapons. There is always something, even if it's only silver weapons, that can kill it.

**Fast reactions****Cost: 15**

The creature normally acts before all others. It has one extra action in every combat phase, and an initiative bonus of +5. It also has a score of 20 in the skill Dodge.

**Regeneration****Cost: 10**

If the creature is injured, it heals unnaturally fast. The body heals three times as fast as normal. Use the rules for healing, but divide the time by three. The wounds are never infected.

**Protective skin****Cost: 10**

The creature has a very tough skin which protects it as well as a bullet-proof overall. The skin may look like ordinary human skin, or like lizard hide. See the section about armor for how a bullet-proof vest protects.

**Enhanced senses****Cost: 10**

The creature has extra sharp hearing, sight, smell, taste and feeling. It can track like a bloodhound, sees pretty well in darkness, can feel its way like a blind man, and immediately recognizes anything it tastes. It also gets dizzy if exposed to strong sensory impressions like explosions and flashes of light.

**Telekinesis****Cost: 10**

This is a psionic power. The creature can lift objects with pure thought. It can bring objects to float in the air, and it can hurl them. The maximum weight of the objects is the creature's Ego in kilograms, and the maximum speed of movement is the creature's Ego meters per second.

**Telepathy****Cost: 15**

The creature can read other people's thoughts, and project its own thoughts in their minds. This only works provided that the victim is within sight or that the telepath knows the receiver well and has had telepathic contact with him earlier. Those who get their thoughts read can sense a "presence" in their minds, but are unable to track it. By rolling under half your Ego, you can block the telepath's attempt to read your mind or send thoughts to you. The creature can only work telepathically with one person at a time.

**Infinite endurance****Cost: 10**

The creature never loses endurance. It can run forever, swim any distance, fight for twelve days in a row, or make the world's elite marathon runners look very silly. Creatures with infinite endurance only need to sleep two hours per night.