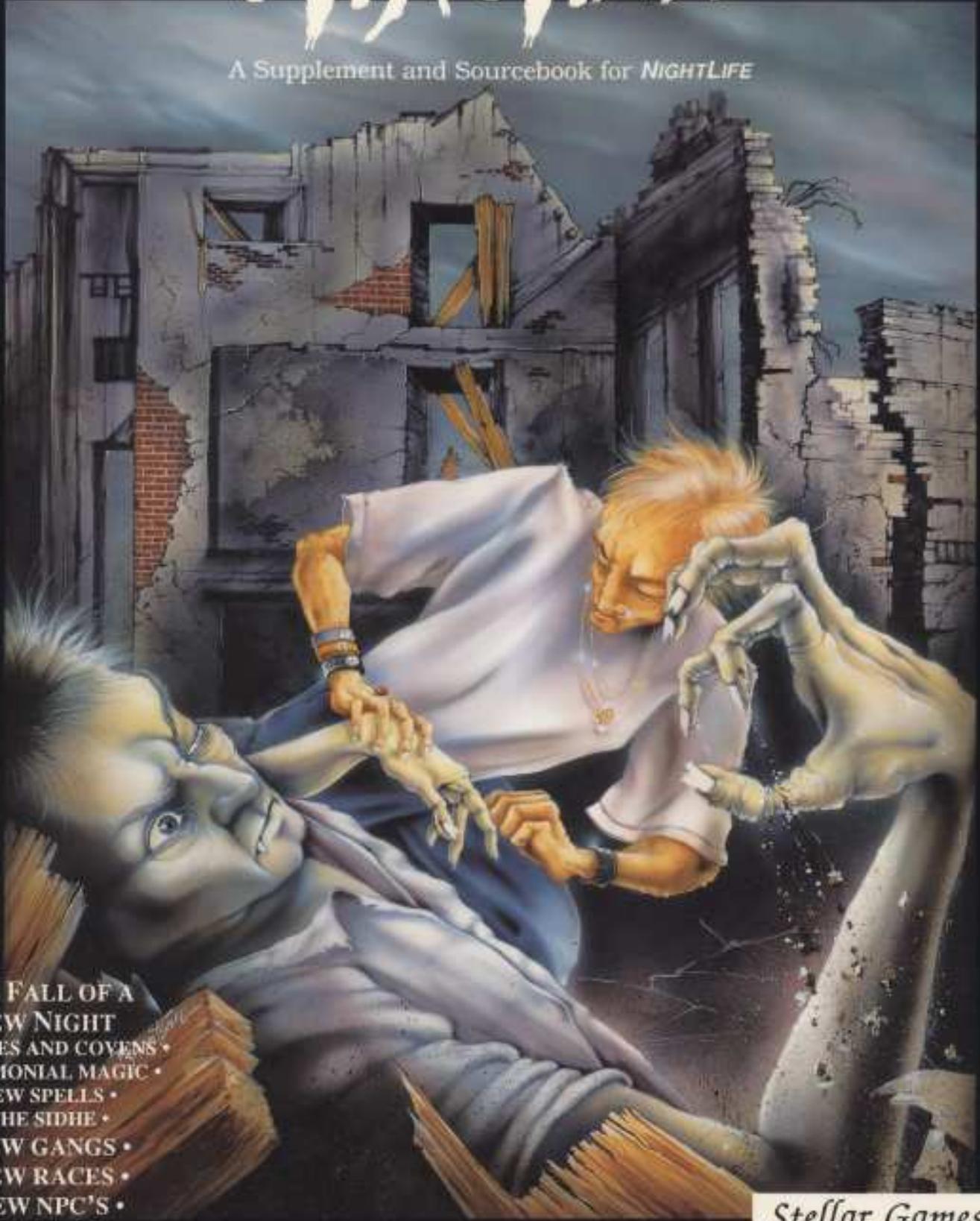


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# KINRISE

A Supplement and Sourcebook for *NIGHTLIFE*



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CEREMONIAL MAGIC •  
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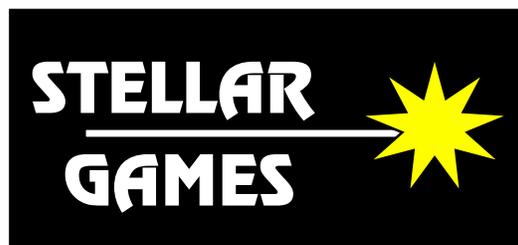


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# KINRISE

A Supplement and Sourcebook for **NIGHTLIFE**

THE KIN AND NUCLEAR WINTER  
THE FALL OF A NEW NIGHT

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# DANCING IN THE RUINS



Greely sighed and rubbed the dust from his eyes. "Geez, Sleet, how long has it been since we came here?"

"Least a year." Sleet looked around, his eyes wide and luminous. "I'd forgotten how bad it was."

New York City, the largest metropolis in North America. Now the largest slag heap in the devastated country of the United States. Nuclear weapons weren't particularly kind to cities.

The buildings looked worse than watches in a Dali painting, their ruler straight edges now warped and bulging. Glass had run like rivers in the heat of the firestorm, and had frozen again as long icicles hanging from the twisted buildings.

The silence was pregnant with tension, anything could be living here now, anything at all. The skeletons that had been fused into the streets and sidewalks and buildings would agree to that. What secret shamblings had their hollow sockets been witness to?

"Let's just get on with it, huh?" Greely, the Vampyre, was more than a

little nervous, and didn't mind showing it.

"Sure." The Wyght was less anxious about where he was, but no less eager to get it over with and get back to the village. At least there they didn't have to worry about getting jumped in a dead end alley by some of the Complex goons they had run into on their way into the city.

They both knew this was no easy job. They could be in the city for days searching for the generator their village needed. Didn't matter to them though, because without the village, getting food might not be so easy. It still struck Sleet as strange that they were now responsible for caring for the Herd, the Herd who had so long despised his Kin. Not that the Herd didn't still hate his kind, just now they thought twice about going around trying to kill them. It was a sick sort of interdependence, one in which neither party would ever feel comfortable.

They started looking for the generator downtown, there was no telling what

things you could find down there. When there had been a city to speak of, that was the place to go for just about anything. Now though, who knew?

The miles-long trek through the rubble was uneventful, but both of them were wishing that something would happen. Anything would be better than the silence and the echo of their boots on the cracked pavement.

Downtown they found what they were looking for: a bomb shelter. They had to hunt around for a while to find a sturdy crowbar to pry the jammed door open, and immediately regretted their actions.

The door popped open with the audible hiss of escaping gasses. Though the bacteria of decay could do nothing to their bodies, the carrion stench was nonetheless an unpleasant one. Gagging and gasping for air, Greely stumbled away from the shelter, hands clasped over his nose.

"What a friggin' mess." Greely spat onto the pavement, clearing the taste of decay from his mouth. "What a friggin' mess."

"C'mon. Might as well get this over with." Sleet pulled his friend along with him. He left the obvious, "before something gets a whiff of this and comes on over to have itself a smorgasbord," unsaid.

Down in the shelter it was worse. The place was filled to capacity with human debris. The bodies were bad, but their positions were worse. Many of them were scattered around the doors, their fingers splintered from clawing at it, a desperate attempt at escape.

Far worse, were the ones in the darkened corners, huddled over the remnants of their companions. Despite the rot it was obvious what they had been doing at the time of their demise. Friggin' cannibals.

"Must have been awful down here. Trapped like rats, just waiting to die. Poor suckers." Greely carefully stepped over the bodies as he tried to keep up

with Sleet, who was already halfway to the back of the shelter.

"I think we're in luck." The Wyght called back over his shoulder to the Vampyre. "Get back here and give me a hand."

It took the two of them less than an hour to rip the generator free of its housing and disconnect it from the wires trailing from the ceiling.

"Hope it works." Greely, ever the pessimist.

"Better. I'm not coming back this way for a long time." He heaved the generator up and Greely helped him lug it to the door. The going was treacherous. Everywhere they stepped, dead limbs tried to pull them down, to trip them up. While having a couple hundred pounds of generator fall on one or the other of them would not kill them, it wouldn't be pleasant either.

"What was that?" Ten feet from the door now and Greely had to go all funny on him.

"Greely, just shut your f -" Sleet's voice cut off about the same time his head was.

"No way, man, no way." Greely let the generator fall from his hands as he backed away from the figure in the doorway.

The creature was huge, having to bend itself almost in half to get through the doorway, mandibles hacking and clacking away at the air. It was unsettling to look at. Even smaller, it would have projected an aura of wrongness.

Roachboy. Greely had heard of the things, but never really seen one. Now here he was face to godawful face with one.

He stared at it, awed at its construction. Shiny, slimy carapace pitted by days out in the windstorms. Human eyes, too large and grotesquely pale sat next to a hundred tiny faceted orbs that gazed in every direction at once. Two pale, dirty arms writhed obscenely from the chitinous chest while a pair of insectile, pincerred appendages hung from

the shoulders. Below the waist, or what should have been a waist, the borders of human and insect were nearly indiscernible. Skinny legs had grown through the powerful roach limbs that propelled the thing.

Greely had just enough time to wonder what he was going to do against the monstrosity. Then his neck collapsed under the monstrous pressure of the pincers, and his head spiraled into the air on a geyser of blood.

"Can you control that beast long enough for us to get in there and get the genny?" The voice was like a rock going through a meat grinder, the voice of a scavvy who'd spent too much time in the dusty Badlands.

"You would doubt the word of a Mentor of Mother Earth?" This voice was

slick and polished, too smooth to be entirely human.

"Guess not, call him off." The Roach-boy bowed down and came out of the shelter, a body dangling from each of his pincers. It gave half a glance to the scavvy, but didn't make a move. The not-quite-man with the smooth voice sent it stalking off into the ruins with a mental command. The bioverted microbes that formed the bridge of command would soon damage the Roach-boy's brain, causing a death of violent madness. The Mentor didn't want to be around when that happened.

A few minutes later, the scavvy and his once-human partner were away from the shelter and on their way back to the wastelands. Back to Mother Earth.

## INTRODUCTION

The year of the Spasm War started off as not half bad. Better than the previous decade anyway. The food riots were mostly over and the wars in the Middle East were finally winding to a close. This meant that airlines that had folded in the face of all the terrorist attacks would soon be up and running again. Even pollution was finally being controlled. Still, there were a few things that had folks ticked off.

### UNEMPLOYMENT

Cutbacks in the military and government employment started the trend toward massive unemployment. When the interest on the national debt went critical in the early years of the twenty-first century, the federal government had to cut back on personnel and social programs. This started a downward spiral in employment that got worse as the tax base shrank and the government tried to do things "more efficiently." Everything they did, however, just made the process worse.

### SOLAR POWER

Solar power was supposed to save the world's environment, and it did do that. In itself, the trend toward solar power didn't reduce employment, only shifted it to new industries. What

the government did with this new, cheap power did hurt, however.

### SOYFOOD

The government, unable to give out welfare money, pushed for the widespread use of hydroponic tanks to grow food with cheap solar power. While there was now plenty of food, most of it was made out of hydroponically grown soybeans. These were ground to a fine paste, molded into roughly food-like shapes, and injected with a wide variety of pseudo-meat flavors. There was also that hyper-nutritious algae crap that was grown in tanks filled with sewage. The algae was prepared like the soybeans, though it didn't hold its shape nearly as well, and tasted like nothing at all. People didn't like the stuff, and the occasional run on the elitist food banks still occurred. Such riots ended in the deaths of a few hundred people and the far greater loss of a few pounds of steak (the real, primo stuff rang in at the same dollar amount as most folks' annual income). Still, most people took what the government gave them and pretended that it really wasn't that bad.

Why were other types of food so scarce? Well, once hydroponics got going, farmers and the food industry couldn't compete. All along the chain of supply, the companies making natural foods went out of business. Less and less

land was cultivated every year. This displaced a lot of people, who moved to (you guessed it) the cities, where cheap food was available. Rural America was depopulated. Restaurants went out of business or only catered to the very rich. And it made the unemployment and tax base problems worse.

## TRANSPORT GRIDS

The real thing that got under most folks skin was the fact that they weren't allowed to have cars anymore. Something about the new "clean up the air act" and the great traffic grid that was currently under construction. It was sort of neat, at least for the first few days. Just go up to the nearest rental place and plop down your Cred-Card and bingo, they gave you a little plastic rental. Bad thing was, you couldn't drive the things. All you could do was type in your destination and the car did the rest. Cut down on a lot of accidents, but the computer controlling traffic flow was far from perfect. Most days you got to spend an hour or so snarled up in a jam so thick it hurt your brain just thinking about it.

Another problem with the new traffic grid was that it was electric (remember the solar power). Instead of fitting each car with solar cells, however, the whole system ran on a power grid. Which meant that every time the power went down, well, just get out of the car and start walking. Not too bad if you were on the highway, because sooner or later a commuter shuttle would stop and airlift you to work (for the low, low fee of just a hundred bucks). It could be a real problem if you happened to be tooling down the back streets of downtown New York. Real good way to get sliced and diced.

Electric vehicles started to replace the old-style internal combustion stuff in the country, but the conversion wasn't completed by the time the Spasm War broke out.

The government also had a few tricks up its sleeves. They saw the car situation as a wonderful way to limit the places people could go. If, for instance, you lived in the hard luck sections of Harlem, there was just no way to get your little rental car to go to Wall Street or the upper Manhattan Island. Keep the riffraff out of the high class territory was what the idea was, though nobody ever came right out and said that. When you typed in your destination, if it wasn't one that The Powers That Be thought you should be headed for, you got a message like "grid to selected city section full at this time." That really ticked folks off, though it did cut

down on crime in the nicer neighborhoods. Like most things, people didn't really have much choice. If you wanted to have any sort of freedom, you had to use the rentals.

Of course, the biggest thing the little electric cars did is layoff most auto workers.

## CABLENET



One of the big advances to appear in the early twenty-first century was CableNet. Finally, all of the promises that cable television had been making for so long came true. Now it really could put you in tune with the world. Over 500 channels insured that there was never a need to be bored. Why even leave your house (well, apartment, most folks only dreamed about having their own house) if you could just zap up the place you wanted to go on CableNet? The tourism channel let you "go" to almost any place you could imagine, and once there, look around, thanks to digitized virtual realities. Naturally, you couldn't actually taste or touch or smell anything, but most people didn't miss the sensations. After all, most of the world was pretty smelly, and there was no telling what sort of nasty little retrovirus you might pick up touching some of the stuff in those places.

## USA AIR SERVICE

CableNet caused a few problems for those airlines just making a comeback from the great Terrorist Wars that had crippled them back in the early years of the century. Without the tourist trade, staying in business became almost impossible.

## Introduction

So, of course, the government stepped in to solve everything. Suddenly, there was only one airline, USA Air Service, and it controlled all the major routes. Prices were outrageous, but only the very wealthy wanted to fly anywhere anyway. Business trips had become obsolete. Nobody wanted to spend a couple of days flying off to somewhere when they could handle everything over computer networks or by fax.

Thus, flying became the province of the ultra-rich, and the line between the haves and have-nots widened ever further.

## THE MED WARS

The next major change to wander onto the scene occurred in the field of medicine, and most folks would agree that it wasn't the best of changes. The Medical Payment Laws made it impossible to receive medical treatment unless you had either the cash up front or an ironclad insurance policy. In a country with a 60% unemployment rate, most folks didn't have either one. This resulted in the much publicized Med Wars. Nasty little affairs, and riots of a scale no one could have possibly imagined. Whole cities were crippled by the fighting in the streets. Hospitals became armored fortresses, relying on corporate security to keep them safe.

The death totals were never officially tallied, but it's easy to imagine them running into the hundreds of thousands, what with rioters unable to obtain even the most rudimentary medical treatments. Most of them died from infections and from a particularly unkind retrovirus dumped on them by "an unknown source." No one made the connection between the helicopters hovering overhead and the distribution of the virus. It was unthinkable that the government, who owned those helicopters, would deliberately dump a biological agent on its own people.

## SLEEPER SIGNALS

Still, when the wars finally settled down, things were pretty calm and cool. CableNet expanded so you could do virtually anything with it now: work from home, order groceries, get your kids' school lessons downloaded to the HomeTerms, and even get a book. People just didn't know what they would do without the CableNet there to facilitate every moment of their waking lives. With the little known sleeper signal permeating the broadcasts, most channels managed to keep their viewers tuned in, even while dreaming. The idiot box had become the

center of American life. By the time anyone realized what was happening, it was far too late to do anything about it. Not that anyone cared, because once you got the sleeper signal enough times, it got real hard to concentrate on anything outside of eating, sleeping, and doing whatever job you might have to do.

Then things started going nasty again. No one knows why, or if they know, they aren't telling. All of a sudden people started getting mean. Real mean. Violent crime shot up. Even the traffic grid couldn't keep it out of the upscale 'burbs. There were rumors that someone had dropped a rogue sleeper signal into the normal CableNet broadcast and that was what was making people freak. There were even those who thought that alien invaders were at work. Whatever caused it, the violence was rampant. Freeway duelling took place now. People started smuggling in weapons to sell in back alleys and underground markets. Before it could be stopped, the highways became a slaughterzone.

Public transit wasn't any safer. Thrillkill gangs roamed the subways, popping anyone that got in their way, mashing up innocent bystanders like so much soybean. Even The Kin were nervous, unsure of how to handle this self-destructive behavior. They decided that they'd just hang low, wait it out. Little did they know that waiting it out was just about impossible. Things were going to get real ugly before they got any prettier.

## MOTHER EARTH

Then Mother Earth came. She infiltrated CableNet with her own peculiar brand of apocalyptic ecoterrorism and pop culture hype. The Brotherhood of Mother Earth, she called it. Her message was frighteningly clear: the world sucked and the only way that it was going to get any better was if we wiped the slate clean and started all over. Not a real happy philosophy, but it caught on in the nihilistic teen scene.

## RUMBLES OF WAR

World politics weren't exactly on an even keel either. The Iraqis were finally getting over the serious beating the US and its allies dealt them way back in '91, and they were not at all happy about it. Deciding that the US was too far away for their crude missiles, they started pelting Israel.

Imagine everyone's surprise when the missiles delivered not conventional warheads, not

even chemical warheads, but five megaton nuclear warheads.

Overnight Tel Aviv disappeared, and things started their downhill slide. In retaliation the Israelis turned most of Iraq into a smoking crater. Though they had denied having any nuclear weaponry, they still managed to deliver enough warheads to exterminate most of the Iraqis.

They didn't stop there. Iran went down next, its people huddled in ineffectual bomb shelters as flaming death fell on their country. The Arabs pleaded with the United States to get Israel to just back off, and the official line from Washington went something like: "Well, if you hadn't been such a bunch of screwups in the first place, this probably wouldn't have happened."

## SPASM WAR

This would have been a localized disaster, except for an old hardline Russian General, who decided that the spread of American influence to the Mideast (as he saw it), had to stop. He ordered a full nuclear strike against Israel.

Then—Spasm War.

The nuking of Israel started a chain reaction. The US struck at Russia, and Russia struck back. Fallout and stray hits brought the other former Soviet satellites into the war (to no one's surprise, they'd all managed to keep a few missiles and warheads). China was nuked as a matter of Russian policy, and they retaliated against Eastern Europe, also firing missiles at Western Europe and the United States. The Western European powers launched their missiles at everyone. Before anyone knew it, WWII had started and finished.

Boy, were things a flaming mess.

## THE FIRST WEEKS

The exchange of nuclear missiles changed the face of the planet. All major metropolitan centers became raging bonfires, their inhabitants torches of flesh. Many of The Kin died in the burning cities, their bodies roasted more surely than if they had been staked out for the Big Mike.

Remember that Emergency Broadcast thingamajig? Forget about it. The first missile chucked our way burst in the upper atmosphere above St. Louis. The Electromagnetic Pulse (EMP) from that blast wiped out most electronic devices in North America. There were a lot of folks sitting around waiting for information to come down the CableNet pipeline. It never came.

People panicked. They panicked even more when they discovered that the little rental cars the government had foisted on them a few years back didn't work without electricity. Electricity that the EMP had wiped out. Solar panels were burned out by the biggest blast of light ever to hit them.

Not that there weren't a few places that still had juice. But what power they had came from little backup generators, just strong enough to provide light in a house.

## RUN FOR THE COUNTRY

The mass exodus of survivors from the burning cities caused quite a few problems. For one, the military didn't have any idea what they were supposed to do with them. When the electricity went out, so did all the lines of communication, and with that went the military chain of command.

There were showdowns between the military and the civilians. The military was trying their best to quarantine those who were irradiated. The civilians wanted nothing more than to escape from the burning wreckage.

The ensuing battle was ugly. Real ugly. The military was better armed, but not nearly as desperate as the mobs of radioactive refugees. Countless thousands died in those first days after the war. More would die later.

At last, the military units either gave ground or were overrun. Fragments of units, with no chain of command and no supply, either found a community to join or went renegade.

The survivors began to work their way into the countryside, determined to get out to the farmlands where they knew there would be food. Everyone knew that food grew in the country. Trouble was, not many people were raising much food the natural way. Most of the folks who still lived out in the farmland weren't real anxious to share what food they had.

More fighting broke out, with the farmers blazing away with whatever hunting rifles and shotguns they could dig up, and their city cousins firing right back with the assault weapons they had taken from the military. Some of the farmers were helped by military units. By this time, everyone could see the writing on the wall. The country was going to pot, and it was time to look out for yourself. Thousands more died.

## WHERE'S THE SUN?

During all the fighting, people began to notice some changes. For one, it was getting cold. For another, nobody could rightly remember when they had last seen the sun. A day ago? A week, maybe?

This was more than a little disconcerting, and some of the little farming towns decided that with renegade military units around, it might be wise to have a few allies in these uncertain times. They invited a few of their enemies into their communities, adding a few more mouths to feed, but also adding a few more men capable of fighting off invaders.



The renegade soldiers had watched and waited, knowing that sooner or later, they would be able to strike at the little farmers and take all the food they wanted. It was a bit of a surprise for them when they came charging into town and got themselves munched by automatic weapons fire. They retreated and regrouped, reassessed the situation, and began to raid more carefully. A lot of the renegades banded together under one of the few remaining generals, Leonard Brovins. Brovins wanted to rebuild America, but in his own way. His so-called Army of New America began to cause no end of grief.

## THE COMPLEX

Another threat, though a more subtle one, was that of the Complex. They had planned far ahead for the Big One. Their advisors told them

just what they would need to do to survive such a war.

They had built themselves deep bunkers they called Keeps. Keeps filled with every conceivable survival item. algae vats, hydroponics tanks, MedBeds, numerous generators, and a wide variety of entertainments. When the bombs started to fall, members of the Complex knew where to go, and knew who was going to be the Lord of the Keep when they got there.

Now these Keeps are sending out Stalkers, Kin whose job it is to kidnap herd and bring them back to the Keep where they are used for food. These Stalkers are brutally effective, powerful enough to swipe members of the military from their units. The only thing that stands in their way is the Commune, which does its best to thwart Complex plans.

## SCAVENGER GANGS

Another faction has also arisen in the wastelands. The scavenger gangs. Also known as scavvies, these are the most desperate of all the Herd. Men and women with nothing to call their own but the rags on their backs and guns or knives in their hands. They attack anyone or anything that enters their territory, brutally and without mercy. Whether you are carrying anything of value or not is not the issue. Your flesh can still be eaten, and the water wrung from you lifeless corpse.

All of these groups constantly gnaw at one another, attacking whoever happens to be closest at the time, and having great difficulty cooperating. Some few have begun to work together as the months pass, but such alliances are rare. Without the Complex to set them up, they would not exist at all.

## KINRISE

As the first anniversary of the Spasm War approaches, a new figure is rising on the horizon. Mother Earth and her Brotherhood are back, and the scavvy gangs have begun to rally around her banner. The Army of New America, led by Brovins, is making their own bid for rule. The Complex is trying to consolidate their power, while rogue Kin walk by day and night under the clouds that screen out the Big Mike. Things look very bleak indeed.

It's one year after the Big One. Welcome to the New America. Welcome to the KinRise.

# THE WASTELANDS

## WORLD-WIDE SUNBLOCK

*"What time is it, Bone?" Leech scanned the sky nervously.*

*Bone sighed. "About five minutes later than the last time you asked, jack. It's 8:13 AM. Sun's been up for over an hour. Just relax.*

*"Can't. Been hidin' from the Big Mike for 83 years. Don't break a habit like that overnight. 'Sides, what if the clouds break open? Fried bloodsucker, that's what. Don't trust those clouds.*

*"Look, it'll be months, maybe years before those clouds break enough to let in the sun. Anyway, if you're so worried about the time, why don't you work on that Edge that keeps you up to date?"*

*"Don't like the idea of a clock in my head. I'm an artist man, can't be splitting the day up into minutes."*

*"Artist my butt. I'm gonna get you a watch."*

*"Don't like watches nowadays. They tick all the time, drive you nuts, y'know. Hey, Bone, what time is it?"*

Funny things happen to the world when you start tossing multimeg nukes around. One of the most noticeable is what happens to the atmosphere. Dust from the multiple explosions gets tossed into the sky, along with millions of cubic tons of soot, ash, and smoke from burning cities.

During the first month or so after the war, the air was pretty bad. Dust, smoke, and soot made filter masks and goggles a necessity. The dust in the lower atmosphere cleared up fairly quickly, however.

The main problem is the upper atmosphere. When the high airburst nukes went off to cause EMP, large amounts of energy was released in the upper atmosphere, creating layers of charged molecules. These layers acted like a static dust trap, drawing in airborne particles. This layer of dust, smoke, and soot screens out the direct rays of the sun, allowing only the smallest amount of visible light through.

That's where things are a year after the Big One. The sky is always black or grey, and it never gets much brighter than twilight. Pre-war twilight, that is. Lightning flares constantly between layers of the clouds. The lightning is so

far up, however, it doesn't help illuminate much, only makes it feel like a big storm is coming.

Some experts say it's only a matter of time before the charge dissipates and the dust comes down in the rain. No one knows how long that will take, however.

The dust layer, of course, doesn't bother the Kin one little bit. No sun, no burning. Simple as that. The Kin get to run around all day if they like, and sleep at night. Most don't, though. Hard to break a couple hundred years of habit.

Another of the little disadvantages that has cropped up is that it's hard to grow things without the sun. Even though genetic engineering delivered plants that could survive on less than 10 percent of their normal sunlight requirements, nobody expected them to have to survive on that for any extended period of time.

Even that wouldn't be too big a catastrophe, if the algae vats and hydroponics tanks were on-line. Like everything electrical, however, they ain't. The solar panels that made it through the bombings can't make current without sunlight, and there are only so many electric motors that can be scavenged and converted into generators. So people are nervous and hungry, and if they aren't fighting off scavvy gangs, they're raiding each other.

## SUCKING RADS

Fortunately for the Kin, they are not directly affected by radiation.

However, as with most things, the Herd are not so lucky. Any city with a pre-war population of more than 200,000, and the area within ten miles, is radioactive.

Any herd who spends eight hours in a radioactive zone has suffered an exposure. Naturally, if a herd spends a whole day trudging through an irradiated area, he is going to chalk up exposures rather quickly (as many as three a day!). This is rather unfortunate, because herd cart around their exposures for thirty days. Worse yet, for every three exposures suffered in a thirty day period, the herd will lose 1 FIT point permanently. When FIT reaches zero, the herd dies.

CPs should note that the effects of radiation are nasty. Keep this in mind when designing adventures in and around radioactive settings. You might find some Complex Seekers, maybe a few rogue Kin, possibly even a few of Mother Earth's boys, but you will not find any sizable number of humans in these areas.

## RADIATION EFFECTS TABLE



For every single exposure a herd suffers, a FIT Roll is made. Make this roll as soon as the herd has spent his eight hours in a radioactive environment. If the FIT Roll is a failure, roll on the Radiation Effects Table, below. Roll 1d10, add 1 point for every other exposure that the herd has received in the last 30 days, and compare the result with the table below.

If the herd continues to take radiation exposures, add one point to the result of the 1d10 roll for every exposure taken. Stop when the effects of a result occur, and ignore any lesser effects.

Remember that a herd loses 1 FIT point for every three exposures taken in the same month.

### 1-5 Nausea

Over the course of the next 48 to 72 hours, the herd will become nauseous, dizzy, and lethargic. His energy level will be far too low for physical activity, and he will have to be physically moved if someone wants him out of his current position. (If someone doesn't keep him cleaned up and help him to the toilet, wherever he's laying is going to get pretty gross.) This lack of energy will last 1d10 days, after which the herd's symptoms will have lessened enough to allow normal activity.

### 6-10 Blisters

After a spasm of intense vomiting, which occurs roughly 24 hours after the exposure, the herd will feel fine. After another 24 hours passes, however, a number of watery blisters will ap-

pear upon his body. These blisters are very tender, making any action more strenuous than a slow walk extremely painful. To reflect this, decrease STR, DEX, and ATT (it's hard to be sexy with what appear to be chicken pox from hell covering your body) by 1d10 each for the next 1d10 days, after which the blisters dry up.

### 11-12 Intestinal Cramps

The herd experiences extremely painful intestinal cramps, and bouts of debilitating diarrhea. He will be confined to one place (usually far, far, away from anyone else) for the duration of the illness (1d10 days). This sickness will leave him weak and weary, so subtract 1 point from both STR and FIT. These points will return 3 weeks later.

### 13-14 Headaches

Blinding headaches strike the herd during moments of stress, completely paralyzing him with pain. Anytime a Skill is used (other than an action covered by Competence) or combat breaks out, the herd must make an Escape Roll against FIT. If successful, the herd suffers no ill effects other than a moment of intense pain. If unsuccessful, however, the herd is unable to take any action other than clutching his head and moaning. Naturally, this makes him unable to engage in combat, and whatever Skill he may have been trying to use will fail. CPs should do their best to use this illness to its full potential. "Disarm that nuke, ya say? Sure, no problem. Here, hand me those pli-urghh." Boom. These headaches will plague the poor herd for the next 3 weeks.

### 15 Gum Disease

48 hours after the exposure, the afflicted herd will begin to notice that his teeth are loosening and his gums are receding. Within a week, all of his teeth will have fallen out. He will be forced to grind his food into a thin gruel, which he can drink. Reduce ATT permanently by 5, due to the lack of attractive dentures. Note that if the herd has already lost his teeth, then his gums will begin to rot, blackening in a most repulsive manner and producing a loathsome stench. Again, reduce ATT by 5.

### 16 Muscle Deterioration

1d10 days after the exposure, this victim will notice his skin becoming loose. It will hang in great folds from his skeleton, and there will be no muscle definition at all. This is caused by the insidious degradation of muscle tissues by radioactive rot. Every month after the symptoms

first appear, reduce STR, DEX, or FIT (randomly determine which one), by one point. This will continue for 1d10 months, after which the process will halt. Note that all Ability losses are permanent, and there is no known method for healing the damage done (other than Magic). If any Ability is reduced to zero, the herd is dead.

### 17 Intestinal Failure

Nothing appears to be wrong with the stricken being. Not at first anyway. But 1d10 weeks later, he will be stricken with abominable stomach and intestinal pain, quickly followed by diarrhea. At the first relief of his swollen bowels, the herd will notice large amounts of blood in his stool. After 1d10 days of progressively worsening intestinal distress, the herd will die, his rotten intestines finally excreted in a final expulsion of truly monumental proportions.

### 18 Ocular Deterioration

2d10 days after exposure, the herd will notice a marked decrease in his visual acuity. His eyes will begin to leak a putrid fluid shortly thereafter, and within another 1d10 days, he will be completely blind. The disease is progressive from there, the illness will creep back into his brain, driving him quite mad. After 1d10 weeks (after he becomes blind), the poor wretch will finally die, his brain a thick, black sludge which leaks from his empty eye sockets.

### 19 Fast Cancers

Almost at once, hideous cancers take root. They make short work of their host, chewing him up like great obscene maggots. While they gnaw away at his insides, the unfortunate victim will lose his hair and his teeth, and his skin will break out in quarter-sized pustules filled with a bilious green, vile-smelling fluid. The whole process will occur with appalling rapidity, and the herd will pass away a mere six weeks after this result is rolled.

### 20 Atomic Zombie

Frighteningly, the radiation does its work within 24 hours. It will basically be the same process as described above with a 50% chance that the corpse will become an Atomic Zombie (see the New Races Chapter for more information) at some point in the next 1d10 days.

**Example:** A squatter is travelling, and unwittingly camps in a radioactive area. He doesn't have a Geiger counter, so he doesn't know that the city just over the hill caught a nuke. The squatter entered the radioactive zone at 8:00 am. He camps until the following morning after spending the day in the radioactive zone. He takes three radiation exposures over the course of that twenty-four hour period. The CP makes an Escape Roll against the squatter's FIT of 13. The first roll, made at 4:00 pm, is a failure. The CP rolls 1d10 on the Radiation Effects Table, and rolls a 4. The squatter will begin to suffer from Nausea sometime in the next three days.

Since the squatter is still taking exposures, the CP adds 1 point to the result of 4 at Midnight, and another at 8:00 am the following morning. That pushes the result up to a 6, which means the squatter will suffer from Blisters 24 hours after the exposure where his Escape Roll failed. This is also his third exposure in a month, so his FIT drops permanently by 1 point, to a new score of 12.

The squatter moves out of the radioactive area by 10:00 am, so there is no fourth exposure at this time. By 4:00 pm, however, the squatter will see and feel the sickness that precedes the outbreak of Blisters. Note that the original result, Nausea, is ignored because subsequent exposures pushed the result to a new entry on the Radiation Effects Table.

## FEEDING ON IRRADIATED HERD

Kin cannot feed on irradiated herd. Eventually, however, some poor sap is going to try, either because he is very, very desperate, or because he simply does not know any better. When this occurs, CPs should roll on the Drug Effects Table in the *NIGHTLIFE* Manual. There is no danger of addiction, however, and Skills and Edges are not affected as they are for drug use.

So just how do Kin know if his selected victim is pumped full of rads? In addition to any physical signs, Aura Sight will work, showing irradiated herd with a large blue aura, several times brighter than any normal aura. It masks all other features by its intensity. As a last ditch effort, the Kin may attempt to make an Escape Roll against PER, once he has begun feeding. If successful at this point, the Kin must still make

a roll on the Drug Effects table, but with a -30 modifier to the roll. If the poor Kin does not realize at this point that his meal is unfit for consumption, he must suffer the full consequences of his action. Roll on the Drug Effects Table.

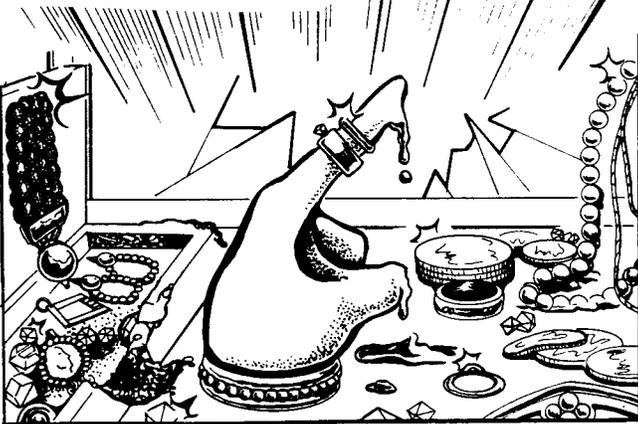
Radioactive areas are not detectable by any means other than a Geiger counter or similar device. These gadgets aren't exactly common though, so getting your claws on one won't be easy.

As a final note on radiation, it should be made clear that the effects of radiation described here have been greatly simplified to facilitate quicker play. Radiation should be used as a dramatic device to show players just how bad things are. Very few things will shake up the player of a Vampyre more than to have his character discover that his almost-next-meal is a mass of running sores with eyes that bleed black pus.

## RADIOACTIVE OBJECTS

Most of the radioactive matter is contained in the fine layer of dust and ash that covers everything. Luckily, most of the nukes were relatively clean. It is rumored that some cities were hit by ground bursts or older, dirty weapons, causing any object removed to be potentially dangerous, especially if made of metal. Characters spending time within 10 feet of such an object will accumulate 1 radiation exposure for each 8 hours. It may be easier to estimate the time it takes for an exposure to occur. Exposure must be more than 15 minutes a day to show any ill effects (i.e., accumulate 1 exposure in 30 days).

### IRRADIATED GOLD



Some gold that was irradiated in the city centers has taken on new properties. Though rather rare, RadGold or KinBane (as it is called)

has become a new and insidious Substance Vulnerability that affects all Kin. A RadGold object is usually formed from jewelry containing a diamond. Its form is a small, melted globe of the precious metal surrounding the gemstone. Kin who come in contact with this substance must Escape against FIT or roll on the Radiation Effects Table. So far, few, if any, herd know the powers of RadGold.

The drawback for the Herd is that RadGold is highly radioactive. A herd within 10 feet will accumulate radiation exposures (see Sucking Rads, above) as they would from any radioactive object. A heavy lead or gold box (50 pounds or so) will stop the radiation, but makes it difficult to travel or use the RadGold quickly.

## WEATHER

With the sun hidden, the Earth has cooled rapidly. Over the course of the past year, the average summer temperature has dropped to an almost uniform 40°F. The difference between the seasons has also lessened, and the temperature drops to only 25°F or 30°F in the winter. Areas near the Chasms (see below) are much warmer, but living in such areas can be quite hazardous to one's health.

Weather patterns have become extremely unstable due to the differences in temperature between the oceans and the land masses (the oceans lose heat at a much slower pace than the land masses do). This causes extremely dangerous storms to spring up along the coasts, and the meteorological effects of these storms often travel far inland.

## PREDICTING THE WEATHER

Keep in mind that while changes in the weather are more common after a nuclear war than they are in the present, radical changes happen only rarely. For instance, a period of windless days may end in a tornado, but it is unlikely that a tornado will suddenly dissipate after only an hour or so, leaving still air in its wake. Watch a few weather reports to help you understand how weather patterns work. Then accelerate the patterns a bit and intensify their effects. This will provide you with a believable, yet severe, model for how weather works.

Simulating such extreme weather would be very difficult with a table, but some guidelines are given below.



### SEVERE STORMS

Tornados are rare, but lightning storms have picked up in intensity (caused by the increase of static electricity in the air), and it is not at all uncommon for a lightning storm to strike a community, causing fires. Hurricanes are very common on the coast (because of the temperature variations discussed above).

Severe storms are very hard on exposed characters, who will suffer **1d10 damage per hour**. If a character gets behind a windbreak (strong wall, cliff, or trench), they can avoid the damage. Just remember that low areas are prone to flooding during a severe storm.

### RAD RAIN (AKA PURPLE RAIN)

Radioactive precipitation still occurs, though not all that often. When it does fall (usually once or twice a month in a given location), it will irradiate the area it falls in for a period of 1d10 days. During this time, all herd must stay indoors, or suffer an exposure as noted under the preceding section on Sucking Rads.

### DUST STORMS

The vegetation in many areas has died off, and the soil is often picked up by the wind. After a long dry Spell, such storms become common in many areas. This can be particularly nasty if the dust comes from a radioactive area (10% chance, more if a large city is near). The dust will scour unprotected flesh to the bone, causing **2d10 damage per hour**. Some sort of windbreak and filter is necessary, or the dust will choke an exposed character.

## LAY OF THE LAND

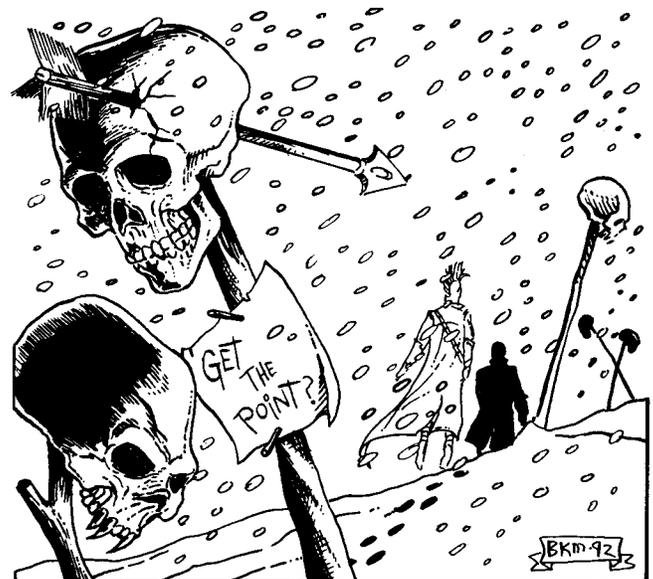
Well, the mountains are still where they used to be, the courses of the rivers haven't changed much, and you can still find the oceans where they were a year ago. Other than that, the world is a different place.

For starters, every city whose population was 200,000 or greater was vaped during the Spasm War. These cities are twisted wrecks filled with all manner of unpleasant critters. Bombed cities are also radioactive in the extreme, as is the area within a of 10 mile radius. Unfortunately, the cities are the only places to find the things necessary to get the world running again: generators, algae vats, hydroponics tubes, weapons, you name it, it's probably in a city somewhere.

This means that the Kin make a lot of trips into cities, trying to find things that their chosen communities can use. The Herd will occasionally try sending some norms into the cities, but these poor saps are usually dead of radiation poisoning before they can find anything useful.

All of the bodies lying around make tempting targets for all manner of critters, especially Nuclear Larvae. For every eight hours that characters are in a city, the CP may roll on the Random Encounters Table found near the end of this book.

## THE BADLANDS



One thing to remember is that though most of the country is uninhabited, there are many creatures on the move. There are small villages every hundred miles or so but, for the most part,

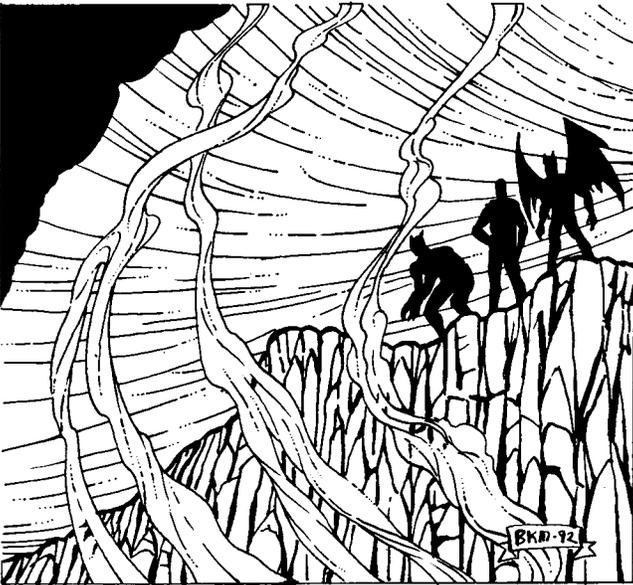
## Welcome to the Wastelands

the land is a vast wilderness. Scavvy gangs roam free here, as do the Gypsies. Mother Earth's groupies can also be found wandering the wastes, always on the lookout for new recruits, always hungry to add new meat to the Brotherhood. Target Alpha's Reconstruction Teams are still active, though severely outnumbered by their opponents.

Rogue Kin run wild and free in this bleak new world, their bestial natures and inhuman appetites unfettered. Aberrant humans whose bodies are twisted by disease and radiation rage at their dismal lives and attack any who come near. The Roachboys and other monstrosities stalk their prey across the wastelands. The critters released when the Wormholes opened to the surface can be encountered as well.

It is not very pleasant to engage in an overland trek. Still, it is better to do this than to attempt to navigate the twisting labyrinth of the Wormholes. To ease a CP's job, the Badland Encounter Table has been included near the end of this book. Roll for encounters once every 6 hours, adding ten to the result of all rolls that occur while the characters are camping.

## THE CHASMS



One of the first things that a person would notice upon travelling across this great, changed land of ours, is the presence of the Chasms. These are chasms, ranging from 10-100 feet wide and 1-10 miles long. The depth of a Chasm is usually about 125 feet, but may be deeper near an entrance to the wormholes. The sides of most Chasms are slightly less than true vertical,

and are mostly composed of loose stone. This translates into a +20 modifier for anyone attempting to climb down the face, freehand. If using ropes, reduce the penalty to +10.

Within a mile or so of a Chasm, the temperature is noticeably warmer, rising as high as 70°F in the warmer parts of the year, and rarely dropping below 50°F, even in the coldest depths of winter. Geothermal heat causes this, as warmth from the lower Wormholes escapes from the Chasms. Normal temperatures in a Chasm run from 100° F to 120° F). This warmth has led many of the Herd to attempt settlements near the Chasms, experiments which will, for the most part, end in failure. This is because the Chasms connect directly to the Wormholes, all manner of critters have been known to come crawling up from the Chasms. Most communities know this now, and will settle no closer than a few miles from a Chasm itself.

Several of the Herd have attempted to use these tunnels as a sort of highway between one settlement and the next. Unfortunately, most of these pioneers ended up as lunch meat on a Sucker's sandwich. Even the Kin have fears about travelling for too long in the Wormholes. After all, who knows what's lurking down there?

## TECHNOLOGY

Before the Spasm War, mankind had become almost entirely dependent on technology to take care of day to day business. Cars drove themselves, food was delivered directly to cooking and refrigeration units within the house (which could be programmed to prepare meals for an entire week), and the little kiddies were schooled at home by CableNet, via the Home-Term. All in all an idyllic existence.

Until, that is, the technology stopped working. When a nuke is detonated over an area, the Electromagnetic Pulse (EMP) floods across the landscape, frying every electrical device for hundreds of miles. The move to solar power and electricity for almost all power applications increased the level of the catastrophe. Without sunlight, solar panels are just so much dead weight. In a heartbeat, America lost all of its basic necessities. Now cars don't run, you can't use the phone, there isn't any electricity, computers don't work, and worst of all, there are no large scale Algae or Hydroponics plants.

There are some exceptions, but they are rare. Unless specially protected, if you have to plug it in, or put a battery in it, it doesn't work.

# THE HERD AFTER THE KINRISE



Stringer adjusted his filtermask and wiped the ashy grime from his goggles. The rest of his scavy gang watched him, nervously awaiting his commands.

"WHO ARE WE!" Stringer screamed to be heard over the wind, his voice a roar.

"GUTEATERS!" A hundred voices replied, and a hundred pairs of hands slammed together. Bloodlust raged in the gangers' veins, their thirst for destruction a palpable force.

"AND WHAT DO WE WANT?"

"TO KILL TO LIVE!"

"DO IT!" As one, the gang exploded into action, following their leader down the steep hill toward their target.

A small village huddled next to the banks of the swollen river awaited their charge. The herd there knew they had little chance. Even if they managed to repel this wave, the scavy's survivors would just go for reinforcements. In a few days it would start all over again. They braced themselves for the attack.

Unknown to the herd, they had help from other sources. Hidden in the upper floors of a dilapidated building, a group of Kin had come to view this little place as their own.

"How many, Opal?"

The Rakshasa turned away from the window and loaded her rifle as she

spoke. "Probably more than a hundred. Guteaters, from the looks of their banners."

"Great, just great." The Sorcerer, Bone by name, began deciding which of his Spells would be most effective. In the corner a Daemon growled its irritation, and the Sorcerer sneered. "You'll get your chance to spill some blood, soon enough."

A pair of twin Wyghts grinned wickedly. Their garb was completely concealing; filtermask, goggles and tight-fitting leathers that covered them from throat to toes. They worked the actions on their Uzis and prepared to leave. "We're goin' down. Wanna be there when the action starts."

"Just stay out of sight. We don't need folks knowing we're here." That from Leech, the Vampyre. He changed into a bat and split, heading for the rear of the Guteater warband.

"Let's go, Bone, it's party time."

The Spasm War was hard on the Herd. Many died instantly, their lives snuffed out in a flash of nuclear heat. In the weeks and months that followed, many more died of disease and in the fighting.

A year after the war, though, mankind is finally starting to get its feet under it. While still unable to get more than a few electrical generators running, and with even fewer algae vats or

hydroponics plants in operation, the Herd appears to be gaining ground. There are now many permanent settlements. The most important of these, along with the descriptions of their leaders and influential members, are listed below.

## COMMUNITIES

Remember that most villages will be peopled with folks still pretty shaken by what has happened. They are likely to be xenophobic, and not at all pleasant to be around. Add to this a lot of survivors who are disease-ridden or sick with radiation, and you are starting to get the picture. Post-war herd towns are dirty, stinking places. Not somewhere one would much like to spend a lot of time.

Much more common than actual villages or towns are the squats, small temporary clusters of tents. These have no permanent location, and the people who live in them often pack up and move along after only a few days. Living in the shadow of the scavvy gangs has taught them that mobility is the best protection. Kin who find themselves on the road with squatters should be sure not to reveal their true nature. Squatters are like nervous, but dangerous, animals. Startle them, and you're likely to regret it.

**Note:** The percentage of the community that knows of the existence of the Kin is given in the following descriptions as Kin Knowledge. Whenever a character meets a member of a community, Kin Knowledge Score is the percentage chance that the Herd will have a Kin Lore Skill Score of 20 or more (competence).

### RATHOLE

**Population:** 900

**Location:** Approximately 30 miles southwest of Phoenix, Arizona.

**Defenses:** A twenty foot high wall of baked clay surrounds the whole town. Inside of that is a ten foot deep trench filled with razor sharp spikes. There are also miles of trackless desert that must be crossed to reach the town.

**Kin Knowledge:** 5%. A handful of Crowleys live here, their libraries hidden in a series of catacombs which connect directly with the wormholes.

**Faction:** Neutral

Rathole was built on the concept of completely free trade. Anything is for sale here, from pleasures of the flesh to weapons dug out of the numerous abandoned military sites which dot the desert. Unfortunately, to buy any of it you must deal with some of the most unsavory individuals ever to draw a breath.

The leader of Rathole is Lord Flesh, a hedonist and trader extraordinaire. His military expertise and his free-spirited nature drew a small core of followers to him just after the war. These men and women he transformed into decent fighters, and together they all went south.

Along the way they encountered others who joined them, some for protection, more for the promises that Lord Flesh made. "One day," he is reported to have said, "there will be a place where anyone can have anything he wants—if he has the coin."

Lord Flesh now lives by one motto: "If you can't eat it and it doesn't bring you pleasure, sell it or throw it away." Although he lives most of his life in a half-delirious state, full of alcohol, he is still a shrewd leader.

The few times that Rathole has come under attack, the aggressors were repelled almost immediately. The high wall kept most of them out, and many more died by vaulting it, only to find themselves impaled on several hundred spikes at the bottom of the interior trench. Add to this the large number of weapons always available within the walls, and it is easy to see how hard it would be for invaders to sack the place.

Still, the Complex has its eye on Rathole, as does the Brotherhood of Mother Earth. Both know that adding the town to their ranks would give them a group of well trained soldiers, as well as the large stockpile of equipment stashed within the city. Besides these points, more and more people flock to Rathole. Every passing day makes it that much less likely that the town will ever be taken.

Kin will find life within Rathole paradoxically hard. While the people there seem to care little for one another, they will band together against any aggressor from within or without. Also, one of the few laws of Rathole makes it strictly illegal to kill another person.

There are no truly influential people here, just a host of traders and bandits. All that holds Rathole together is the freedom to buy and sell whatever is wanted, and its powerful defense force. Anyone caught tinkering with the power structure within the town is likely to find themselves barred from it for life, or worse.

## SULLIVAN

**Population:** 10,000

**Location:** Mid-Missouri, along I-44. This community is based on the pre-war town of the same name.

**Defenses:** Militia of 6,000. The members of this militia are fond of hit-and-run tactics, and are known for their tenacity and stubbornness. The old city hall has been converted into a fortress.

**Kin Knowledge:** 3%. Very few of the people of Sullivan know anything at all about the Kin. Those that do will most likely consider them to be monsters, or worse. The only exception to this rule is Alex Storm, a Crowley who fled St. Louis.

**Faction:** Reconstructionist. This is the largest community in all of post-war America. As such it was among the first to be contacted by Target Alpha's Reconstruction branch.

Sullivan is the largest community in all of post-war America. It owes this to its relative isolation from major cities and its lack of any military potential. These two factors spared it from the heavy nuking experienced by most of the nation.

During the months directly after the war, people flocked to Sullivan from St. Louis, Springfield, Jefferson City, and every other city in the state. Unlike most of the rural communities, Sullivan readily accepted these many of these refugees, realizing that they would need a lot of people to hold their own in the coming years. They also realized the potential of having many technical personnel and doctors in their town.

Sullivan is also the most advanced of the communities. They have the lights on in 60% of the town, have running water back, and will soon have the sewage treatment facilities functioning, allowing for indoor plumbing. It also has its algae vats and a small hydroponics plant producing enough food to meet its needs. It is entirely possible that Sullivan will regain its pre-war standard of living within the next few years.

Kin who find their way here will probably be able to easily blend in with the rest of the town, due to its varied populace. Kin who plan to stay for awhile will eventually come into contact with Alex Storm. However, as word of Sullivan's status spreads, it is entirely possible that many Kin will arrive to vie for the right to hunt there. This could prove rather sticky.

Overall, it has become apparent that Sullivan will be one of the major bases of operation for the Reconstruction. This means that the Complex, the scavvy gangs, and the Brotherhood will do everything in their power to bring it down.

## Alex Storm



**Race:** Human

**STR:** 10

**DEX:** 11

**FIT:** 13

**INT:** 18

**WILL:** 20

**Magic Ability:** 15

**Max Humanity:** 71

**Skills:** Library Research, personal (85); Occult Knowledge (90); Occult Etiquette (70); Latin (90); Ancient Greek (80); Hebrew (83); Celtic (90); Old English (97); Biology (72); Chemistry (70); Physics (70); Medicine (82); Diplomacy (45); Theology (62); Cryptology (35)

**Faction:** Commune

**Description:** Alex Storm is arguably the most valuable of all the herd currently residing in Sullivan. His specialized knowledge makes him a valuable asset for his skill in medicine and chemistry, both of which were in great demand at the time of his arrival.

Careful use of tact and ruthlessness have placed Storm high in the hierarchy of Sullivan, a position he uses to his advantage. While he doesn't want to rule the place, he does want to make sure that it is run right. His occult Skills are of great use to Kin (especially Sorcerers) and

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he is also a boon in that he will help other Kin integrate themselves into Sullivan with minimal friction. Amazingly enough, he has put together quite an occult library, and now possesses all the materials necessary to research Spells. He is generally well liked. Though some find him to be a know-it-all, most view him as a kindly, old, retired doctor.

### Sarah Long



Race: Human

STR: 18

DEX: 22

FIT: 13

INT: 16

WILL: 14

Magic Ability: 10

Max Humanity: 100

Skills: Pistol (72), Wing Chi (95), Diplomacy (70), Administration (65)

Faction: Reconstructionists

**Description:** Sarah Long had been the mayor of Sullivan before the War, and was asked by its inhabitants to stay on and supervise the job of putting Sullivan back together. She agreed, and has managed to keep things running as smoothly and efficiently as possible. She is directly responsible for every major advancement made thus far, and is likely to be responsible for many more. She is a striking woman, who, even at 43, has kept herself in excellent shape. She is fanatically devoted to Martial Arts. Sarah also serves as Chief of Police.

PER: 14

ATT: 21

LUCK: 20

HTH: 4

SP: 33

## DOGTOWN

Population: 600

**Defenses:** Standing militia of some 400 men and women. Children over the age of 13 are considered to be part of this militia. The village relies almost entirely on its natural surroundings to provide special defenses. The hills around Dogtown are riddled with caves, which are packed with non-perishable foods and other supplies. Anyone attacking Dogtown will be able to destroy buildings, but will be hard pressed to do any real damage to the wily and self-sufficient hill people of the Ozarks.

**Location:** Deep in the heart of the Ozarks. The back hills country has provided natural isolation and a degree of protection for generations.

**Kin Knowledge:** 60%. The superstitions of the Dogtowners have kept them safe from Kin predations for a long, long time. They have several Sorcerers who, though of limited power, have greatly aided them in the recent months. Overall, the people fear The Kin, but are pragmatic enough to realize that an agreement with the more civil Kin could be beneficial to their community.

**Faction:** Neutral (though leaning toward the Commune).

Dogtown is a rarity, in that it has changed little from its prewar state. It was always an isolated community of several tens of families, all hidden up in the forested Ozarks. When the war came, they simply fortified their houses and laid in a stock of food and weaponry in the limestone caves that surround their little village.

Dogtown has thus far managed to avoid the factional conflicts occurring in the world at large, but Complex Stalkers have begun to raid the village. This has the Dogtowners worried, not because the town could be destroyed (they could just as easily live in the caves as in the houses), but because their children are being stolen.

While they refused to side with the Commune when that group first approached them, the residents of Dogtown are reconsidering this stance. Fight fire with fire seems to be their new motto.

Perhaps the most striking detail concerning this community is their knowledge and sorcerous ability. A full 60% of the population knows and believes that The Kin are a real force, and there are two full-fledged Sorcerers among

them. The most powerful of these is Ezekiel Liam, who is also the leader of the community.

Caleb Matthews, the other Sorcerer in Dogtown, sees his magical aptitude as a key to power. Unfortunately for everyone in Dogtown, he is plotting to overthrow Ezekiel with the help of Jessica Flambeaux, a Vampyre. Once Matthews and Flambeaux are in charge, they plan to turn Dogtown over to the Complex, which has promised them much power in return. It's too bad Matthews and Flambeaux don't realize that they are being duped. If someone doesn't lend a hand soon, there won't be a Dogtown.

### Ezekiel Liam



**Race:** Sorcerer  
**STR:** 13                      **PER:** 20  
**DEX:** 8                        **ATT:** 10  
**FIT:** 12                       **LUCK:** 47  
**INT:** 24                       **HTH:** 3  
**WILL:** 31                    **SP:** 59  
**Magic Ability:** 40  
**Max Humanity:** 85  
**Edges:** Drain, life force (12)  
**Familiar:** None  
**Skills:** Knife (64); Cooking (42); First Aid (75);  
History, Ozarks (90); Kin Lore (90); Story-  
telling (100)  
**Description:** Ezekiel is a crusty old man, with a scraggly white beard and piercing green eyes. He has long known and understood his inhuman condition, but has done his best to conceal or control it for most of his life. He is good-natured, but somewhat xenophobic, and can be

trying on the patience. Still, he tells a good story and commands the respect of his community, and is the key to any negotiations with Dogtown. He is viewed by the Dogtowners as a Hoodoo Man, but not an evil one. His services mostly consist of a quick healing Spell, or the curing of an illness. Up until the Complex began hassling his village, he used white magic exclusively, but has since been using Street and Black magic. Once he even used his Drain Edge (the first time he ever did). Worried that his magic won't be enough, he is trying to forge a deal with the Commune, so he will no longer be responsible for the magical protection of Dogtown.

### Caleb Matthews



**Race:** Sorcerer  
**STR:** 21                        **PER:** 27  
**DEX:** 18                       **ATT:** 15  
**FIT:** 15                        **LUCK:** 22  
**INT:** 25                       **HTH:** 4  
**WILL:** 38                    **SP:** 37  
**Magic Ability:** 30  
**Max Humanity:** 30  
**Edges:** Drain, life force (75)  
**Skills:** Rifle (62), Hunting (37), Occult Knowl-  
edge (104), Persuasion (87)  
**Familiar:** Shaitan (rattlesnake)  
**Faction:** Complex  
**Description:** Caleb Matthews is Ezekiel's prime adversary for control of Dogtown. Ever since Caleb joined the village (some six months ago) the two have been mortal enemies.

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Caleb is a powerful looking man, though his attractiveness is marred by the large starburst burn that covers the left side of his neck. He received this injury during a magical duel with a Commune Sorcerer before the War, and it was for this reason that he threw in with the Complex.

Caleb is currently involved with Jessica Flambeaux, the Vampyre who introduced him to the Complex. If Dogtown does not receive some help soon, it is very likely that the two of them will manage to hand the town over to the Complex.

Caleb's opponents should be wary of him. He specializes in Summonings, and prefers to have a Demon do his dirty work.

### Jessica Flambeaux



**Race:** Vampyre

**STR:** 40

**DEX:** 23

**FIT:** 30

**INT:** 27

**WILL:** 36

**PER:** 43

**ATT:** 45

**LUCK:** 60

**HTH:** 8

**SP:** 90

**Max Humanity:** 45

**Edges:** Armor (15); Drain, blood (65); Claws (70); Animal Control, dogs (48); Aura Sight (59); Danger Sense (40); Mesmerize (63); Mistform (92); Nocturnal Vision

**Skills:** Diplomacy (35), Disguise (82), Fear Resistance (46), Persuasion (62), Seduction (77), Stealth (58)

**Faction:** Complex

**Description:** Jessica Flambeaux is a cold, ruthless Vampyre of scorching beauty. Her hair is as

red as her skin is pale, and the makeup she wears is patterned around a flame motif.

It was she who first introduced Caleb to the Complex, and she is now his go-between and lover. The two of them make a powerful team, and they know it. They plan to subvert Dogtown in short order and retire to a Keep, possibly with a high position of their own.

Jessica's major weakness is her attraction to Animates. When presented with an attractive Animate, under any circumstances other than direct combat, she will make at least one seduction attempt. Animates who can keep their wits about them enough to pump her for information, can probably learn much through her infatuation, and her attempts to impress.

Caleb knows of this weakness, however, and is likely to have any Animate who gets too close to his mistress disposed of. This is likely to be the biggest bone of contention between the two and, if exploited, may lead to their downfall.

### GUNNER

**Population:** 430

**Location:** The mountains of north central Washington State.

**Defenses:** The village is hidden within the mountains, and most homes have escape tunnels which lead into underground caverns. Add to this the inhabitants' fondness for booby traps, and the place is highly defensible.

**Kin Knowledge:** 10%. Those who know of the Kin's existence accept them for what they are, and will not reveal their true nature to the unsuspecting. They know that if they treat the Kin well, they can count on them for support. As can be seen from this attitude, they have yet to come in contact with any Kin not of a pro-human faction.

**Faction:** Reconstructionist

Gunner is a military town, founded on the principles of protection and freedom. All that is required to gain admission into Gunner is a weapon and the willingness to use it in defense of the town. Virtually every person in Gunner is able to fire a weapon or make a trap of some sort. All will fight to the death rather than succumb to an outside force. The youngest child in Gunner is ten.

While loosely affiliated with the Reconstructionists, Gunner is a very independent town. The people are led by Cal Gunner, for whom the town is named. A veteran of the Iraqi War,

Gunner led a small band of people into the hills and established a settlement.

Gunner is hard to find, unless you have already been there. Most of the houses are built below ground, with only the rounded mounds of the roofs visible. The people are more than a little xenophobic, and are difficult to approach. It is well known among the Gypsies that Gunner mushrooms fetch a very high price, as does their beer.

Gunner is also an oddity in the Reconstructionist movement, because they do not want to return to the life of high technology. All they really want to do is reestablish a good, strong central government, and then get on with their lives. To this end they allow the Reconstructionists to use their town as a meeting place and storage depot, but they will not let them establish a permanent base.

The Complex doesn't consider Gunner much of a threat, as the people there are not overly aggressive or territorial. Mother Earth views them as a potential trouble spot. Her followers are currently attempting to infiltrate the village, and will probably be successful sometime in the near future.

The Commune has taken a very active interest in Gunner, mainly because Mother Earth has. They have already contacted a handful of Gunner's more open-minded residents, and have established a system whereby the Kin will warn the town of any impending attack. The Commune will do all they can to protect Gunner and keep Mother Earth from gaining another stronghold.

## **Cal Gunner**

**Race:** Human

**STR:** 29

**DEX:** 25

**FIT:** 25

**INT:** 24

**WILL:** 30

**Magic Ability:** 11

**Max Humanity:** 75

**Skills:** Automatic Rifle (75); Knife (54); Martial Arts, Hard (37); Pistol (66); Rifle (75); Camouflage (87); Fishing (95); Hunting (95); Stealth (80); Tracking (95)

**Faction:** Reconstructionists

**Description:** Cal Gunner was a good soldier during the Middle East Terrorist Wars, earning many citations of Valor and a handful of Purple Hearts. He was never quite able to reintegrate with society though, and chose to live up in the

mountains of Washington State after his return from the front.



When the war came, those who had always considered him to be some sort of crackpot survivalist suddenly had a newfound respect for his preparations. Those who survived the war and found him, he led up into the mountains. There he taught them the skills that they would need to survive. They elected him their leader, and the community has been growing ever since.

His major weakness, however, is his reluctance to use any non-weapon technology. His refusal to try to get electricity and running water going has led to more than a few dissatisfied grumbles. More worrisome is the lack of hydroponics labs and algae vats.

Sooner or later the last of the wildlife is going to become very hard to find, and food will get even scarcer than it already is. While there is some hope that the people of Gunner could survive for a time on their prized mushrooms, it is doubtful that they could do so for long, because mushrooms have little nutritional value.

The Kin of the Commune are already looking into removing Gunner from his post of command if his attitude endangers the lives of his villagers.

## **SCAVENGER GANGS**

Of all the Herd, the scavenger gangs (also known as scavvies or scavvy gangs) are the most dangerous.

They are ruthless and barbaric beyond even Kin standards, living by no law higher than their own. They have judged all of humanity to be

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their enemy, and have set about systematically destroying and looting every village they come across. Probably the only thing that has kept the scavvies from gaining total control over most of the country is that they are constantly fighting one another.

Another factor that has consistently worked against the scavvy gangs is that they have a rather loose chain of command. Most gangs are composed of sub-gangs, which are usually quite small (no more than 30 or 40 members) compared to the whole.

It is extremely rare for any gang to put together more than a hundred or so members for any one operation. This is due to the fierce competition between leaders of the various sub-gangs. Remember that cooperation is rare, and that only extraordinary circumstances will motivate an entire scavvy to fight together.

Below are descriptions of several gangs, their leaders, and other important members of the scavvies.

### SCAVVY GANG DESCRIPTIONS

**Current Face:** The scavvy's reputation. For more information on Face and how to use it, see the *MAGIC* Sourcebook from Stellar Games. Initial Face in KinRise is equal to 1/10 of the scavvy's membership (scavvies are spread much thinner than the city gangs were). Scavvies get +1 FACE for every square mile of their turf, and +10 FACE for being affiliated with a faction (but only where the faction is feared or respected). A scavvy also gets +1 FACE for every successful Faceoff (as described in the *MAGIC* Sourcebook from Stellar Games). Do not use the modifiers for criminal activities.

**Turf:** The area that the scavvy claims as its territory. Scavvy turfs are far larger, and therefore, more fluid than those of the former city gangs. It is not unusual, for instance, for a scavvy to range from the Mississippi to the Rockies over the course of a year. They go where the loot is, and where the fighting is.

**Base:** The stronghold of a scavvy. Many gangs don't have one, leading a completely nomadic existence.

### EYESUCKERS

**Membership:** All herd, approximately 400

**Orientation:** Violently anti-Kin

**Colors:** Red splashes on white

**Current Face:** 40

**Turf:** Southern New York State

**Base:** As with most scavvies, the Eyesuckers have no actual base. They roam about quite a bit, and are hard to pin down to any one location.

**Initiation:** New recruits must eat the eyes from one Kin victim that they have helped to slay.

**Description:** The Eyesuckers earned their name from the gruesome initiation ceremony their new recruits go through. They are somewhat unusual among scavvies because of their militant anti-Kin stance, and because of their age. Most of the Eyesuckers are in their mid-to-late thirties. This oddity makes them no less vicious than the younger gangs, however, as their zealous extermination of many Kin has proven.

After discovering a cache of powerful weapons hidden in the wilderness, this group is now among the best armed in existence. The Eyesuckers are currently waging, and winning, a war against the Complex Keep on their turf.

### Eye Chew



**Race:** Human

**STR:** 23

**DEX:** 20

**FIT:** 30

**INT:** 21

**WILL:** 30

**PER:** 20

**ATT:** 21

**LUCK:** 40

**HTH:** 5

**SP:** 70

**Magic Ability:** 21

**Max Humanity:** 43

**Skills:** Club (56), Knife (65), Pistol (85), Streetfighting (72), Rifle (75)

**Description:** Eye Chew is a dangerous looking man, with only one eye, and only three fingers on his left hand. He formed the Eyesuckers

shortly after the war, when a less than pleasant encounter with several Werewolves resulted in the deformities mentioned above.

This laid the groundwork behind the Eyesuckers, as he swore that every Kin would suffer as he had.

Eye Chew is not exactly well balanced, as evidenced by the change of his name from Robert Jackson to its current form. He is obsessed with the destruction of the Kin, and has honed his gang into a razor-sharp instrument to reach this end.

### Typical Eyesucker

**Race:** Human

**STR:** 12

**DEX:** 18

**FIT:** 10

**INT:** 12

**WILL:** 18

**Magic Ability:** 10

**Max Humanity:** 50

**Skills:** Club (70), Knife (40), Pistol (40), Rifle (50), Streetfighting (65), Scavenging (60)

**Description:** Eyesuckers have been hardened by their life in the KinRise world, and are far superior to the gang members of pre-war America. They are a little older than the average scavvy gangbanger, but are far more skilled and wily.

Every Eyesucker will be armed with either a Pistol (.38 or larger), an M-16, or a shotgun. They will also have an assortment of wooden stakes, and implements and charms made of flint, cold-wrought iron, and silver.

Eyesuckers will be found in groups of 1d10 most of the time, though some operations will call for two or three times that number. If Eye Chew ever manages to get organized enough, be sure that the whole of the membership will be called upon to attack the Complex Keep the Eyesuckers are at war with.

### GUTEATERS

**Membership:** Approximately 5000 herd, and some 250 Sorcerers.

**Orientation:** For Mother Earth and opposed to any who do not follow her. Violent enemies of the Stormdogs.

**Colors:** A single black flame tattooed on their foreheads.

**Current Face:** 60

**Turf:** Wherever Mother Earth leads. Note that there are cells of the Guteaters all across the continent, and they are not a single group gathered in one place.

**Base:** None, though they are known to prefer to hole-up in natural caves when possible.

**Initiation:** Unknown.

**Description:** The Guteaters were originally just a group of teenagers who had banded together for survival. When they later met Mother Earth, she revealed to them their innate sorcerous abilities. As a show of gratitude for their newfound powers, the Guteaters have sworn to serve Mother Earth.

Currently, they are used as terrorist squads against communities who will not side with Mother Earth. They are very effective in this way, using their Spells and bound demons to good effect. Another advantage that they have over most gangs is their ability to summon a Wilderling. This powerful creature is formless, but transfers a bit of itself into every Guteater present when it comes into our world. This translates into an additional 10 SP and the Armor Edge (10) being given to those present. Note that this lasts only three hours, and no more than 10 people (including the Sorcerer, who does not gain the additional SP or Armor Edge) can be present at the summoning.

Wilderlings are brought from the Twisted Dimensions through a variation on the traditional Summoning Spell. This variation is known only to the Guteaters and a few other select followers of Mother Earth. Little is known about the summoning Ritual.

### Flashflinger

**Race:** Sorcerer

**STR:** 13

**DEX:** 21

**FIT:** 25

**INT:** 27

**WILL:** 35

**Magic Ability:** 30

**Max Humanity:** 40

**Humanity Damage Modifier:** None to damage, +1 to the cost of White Magic Spells, -1 from the cost of Black Magic Spells.

**Edges:** Drain, life force (75)

**Skills:** Pistol (95), Knife (64), Streetfighting (67), Occult Knowledge (43)

**Familiar:** Goat named Baal

**Faction:** Guteaters

**Description:** Flashflinger is the leader of the Guteaters and the most powerful of their Sorcerers. He is young (only sixteen) and headstrong. His absolute loyalty to Mother Earth keeps him from becoming too independent. Flashflinger is arrogant and boastful, and will waste no oppor-

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tunity to gloat over fallen opponents. Mother Earth has made many attempts to teach the boy humility, but to no avail. This is a testimony to the boy's indomitable will. Flashflinger will be an adversary to watch, if he lives long enough to achieve maturity.



### Typical Guteater

Race: Human

STR: 15

DEX: 16

FIT: 15

INT: 13

WILL: 22

Magic Ability: 25

Max Humanity: 40

Skills: Club (60), Knife (60), Pistol (60), Scavenging (60)

Faction: Guteaters

**Description:** The average banger for this gang is about sixteen years old. They are by far the most powerful gang in post-war America, and they know it. They have no fear of anyone, or of anything, and are willing to do anything to further the ends of Mother Earth. They do what Flashflinger tells'em, more or less, and can assemble a fairly large force in short time, if it is for Mother Earth. The Guteaters are a large threat to communities trying to rebuild, and both the Complex and the Commune are doing everything possible to stop them. Typically, members of this gang are found in groups of 1d10+10.

Guteaters are normally armed with either crowbars, icepicks, or knives. The leader of a group of bangers will usually have either a shotgun (sawed off), or a comparable weapon.

### STORMDOGS

Membership: 300 herd

Orientation: Radically Anti-Mother Earth

Colors: Flames in a barred circle on items of clothing, usually jackets or coats.

Current Face: 60

Turf: Roving, usually within 50 miles of one of the Brotherhood's major outposts

Base: The Stormdogs have an ingenious system of modular tents which they can assemble completely in less than 30 minutes. This gives them quick protection from the elements.

Initiation: Kill and bring back the tattooed head of either a Guteater or one of Mother Earth's other followers.

Description: The Stormdogs are one of the most desperate gangs in America, fighting a battle against a force so powerful they are almost sure to be defeated.

While they are violently opposed to Mother Earth, they aren't on friendly terms with anyone else either. They, like most scavviess, view anyone not part of their organization to be prey. They raid small settlements for supplies to continue their war against Mother Earth. They have earned a particularly bad reputation among Reconstructionist communities for their midnight assaults.

When combatting the Brotherhood, they attack quickly and lethally: launching a quick offensive, then fading into the shadows. Knowing they would never survive an open war with the Brotherhood, they have chosen to disrupt its supply lines and to harry its followers whenever possible.

One of the missions that Mother Earth has charged the Guteaters with is the destruction of the Stormdogs. The 'dogs realize their dangerous position and have elected to fragment themselves as much as possible to combat it.

This has had two noticeable effects: first, recruitment has been on the rise as the 'dogs spread out and begin to come into contact with other wanderers, and secondly, the Guteaters have had a very hard time tracking down the 'dogs' leaders.

The Stormdogs do meet on occasion to discuss their larger plans. On the nights of the new moon, all of the 'dogs will be summoned to a pack meeting by runners from the gang leader. There they conduct a combination war council and pep rally that assigns each smaller gang their target for the coming month, and pumps them up for battle.

## Stormdog



**Race:** Human

**STR:** 15

**DEX:** 20

**FIT:** 33

**INT:** 26

**WILL:** 25

**Magic Ability:** 15

**Max Humanity:** 50

**Skills:** Knife (73), Pistol (84), Rifle (68), Street-fighting (52), Explosives (75), Leadership (60), Scavenging (45)

**Faction:** Stormdogs

**Description:** Stormdog is the undisputed leader of the Stormdogs, and surely the reason for this scavvy's successes to date. He is a powerful man in his early twenties, and it is his talent for tactics and strategy that resulted in the group's current structure.

While he is a good leader, he is also moody and violent, and has killed people on a whim. Why he hates Mother Earth so is currently unknown to anyone but himself, but it is a hatred that runs deep and true. Nothing will come between Stormdog and Mother Earth, save the final obstacle of death.

Stormdog makes deals with Kin on occasion, but is more likely to use Kin for his own ends. He doesn't trust Kin, and those who deal with him should know better than to trust the scavvy leader, though he is said to keep his word.

**PER:** 37

**ATT:** 15

**LUCK:** 51

**HTH:** 3

**SP:** 84

## Typical Stormdog

**Race:** Human

**STR:** 15

**DEX:** 18

**FIT:** 10

**INT:** 11

**WILL:** 25

**Magic Ability:** 15

**Max Humanity:** 50

**Skills:** Knife (60), Pistol (60), Rifle (60), Street-fighting (60), Scavenging (60)

**Faction:** Stormdogs

**Description:** Most Stormdogs carry rifles (usually .22's, but the leader has a 60% chance of carrying an M-16, AK-47, or Uzi). In addition, Stormdogs will have either a knife or other blade weapon (CP's choice). These boys are found in small groups of 1d10+3.

CPs should remember that Stormdogs do not have the same fighting philosophy as other scavvies do. They will avoid head-on conflict whenever possible, preferring to preserve manpower by attacking from a distance with their rifles and setting up ambushes. Stormdogs are hard to pin down. It is unlikely that any one group will know the exact location of any other group.

At the pack meetings security is very tight, with guards hidden in the outlying terrain. They have an ingenious system of coded signals to warn the main group of approaching enemies. The Guteaters attempted to attack a pack meeting once, and lost more than 90% of their attacking force, while the Stormdogs lost a mere 5%.

Despite their small numbers, this is not a group to be messed with lightly. Their organization is impeccable, and their thirst for revenge unquenchable.

## STAKES

Unfortunately for the Kin, Stake organizations are beginning to reform and become active. This just adds another complication to being Kin in post-war America.

## THE VAN HELSING SOCIETY

While a majority of this group of stakes was destroyed in the war, there were many survivors. Most notable among these survivors is the founder's son, Otis Eberhardt. While not a Sorcerer as his father was, Otis has still managed to uphold the family tradition of staking Vampyres.

The Society is just now putting itself back together after the war. Otis has spent most of the

## The Herd After the KinRise

past year wandering from community to community, finding old members and recruiting new ones. Word of mouth has managed to accomplish much of this, and Eberhardt finally feels comfortable enough with his supporters to establish a permanent base of operations.

This maneuver is very, very risky because the same words that have passed through the grapevine to recruit new members have also found their way into the ears of the Kin. Naturally, they are not at all happy to find that their old enemy is making a comeback.

When Eberhardt finally does establish a permanent base, it will probably be located somewhere in the mountains of New York State. From there, he will be able to send scouting parties into New York to recover whatever sorcerous texts survived.

It is believed, among the Kin, that the Van Helsing Society is going to attempt to revitalize their sorcerous abilities to better facilitate their war with the Kin. While this is something of a contradiction (as it was with the original Van Helsing Society), Otis has managed to convince the other members that it is the only way to achieve their goals.

### Otis Eberhardt



Race: Human

STR: 23

DEX: 16

FIT: 18

INT: 35

WILL: 40

Magic Ability: 50

PER: 28

ATT: 25

LUCK: 60

HTH: 3

SP: 78

Max Humanity: 50

Skills: Pistol (65), Alertness (78), Kin Lore (45), Leadership (67), Occult Knowledge (54), Persuasion (79), Scavenging (50)

Faction: Van Helsing Society

**Description:** Otis Eberhardt has all of his father's zealotry, as well as a ruthless edge that his father never had. Otis is trying very hard now to awaken his own sorcerous abilities, desiring the power they would give him. This is the rationale behind searching New York for sorcerous texts.

There have been many rumors among the Kin concerning this man, and many center around his alleged connection to the now defunct Solution 2000 organization. Some Kin believe that he is actually attempting to revive Solution 2000, and not the Van Helsing Society.

## AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF SUPERNATURAL STUDIES

The AIOSS has been more fortunate than most stake organizations, at least as far as the survival rates of its members goes. The AIOSS was so decentralized that when the fall came, they were mostly unaffected. The true members of this organization have done a fantastic job of reorganizing, using the Gypsies as go-betweens and messengers for the various cells of the AIOSS. While they are not yet quite as advanced as the Van Helsing Society, they are a much more fluid organization, and one which will most likely prove to be a major enemy of the Kin and Mother Earth in the months ahead.

## HEXENBANNER

This organization was devastated when the bombs fell. Unable to use their political power and their monetary resources in this new environment, the group quickly folded. There are still some pentagons out there operating, but the organization as a whole has crumbled.

The remaining pentagons are usually wanderers and some have taken up with the Gypsies. This allows them to travel in relative safety while hunting Kin. The only drawback is that most Gypsies do not like the Hexenbanners (whom they call Witch hunters), and will not tolerate their presence if their true identity is revealed.

## GYPSIES



The Gypsies are one of the most important factions in post-war America. Their nature is that of wandering traders, and they are very good at what they do. Without the Gypsies, it is very likely that the world would be in far worse shape than it is in now.

These wanderers travel from settlement to settlement, transporting items and information from one community to the other for trade and profit. They often use the Wormholes for travel, and are the only humans known to do so on a regular basis. This gives Gypsies something of a mystical nature, as other people are awestruck by their appearances and disappearances.

Even more important than the material goods that the Gypsies cart from village to village is the information that they carry. On their travels, Gypsies hear much and are willing to part with this information for a price. The only information that they will not sell is that dealing with the scavvies. This has something to do with an agreement hammered out between the Gypsies and the scavvies for mutual protection and profit. The exact nature of this agreement is secret, but it has to do with arms supply, information on city defenses, and free passage.

Most places view the Gypsies as a necessary evil: they need the information and supplies that the Gypsies bring, but they do not need or want to give away any information about their community defenses. They fear that the Gypsies will

sell this information to the scavvies in exchange for protection. Gypsies will only trade within a city, and not outside of it, so it is easy to see the resentment many villages feel toward them.

Another important service the Gypsies provide is a communication network between members of the various factions. Without these (relatively) safe methods for transporting information, most of the factions would simply fall apart, unable to keep track of what they were doing. The one drawback to this is that some of the less scrupulous Gypsies will sell their information to a rival faction. This is why the Kin only use Gypsies in the most dire of circumstances, or to pass worthless or false information to their enemies.

Another noteworthy function the Gypsies play is that they will transport not only goods but persons as well. The only restriction here is that the person being transported must remain blindfolded at certain times, and must not speak to any of the Gypsies unless spoken to. While this is not the most comfortable means of travel, it is by far the safest, as the Gypsies have never lost a passenger yet.

Other than the runners (who may be Kin, see below), no Kin, including Sorcerers, are allowed to become Gypsies. There are rumors, however, that some Gypsy bands are Witch Covens.

Gypsy names are usually very colorful, most often related to some personal trait of the Gypsy. Some of the most common are: Strongarm, Bladetongue, Fooltaker, and Trueeyes. The names of their bands are also very colorful, but usually relate to something about the father of that band. Some of the largest bands are the Longwalkers, Gunbringers, Favored Sons, and the True Traders.

Despite the fact that the Gypsies are not Sorcerers, the fathers possess secret knowledge that allows them to swear their band members to secrecy. Any Gypsy who joins a band must kiss the ring of the father in a ceremony before the entire band. In effect, this is the same as having an Omerta Spell cast upon the character. Betray the band and die.

While there is much infighting among the Gypsies, it is done politically and not physically. The Gypsies are traders, not the military, and they do not wish to engage in the more deadly pursuits unless they are left no choice. The Fathers will also serve as impartial judges to settle disputes and hear cases for many small communities (for a fee, of course).

The Gypsies appear to be a very disorganized group, with each band acting indepen-

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dently. In actuality, however, they are a highly organized group, concerned mainly with becoming the only mercantile force in the devastated United States. It is believed that their supreme leader, known only as the Grandfather, is based in Rathole, and that he may in fact be Lord Flesh himself. Remember this: if you cross one Gypsy, you cross them all.

### **GYPSY HIERARCHY**

The Gypsy subculture is intricate, with enough restrictions, regulations, and codes to thoroughly confuse an outsider. Their language is a strange polyglot of influences with smatterings of Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, and English, all thrown in with enough slang to confuse even one of the Kin. It is truly amazing that such a rich and varied subculture could spring up so quickly after the war.

### **THE GRANDFATHER**

The leader of all Gypsies is the Grandfather. It is suspected that the Grandfather resides in Rathole, and is Lord Flesh himself, but no one is sure. In any event, the Grandfather is the architect of the Gypsy way of life, and receives ten percent of every band's annual take. The Grandfather will only be consulted on matters of concern to all Gypsies, and as of yet, none of these have come up.

### **Runners**

Runners work directly for the Grandfather, and belong to no particular band. Their faces are never seen. Their job is to deliver messages between bands and to the grandfather. Anyone who harms these runners will find himself unable to trade with the Gypsies ever again. It is believed that the runners are Kin who know many of the secret passages of the Wormholes. It could be true. The runners always seem to make impossibly fast time from one point to another.

### **THE COUNCIL**

The council is a ruling body composed of all the fathers of the various Gypsy bands. The council is used to mediate disputes of only the most grave nature. So far, the council has only been called to session once, and that was to settle a question over the trade routes of two bands and accusations of unfair trading.

### **BANDS**

The primary unit of Gypsy life is the band. Bands are very large, usually numbering more than a hundred people, with many as large as four or five hundred. The bands are constantly moving, and their only purpose is to trade and increase their wealth.

The concept of individual wealth within the band does not exist, though prestige does. Prestige is gained by performing acts of bravery, finding new technological items, or by cutting a new and lucrative deal with a formerly recalcitrant community. No one outside of the Gypsies has ever figured out exactly how this prestige system works, but within a band, it is the sole measure of one's position.

The leader of a band is known merely as the Father, and his word is law. All others are referred to as children, though among themselves this is rarely used. Below the father in importance are the traders, the life blood of the band, and the explorers, without which the band's goods would increase only slowly. There are also guards and commoners. Commoners tend to such tasks as mending tents, repairing damaged goods, and other menial jobs.

### **Guards**

**Race:** Human

**STR:** 15

**DEX:** 17

**FIT:** 15

**INT:** 11

**WILL:** 13

**Magic Ability:** 24

**Max Humanity:** 50

**Skills:** Knife (90); Martial Arts, soft (45); Pistol (60); Rifle (60); Sword (70); Intimidation (50)

**PER:** 72

**ATT:** 12

**LUCK:** 60

**HTH:** 3

**SP:** 75

**Description:** The Guards of a Gypsy band are charged with the protection of the band. They are the strongest and quickest of the young men in the band, and are trained to use many weapons, as well as their own bodies. Guards are fanatically loyal to the band and will lay down their lives to protect it. There is usually about 1 Guard for every 10 Gypsies in a band. If there are many Traders in a band (such as when two bands join temporarily to transport especially important or bulky items), there will be more.

Guards are well armed, and each will usually have the following: knife, pistol, shotgun, flak vest and a helmet. There is a 15% chance of any

guard having an Uzi, and a 30% chance of a leader having an Uzi.

### **Traders**

**Race:** Human

**STR:** 13

**DEX:** 14

**FIT:** 13

**INT:** 27

**WILL:** 21

**Magic Ability:** 29

**Max Humanity:** 75

**Skills:** Knife (80), Pistol (50), Business (80), Gambling (55), Lying (95), Persuasion (85), Seduction (65)

**Description:** Traders are the most beautiful women that a Gypsy band can lay its hands on, and with good reason. These women are ruthless traders who use their beauty and wiles to work the best deals for their band. Fortunately for less skilled traders, Gypsy Traders do not believe in robbing a man blind. They will never attempt to bargain a man down below twenty percent of the fair asking price.

Traders are the most prized possession of any Gypsy band, and harming one of their Traders is reason enough to have a community cut off from all contact with the Gypsies. This is usually enough to bring a town to its knees after a few months. This establishes the power of the Gypsies, and allows them to return to that community in the strongest possible trading position.

Traders are usually armed with a sWitchblade or three, as well as a pistol hidden somewhere on their person.

Traders usually travel with the main band, though a trading party may be sent to smaller communities off of the band's normal route. A normal trading party consists of one to five traders and five to thirty guards.

### **Explorers**

**Race:** Human

**STR:** 23

**DEX:** 25

**FIT:** 22

**INT:** 25

**WILL:** 20

**Magic Ability:** 27

**Max Humanity:** 30

**Skills:** Knife (90), Pistol (65), Rifle (80), Street-fighting (60), Biology (30), Mechanics (50), Medicine (25), Pharmacology (25), Physics (20), Scavenging (95), Stealth (50)

**PER:** 27

**ATT:** 35

**LUCK:** 30

**HTH:** 3

**SP:** 43

**Description:** Explorers are the second most important members of any band. It is their duty to venture out into the wilderness and cities in search of technological items and anything else of value to sell or trade.

Explorers are given every advantage possible, from Geiger counters and radiation suits, to anti-Kin ammunition (if the band has such items). Explorers enter the most hazardous areas: radioactive wastes, ruined cities teeming with bizarre creatures, and even the wormholes. They tend to travel in groups of three, and are accompanied by at least two Guards per Explorer, more if they are anticipating serious trouble.

Explorers usually travel in groups of three, accompanied by as few as three, or as many as thirty, guards. This party is designed for forays into dangerous areas to recover goods of one sort or another, or as an elite military unit used for quick raids deep into enemy territory.

## **RECONSTRUCTIONISTS**

Unknown to most of the people in pre-war America, our government had established an organization to deal with the consequences of a nuclear war. Known as the Reconstructionists, this branch was charged with the daunting task of re-establishing national order in the event of a nuclear strike against the United States.

Back at its inception (in 1974) the Reconstructionists were handed whatever they needed on a silver platter. Manpower and monetary resources were poured down the branch's bottomless maw for years. Unfortunately, most of this cash and equipment was squandered by inept officials, and corrupt practices.

In 1985, Daniel Web was appointed Director of the Reconstructionists. He immediately began a campaign to eliminate waste and graft, making himself some very powerful enemies. In the end, he managed to make the Reconstructionists a more efficient organization, but also a politically bankrupt one. His enemies, though defeated, had managed to get funding for the Reconstructionists on the back burner.

Unable to get the funds or personnel he knew he needed, Web went outside of the government for sponsors. The Failsafe Coalition approached him almost immediately, offering not only money, but a chance to regain vital political backing. Within months, the Reconstructionists were making progress again.

Ten years before the war, the Reconstructionists had completed two Caches: hidden

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bomb shelters with all the necessary equipment to bring order to a chaotic world. Unfortunately, before they could complete many more, disaster struck.

Web was completely unaware that the Failsafe Coalition was in fact a Kin organization. He had unwittingly allowed the Kin to get a foothold in his organization, and they had used it ruthlessly. Several of the less moral members of the Coalition leaked information concerning vital Reconstructionist projects to the Complex. Seeing a perfect chance to manipulate the Herd government to their own ends, the Complex quickly began subverting the Reconstructionists cause.

Within a year, the Reconstructionists had unwittingly constructed a Complex Keep, and had compromised the two existing Caches. Naturally, when Web discovered what had happened, he ordered a complete investigation.

Target Alpha came down hard on the Reconstructionists. A Witch hunt began, and a covert war started. High ranking Reconstructionist officials (who just happened to be Kin and members of the Complex) became targets for Alpha's Control Teams, and a bloody series of murder by proxy began.

At the end of the two month war of assassins and computers, the Reconstructionists were defeated. All of the Kin within the Branch were either dead, or had fled. Most of the herd personnel were missing.

Web's dream would not die. He was one of the first Reconstructionists to lose his job. Web hooked up with the Failsafe Coalition again, this time as a civilian. He handed the Coalition a plan for a new organization, and within two years, was back in business.

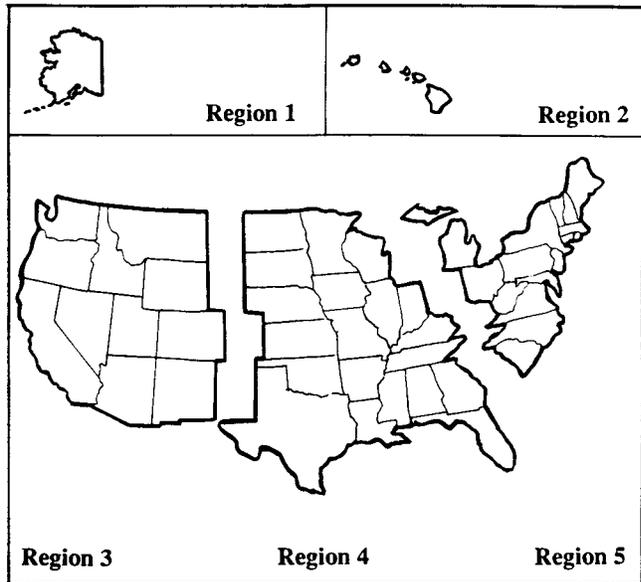
Strangely, the Reconstructionists were surprised when the War broke out. Most of the Reconstructionists had spent entirely too much time listening to Failsafe's propaganda, and had come to believe that it was impossible for an all-out nuclear war to occur.

Still, when the dust finally began to settle, the Reconstructionists were there. While they are only a few hundred strong, they are making a major difference.

## **REGIONAL ORGANIZATION**

The Reconstructionists were set up along very simple lines. At the head of the organization is the Director, currently Randolph Clegg. Below the Director are Regional Heads, of which there were six (the US is divided into six

regions by the Reconstructionists. Below the Regional Heads are the District Managers (there are forty-eight, one for each state except Alaska and Hawaii). Below the District Managers are Field Operatives, of which there were several thousand before the war.



**Region 1:** Alaska.

**Region 2:** Hawaii.

**Region 3:** Washington, Idaho, Oregon, California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado and Wyoming.

**Region 4:** North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia.

**Region 5:** South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Delaware.

If a nuclear war occurred, the Director would activate the Regional Heads. Each of the Heads had very specific goals to achieve in as short a time as possible. The Heads would delegate their responsibilities to District Managers who were, in effect, front line leaders. The Managers would mobilize all field operatives in their district, and the reconstruction of America would begin.

## Randolph Clegg



**Race:** Human

**STR:** 15

**DEX:** 18

**FIT:** 21

**INT:** 23

**WILL:** 20

**Magic Ability:** 9

**Max Humanity:** 62

**Skills:** Automatic Rifle (40), Pistol (60), Administration (55), Biology (84), Botany (72), Chemistry (54), Diplomacy (40), First Aid (70), Teaching (50)

**Faction:** Reconstructionist

**Description:** Randolph Clegg taught high-school science classes before accepting a full-time position with the Reconstructionists. In the years before the war, he quickly worked his way up to being Web's right-hand man, and became Director after Web's death.

Clegg is, like all Reconstructionists, a bit paranoid. He believes that the only hope for the world is through the Reconstructionists. He will not trust Kin with any sort of vital information, though he may permit Kin to work as field operatives.

### AFTER THE WAR

Unfortunately, the Reconstructionists had not anticipated the nationwide blackout that occurred. It is suspected that someone stole their data concerning EMP. If the Reconstructionists had anticipated EMP, their countermeasures were ineffective. Thus, the Reconstructionists

became disorganized, and their structure nearly collapsed.

It was only through Clegg's quick thinking that the Reconstructionists were saved. He contacted the Failsafe Coalition (who, naturally, were quite upset that their efforts for world peace had come to such a dismal end) and commandeered many of their Sorcerers. The flingers were instructed to use their Limo Spell to get in touch with the Regional Heads, and the ball was rolling.

Now, the Reconstructionists number 5,000 core members across the continent. Their base of operations is in Sullivan, the largest community in post-war America, and the community where their efforts have been most successful. Other small bases exist in various areas, and smaller, but very stable, towns are starting to rise around these.

The Failsafe Coalition has been absorbed into the Reconstructionists, where the Kin can be most effective. Now that their plans for world peace have been shattered, they have decided to start all over again.

### ATTITUDE TOWARD OTHER FACTIONS

The Reconstructionists adamantly refuse to work with Target Alpha. Alpha's new hard-line policies and old grudges prevent these two organizations from ever getting along. They also won't work with the Complex, who they feel betrayed them way back in the days of Daniel Web. The infusion of Failsafe operatives brought along old prejudices so even the Commune is not trusted. This loner stance may seem a weakness, but it has endeared the Reconstructionists to most of the Herd.

The one thing that may prove to be a stumbling block to the total acceptance of the Reconstructionists doctrine by all people is their attitude towards Kin. Unlike most Herd, the Reconstructionists do not view the Kin as evil, but as a necessary part of the new world order. This will no doubt frighten most of the Herd, but it is possible that given time, they may accept it. In any case, the Reconstructionists reveal what they know of the Kin to herd in measured doses, and very, very slowly.

Another, perhaps fatal, flaw lies within the organization itself. None of the herd members of the Reconstructionists are aware of the ulterior motives of the former Failsafe Coalition members. These Kin seek to control all of humanity in order to ensure Utopian peace on Earth.

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Sooner or later this conflict of ideals is going to erupt, and it won't be pretty.



### OPERATIVES

It is impossible to describe a typical member of the Reconstructionists. All that they have in common is some sort of scientific Skill. When generating Reconstructionist operatives, keep in mind that every operative has at least one Skill from the following list at a score of 70 or more:

- Administration
- Agriculture
- Aircraft
- Biology
- Boats
- Botany
- Business
- Chemistry
- Computer Operations
- Computer Programming
- Dentistry
- Diplomacy
- Electrician
- Electronics
- Explosives
- Language
- Law
- Medicine
- Pharmacology
- Physics
- Psychology
- Other Trade

The operatives sent to secure any one objective will have Skills best suited to their operation.

### RECONSTRUCTIONISTS AND PLAYER CHARACTERS

The only conflict that might arise between Player Characters and the Reconstructionists is if the Player Characters interfere with the Reconstructionists' plans. Such interference is usually dealt with as swiftly as possible.

The Reconstructionists may provide the PCs with food and shelter in exchange for having dangerous missions performed. This is a good way to start a campaign in KinRise as it immediately throws the players into the thick of things, and brings them into conflict with some very powerful enemy factions (such as the Complex, the Brotherhood, and the Army of New America).

If this option is taken, the players will most likely be dispatched as guards for their first missions, making sure that important people or valuable cargo make it to their assigned destination. Other missions include scavenging forays into blasted cities, or even the leading of an armed conflict against a troublesome scavvy gang in the area. The possibilities are limitless, but many CPs may feel that this route is too stifling for the PCs. As always, the choice is yours.

### THE ARMY OF NEW AMERICA



Downscaling of the US Military conventional forces began in the 1990's and continued after the turn of the millennium. Most of the US Navy and the US Air Force personnel died during the Spasm War, their ships and bases targeted for nuclear destruction. The Army and the National Guard had been called out when the bombing of Iraq began to help quell riots and

panic. A lot of units survived, using chemical/radiation suits when the fallout occurred.

With their channels of communication fried, most units were cut off from command and supply. there weren't enough of them to do the job of quarantining radiation cases and keeping order. Units were fragmented, destroyed, or fell back away from the cities.

With no command or supply, units began to scavenge independently or hook up with communities. Military units were valued greatly by all communities, not only for the weaponry they brought, but also for their knowledge of tactics and warfare. Often, officers who led their men into a community found themselves elected as the leaders of town militias.

The only intact remnant of the US Army is an organization calling itself the Army of New America. The Army of New America is led by General Leonard Brovins, who may be the highest ranking member of the US Military left in the world. If there is anyone who outranks him, they aren't calling attention to themselves.

Brovins was in command of a supply depot in the Kentucky when the Spasm War occurred. The depot was a hardened site, meant to withstand a nuke (if it wasn't too close). The depot and Brovins's command survived because he refused to give aid to the city populations. Since most of Brovins's officers were of a like mind, they sat out the first months of the Spasm War's aftermath, then began to recruit among wandering military units. Brovins declared himself commander of the US Army. He also declared that, due to martial law, he was the leader of the federal government. From there it was a small step to declaring that the US Army no longer existed, and the Army of New America was born. Officers and men who objected were shot for treason.

Brovins had a small but potent force. Immediately after the War ended, these men and women set about reconstructing a reasonable communications system. Today, this system of runners and messengers allows the fastest and most reliable communication anywhere. Even the Gypsies envy the Army of New America its communications.

This communication set-up has allowed the Army of New America to conduct its operations quietly and very successfully up to this time. Now, though, the scavvy gangs have begun to be quite a problem, as have the Brotherhood of Mother Earth and the Complex.

## GOALS

What are the goals of the Army of New America? Well, General Brovins seeks to create a totalitarian military state, with the soldiers and officers as the elite. One common phrase among the men is "To return the glory of Sparta." Most folks aren't thrilled with this whole idea, and the military has met with some stiff resistance.

Still, they are making some progress. They have established several bases throughout the southeast, and several of these have electrical power. It is from these bases that most actions are staged. Units of the Army of New America may be found everywhere in North America, but outside of the Southeast, scouting parties are the norm.

Another goal of the Army of New America is to seize all the technical personnel they can lay their hands on. The theory is that if they control technology, they can control the people. While they have been less than successful in achieving this objective, they have managed to swipe several important engineers, electricians, scientists and doctors from some of the smaller communities. This has made for increased guards being placed on all technical personnel in communities, and has done much to intensify the paranoia that most post-war communities survive on.

## TROOPS

The Army of New America has approximately 3,000 troops under its control, There are always about 800 troops stationed at Brovins's hidden headquarters in western Kentucky. Most of the other troops occupy the bases scattered throughout the Southeast. A smaller number act as scouts, spread across all of North America. Brovins intends to take the entire country, and wants to keep his eye on what's happening everywhere.

Despite the large area that the Army of New America patrols, units are in constant communication with Brovins. It takes less than 36 hours for General Brovins to get word to any unit, anywhere on the continent, *and* get a reply. No one knows how this is done, and the Army of New America sure isn't telling. Quick communications allow the military to outflank enemy troops with ease, and it will likely be the deciding factor in any major conflict.

## General Leonard Brovins



**Race:** Human  
**STR:** 12                   **PER:** 25  
**DEX:** 14                   **ATT:** 6  
**FIT:** 21                   **LUCK:** 67  
**INT:** 26                   **HTH:** 2  
**WILL:** 32                  **SP:** 88

**Max Humanity:** 50

**Skills:** Automatic Rifle (50), Club (25), Knife (30), Martial Arts (32), Pistol (67), Rifle (50), First Aid (25), Diplomacy (30), Intimidation (45), Leadership (75), Persuasion (20), Stealth (35), Throwing (30)

**Description:** General Leonard Brovins is the highest ranking member of the US Military known to have survived the war. A hardline veteran of the old school, he believes in discipline and control, and always has, even for civilians. Brovins had a brilliant career in the US Army, and many thought he would eventually become the head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. All that ended during the Med Wars of the early twenty-first century. Though it was never made public, Brovins gave the orders to dump biological agents onto rioters. The Army gave Brovins a choice: retirement, or the acceptance of a sinecure position running a supply depot in Kentucky. Brovins chose the latter.

Brovins was a bitter man in the years before the Spasm War. His hardline philosophies matured into full fascism as he blamed the civilian government for not recognizing his genius. He had gathered together a number of officers that shared his views, and was beginning to make plans for a military coup of America when the

war broke out. Without the war, Brovins might have caused some destruction, but would never have succeeded in taking over the United States. Now, however, his dream of a totalitarian government of the military elite may come to fruition.

### Typical Private or Non-Com

**Race:** Human  
**STR:** 20                   **PER:** 20  
**DEX:** 20                   **ATT:** 10  
**FIT:** 25                   **LUCK:** 25  
**INT:** 10                   **HTH:** 4  
**WILL:** 15                  **SP:** 50

**Max Humanity:** 50

**Skills:** Automatic Rifle (70), Club (30), Knife (30), Martial Arts (40), Pistol (40), Rifle (70), First Aid (25), Scavenging (50), Stealth (50), Throwing (50)

**Description:** The enlisted men of the KinRise world are tough and dangerous. They believe in their leaders and their country, and are devoted to what they see as a right and just war. They are unswerving in their attitudes, and will most likely beat the crud out of anyone who criticizes these ideals. While they are not combat junkies, they do not fear violence, and will do whatever is necessary to fulfill their mission objectives.

Keep in mind that most soldiers are only now becoming aware of the existence of the Kin. It is likely that Kin will be able to achieve at least some element of surprise by using their Edges during a fight. Unfortunately, doing so could add to the information known by the military, so most Kin are loathe to reveal their true nature.

**Weapons & Equipment:** M-16 Rifle, 9mm pistol, 1d10 Fragmentation Grenades, Survival Knife (Damage: 7+HTH), Flak Vest, Helmet, and three full reloads for both pistol and rifle.

### Typical Line Officer

**Race:** Human  
**STR:** 20                   **PER:** 25  
**DEX:** 20                   **ATT:** 10  
**FIT:** 25                   **LUCK:** 30  
**INT:** 15                   **HTH:** 4  
**WILL:** 20                  **SP:** 55

**Max Humanity:** 50

**Skills:** Automatic Rifle (70), Club (30), Knife (30), Martial Arts (40), Pistol (40), Rifle (70), First Aid (25), Diplomacy (20), Intimidation (30), Leadership (40), Persuasion (20), Scavenging (50), Stealth (50), Throwing (50)

**Description:** Line officers in the Army of New America are veterans of many conflicts. They have shown courage and practicality, as well as keeping a cool head under fire. They hold their men's lives in very high regard, and will do everything in their power to give their men every possible advantage in a conflict.

If anyone in a unit is likely to know anything at all about the Kin, it is the officer. There is a 20% chance that any given officer will have a score of 20 in Kin Lore. Those officers that do know anything about the Kin will do their best to keep their men out of fights with these creatures. The odds of surviving are just too low.

These leaders of men are tough as nails, and will often lead their men into combat. Occasionally, they will also single out a particularly awe-inspiring opponent and engage him in hand-to-hand combat, in an effort to bolster troop morale.

**Weapons & Equipment:** M-16 Rifle, 9mm pistol, 1d10 Fragmentation Grenades, Survival Knife (Damage: 7+HTH), Flak Vest, Helmet, and three full reloads for both pistol and rifle.

## SPECIAL OPERATIONS

Special Operations (SpecOps) is used when secrecy and subtlety are necessary. SpecOps men have been used in the past to infiltrate a community, for assassinations, for sabotage, and most frequently for kidnapping. Of late, SpecOps has also been called when evidence of the supernatural is discovered. In time, and as the Army of New America grows more and more aware of the Kin, it is likely that a separate branch of SpecOps will be formed for dealing with them.

**Note:** The Nowhere Men are no longer part of the US military, and just about everyone in the military who knew about the Kin before the war are either dead or have deserted. The Army of New America is only now beginning to understand the nature of the Kin and are as yet unsure how to deal with them.

SpecOps operate in units of five men, usually led by a Captain or Lieutenant with the same Abilities and Skills as his men. SpecOps units are usually used as advance scouts, or as saboteurs. They are rarely expended in straightforward ground combat, as they are far too valuable.

## Typical SpecOps Trooper

**Race:** Human

**STR:** 25

**DEX:** 25

**FIT:** 30

**INT:** 20

**WILL:** 30

**PER:** 25

**ATT:** 10

**LUCK:** 30

**HTH:** 5

**SP:** 60

**Max Humanity:** 50

**Skills:** Automatic Rifle (90), Club (30), Knife (70), Martial Arts (70), Pistol (60), Rifle (90), Alertness (50), First Aid (40), Scavenging (80), Stealth (80), Throwing (70)

**Description:** SpecOps are the best of the best, and are intensively trained for infiltration and guerilla work.

**Weapons & Equipment:** M-16 Rifle, 9mm pistol, 2d10 Fragmentation Grenades, Survival Knife (Damage: 7+HTH), Flak Vest, Helmet, and five full reloads for both pistol and rifle.

## TARGET ALPHA



Target Alpha has undergone many changes in recent years. While the organization still exists for the same purposes, its methods and personnel have been reorganized to more effectively deal with the threat of a world dominated by Kin.

Alpha first became aware of serious political manipulation by the Kin during its inter-agency war with the Reconstructionists. The extent of the Kin infiltration, not to mention the extreme power they had been wielding, terrified then agency head, Laura Stevens.

In the months preceding this episode, Target Alpha had taken a more amiable approach to

## *The Herd After the KinRise*

Kin than they had previously utilized. They dealt with them as friends and equals, and the ranks of the ENOs swelled. Also, for the first time, many ENOs were granted top security clearances. Many were placed in charge of Control Teams.

The main problem with this technique was the complacency it bred among Alpha's agents. Alpha did not carefully scrutinize every Kin that was introduced within the structure of other government organizations. They had decided that the Kin were not bad, just different, and that they deserved no more attention than one would pay a herd.

That was their downfall. Even within their own organization, Alpha had not kept a tight enough rein on its Kin operatives. It was only after a Complex agent was successfully accepted into Target Alpha's upper echelons that things got scary.

This agent immediately made sure several of his cronies were brought up in the ranks as well, and before they could be stopped they were dictating policy to Stevens. The Complexers also began a private extermination policy, disposing of their political opponents in a series of unfortunate accidents.

Stevens, though a bit careless, was no fool. Once she became aware of what was happening within her organization, she took immediate steps to limit the damage.

She used contacts she had gained at the CIA during her career, and brought undercover agents into Alpha. When they discovered the true extent of the damage done to her organization, they immediately reported that it had been compromised to their director.

The CIA, in turn, attempted to have Target Alpha (with whom they had more than a few jurisdictional debates over the past years) shut down, declaring it a risk to national security.

Fortunately for Stevens, an executive order denied the CIA satisfaction. They did however decide that Stevens had only three months to repair the damage done, and to make sure that the conspiracy had not widened its spheres of influence into other agencies.

The Agency had come full circle. From the hard line that Carmichaels and his immediate successor had taken, through the relatively lenient period of Stevens, back to the iron fist that Carmichaels had established.

With only three hand picked agents to aid her, Stevens went on a rampage. Within days the members of the Complex were assassinated. The purge widened as Stevens purified more and

more sections of Target Alpha. Within a month, all Kin members of Target Alpha were either dead or in chains. Target Alpha was clean again.

Next, Stevens blasted through the CIA. In three days she had sterilized that agency as well, devoting all of Alpha's resources to the task. While many of their ENOs had been subverted, Alpha was unable to prove that all of them had been. The CIA was allowed to retain approximately 40% of their Kin operatives.

As the hunt continued, many Kin were shaken out of other government organizations, until at last only the Reconstructionists were left.

Both sides refused to back down, and numerous operatives were lost in both organizations. Realizing the futility of trying to cleanse a section so thoroughly riddled with the Kin, Target Alpha turned to political means. The President disbanded the Reconstructionists, and gave Target Alpha carte blanche to deal with its members.

Once the Reconstructionists were safely out of commission (or were as far as the government was concerned) Alpha began Operation Nightstalker. The war with the Kin was on.

Several key members of the government became very impressed with Target Alpha's progress, and the organization grew by leaps and bounds. More agents were recruited into Alpha, and the money seemed to flow from a never ending fount. Stevens, happy with the way things had worked out, retired to a secluded home in northern New York State.

Her successor was Carlos Ramirez, a veteran of Target Alpha's Kin-hunting south of the border. He continued in Steven's footsteps, and soon even the Complex ran at the mention of an Alpha Strike Team.

## **AFTER THE WAR**

Alpha is only now coming into its own. Ramirez has done much to bring the organization back to a position of power. When the Reconstructionists had been disbanded, the US government retained all rights to their caches. Ramirez has made good use of these (and other supplies laid in by Target Alpha itself) to keep what agents have survived well equipped and fed.

Up until this point, most Kin thought they were rid of Target Alpha, believing it to have perished in the holocaust that had consumed most other government organizations. They are in for a nasty surprise.

At present, Ramirez is doing his best to set up a tangible agenda for his agents (of which there are only 200, a mere handful). He and his advisors are torn between attempting to solve the Kin issue and offing Mother Earth. While they may be able to fight one war, it is unlikely that they will be able to do much if forced to fight on two fronts.

Remember, this agency, while seriously short of staff, has high-tech equipment. Their shelter (whose location is a secret, and very well kept) is fully operational and has electricity. This is a powerful bargaining chip in the Kin-Rise world, and it is likely that many villages will choose to side with Target Alpha in exchange for the technical expertise offered by its operatives.

Eventually, a confrontation between the Reconstructionists and Target Alpha may occur. These two organizations are hated foes, with radically different ideologies. Any conflict will be brief and bloody as both sides attempt to annihilate the other.

### Carlos Ramirez



**Race:** Human

**STR:** 27

**DEX:** 31

**FIT:** 22

**INT:** 31

**WILL:** 33

**Max Humanity:** 50

**Skills:** Automatic Rifle (85), Club (62), Knife (77), Martial Arts (89), Pistol (90), Rifle (85), Computer Operation (35), First Aid

**PER:** 21

**ATT:** 23

**LUCK:** 120

**HTH:** 5

**SP:** 142

(50), Kin Lore (86), Occult Knowledge (72), Trailing (66)

**Faction:** Target Alpha

**Description:** Carlos Ramirez was the regional director of Target Alpha's operations in the American Southwest and Mexico before the Spasm War. Just months before the war broke out, Laura Stevens retired, and Ramirez was named Director of Target Alpha. When the Spasm War broke out, Ramirez moved to the secret Alpha bomb shelter with a select group of Operatives. Since the end of the war, about 200 Operatives have managed to find their way to the shelter. It is from this core that Ramirez intends to rebuild Target Alpha.

Though Ramirez shared the paranoia of Kin that led Laura Stevens to purge Alpha, he is beginning to reconsider. Reports of Commune Kin helping herd survivors has raised questions as to Alpha's goals. For now, however, all Kin are seen as enemies.

### Typical Target Alpha Operative

**Race:** Human

**STR:** 25

**DEX:** 30

**FIT:** 20

**INT:** 20

**WILL:** 30

**Max Humanity:** 50

**Skills:** Automatic Rifle (70), Club (50), Knife (65), Martial Arts (60), Pistol (60), Rifle (70), Computer Operation (35), First Aid (50), Kin Lore (60), Occult Knowledge (40), Trailing (50)

**Faction:** Target Alpha

**Description:** The typical Target Alpha Operative is a tough survivor who managed to travel to the rendezvous set up in case of a nuclear war. Most surviving operatives are fanatically anti-Kin, though some are willing to admit that it was the Complex, not Kin in general, that was responsible for the strife between Target Alpha and the Reconstructionists.

**Weapons & Equipment:** M-16 and 9mm pistol, each with five full reloads of Combination (anti-Kin) rounds. Such ammunition does normal damage against Kin without Armor Edge, and does half damage against Kin with Armor Edge, ignoring the effects of Armor Edge. Operatives are also issued a survival knife, a wooden stake, a holy symbol, a silver and flint knife, two ounces of garlic oil, a flak vest, and a riot helmet. May also have special equipment found in the *MAGIC* Sourcebook.

# THE KIN



Michaels crouched in the dark outside the encampment, waiting for his scout to return. He'd waited like this plenty of times, and knew how to keep completely still, not allowing movement to give away his position.

Just when Michaels was beginning to think he'd have to send another scout, a small, fluttery shape flew out of the dark and landed next to him. The shape expanded, coalescing into the manlike form of the Vampyre he'd sent to check out the encampment.

"Took you long enough," Michaels whispered.

"Big camp," the Vampyre replied. "Bout 35 or 40 herd, and none of'em have any glow. Three sentries, all armed with shotguns. Just a squat, not a regular town."

"Any guard dogs?"

"Nope, none of'em Kin as far as I could see. They're all pink man, just waiting for us to pick'em."

"Okay," Michaels said, "tell the others we're movin' in. Nice and slow, and tell'em to keep it quiet. Let's see if we can take these herd without them knowin' it."

A few seconds after the Vampyre left Michaels's side, dark shapes slid out of the underbrush toward the camp. Michaels had twenty-one Kin under his command, an average size for a Stalker Patrol. More than enough to take the herd in the squat below. With a little luck, they'd get back to the Keep with most of the herd, and the Complex Kin there would have more food for their larder. But first, they had to catch their prey.

Everything went smoothly until the Vampyre scout tried to knock out the third guard. The drac tripped, of all things, and landed right at the guard's feet. The guard didn't waste any time. He started yelling and firing. The Vampyre took a shotgun blast in the shoulder before he could even think of getting out of the way.

"Get'em!" shouted Michaels, "and get'em alive! The camp was suddenly full of fast moving Kin, knocking away weapons and throwing nets over the groggy herd. Michaels hit the guard who shot the Vampyre, knocking him to the ground and ripping the shotgun out of his hands.

*It was all over in less than a minute. Kin were binding the hands of their new captives and stripping them of food and ammunition. Michaels strode around the camp checking on his troops.*

*"Anyone but the drac here hurt?"*

*A chorus of no's answered him. Michaels walked back to the Vampyre, who was cradling his useless arm and gritting his teeth from the pain of his wound. Michaels pointed at the guard who'd fired.*

*"Take him. I need you ready to travel. Do it out of sight."*

*The other captives watched as the Vampyre dragged the guard behind some bushes. Their eyes widened when the Vampyre came back alone, his injuries gone.*

*Michaels turned to the captives and spoke: "All right, none of you have to get hurt unless you do something stupid. We're takin' you to a place where there's food and clean water." Michaels didn't care about herd feelings, he just knew that people with some hope wouldn't be as ready to make a break for it. To his own people he shouted, "move'em out, we got twenty miles to where a truck can come and get us. And keep your hands to yourselves. I want all of these herd to be with us when we get to the Keep."*

## THE LEGEND OF THE KINRISE

Among the Kin, there are many tales passed back and forth, tales of hope and beauty, as well as tales of despair and destruction. Among the most well known of these tales, is the Legend of the KinRise, a paradoxical myth of destruction and rebirth, a story as old as the Kin.

This tale tells of a great empire of man, raised up on the face of a failing Earth, an empire to span the continents, so huge that the Kin hidden within it could remain unseen, with food aplenty. It also speaks of the Forgotten, a race of Kin long dismissed as fanciful legend, and their role in the destruction of this fantastic realm.

Until Mother Earth and her Brotherhood wandered onto the scene, most Kin remembered these tales only vaguely, as stories told to them

by their Elders, not as something by which to live their lives.

It was with great surprise that they realized who Mother Earth was, and what she professed to do. Suddenly, all the Kin wanted to hear the tales again.

It is agreed among the Elders that Mother Earth is indeed one of the Forgotten. Unfortunately, the Elders had also forgotten the proper methods of her destruction. Also, some Elders didn't want Mother Earth destroyed.

For while the legend spoke of a great cataclysm to sunder the Earth with spears of flame and tongues of heat, it also spoke of a healing time, when the sun would dare not show its face to the Earth. The KinRise.

When Mother Earth's power began snowballing, serious fighting broke out among the Kin. The Commune, confused and terrified by the depth and breadth of her following, desperately attempted to dispose of her by any means possible. The Complex did little to thwart the Commune's plans, retreating instead to their private enclaves where they plotted the subjugation of mankind. It was during this time that the Complex decided on their method of survival, and the Keeps and their Lords were declared as major objectives.

Mother Earth's powers continued to grow. She defied the Kin in her every action, exhorting her followers to destroy the filth of the earth, to rip and tear and smash through the Kin, and to leave no undead stirring.

This threw a real curveball into the set-up. Until now, most Kin factions had safely been able to hide out, playing it neutral until they saw what Mother Earth was really up to. Then they could decide whether or not she needed to be neutralized. When she wanted to tear down society, she wasn't much of a problem. When she decided to wage a war of genocide against the Kin, that was another matter entirely.

The Morningstar Corporation was the first to side with the Commune against Mother Earth. This uneasy alliance lasted until the first bombs ripped into America, then promptly disintegrated. Next to come was the Failsafe Coalition, a faction in turmoil. This turned out to be a mixed blessing as Complex traitors used the Coalition to infiltrate the Commune and disrupt its plans. Still, the Commune's forces were growing with each passing day, and the future was starting to look very bleak indeed for Mother Earth. Then the war happened.

Of all the Factions, only the Complex managed to come into the post-war period relatively

intact. Hidden deep within their monstrous Keeps, with human cattle surrounding them, they were prepared.

The Commune has also survived, but only in bits and tattered pieces. Certain of its Elder members have reunited core groups in many areas, but slow communications and the need to keep on the move (looking for food) have hampered these efforts.

For a while it appeared that Mother Earth was slain, her ashes scattered over nuclear oblivion with the rest of her body, but such was not so.

Within a month after the KinRise, she resurfaced, leading an army of ragtag teenage followers, who fell upon and ravaged several midwestern refugee camps before disappearing once more.

This became a rallying point for the Commune, who flocked together to stop the destruction. They utilized this opportunity to restructure and regroup, bringing the Commune back together.

Over the past year, an uneasy balance has been reached. Most Commune members have taken up permanent residence in villages of their choice, doing what they can to help with the rebuilding. They also serve as a protective force in case any of the Keeps get a little rambunctious.

The Complex has remained in their Keeps, though now they are starting to creep forward to do what they do best, destroy herd. Their Seekers and Stalkers scour cityscape and countryside alike, doing what they can to salvage technology for their Keeps and herd for their gullets.

## THE COMMUNE

The Commune has only recently been restored to a workable state. There are now Elders all across the country, who are in charge of numerous cells of Kin. This method allows quick (well, reasonably quick) transfer of information, as well as an efficient method to organize members.

Number one on the Commune's agenda is removing Mother Earth from this world, as painfully as possible. Mother Earth continues her genocidal war to this day, doing everything in her power to destroy all Kin. While her destruction is a noble cause, it is not one which the Kin will likely find fulfilled for quite some time. Their numbers grow very slowly compared to the armies of Mother Earth, and her newly displayed talents will make her that much harder to defeat.

The Commune has several other goals, including the rebuilding of society as quickly as possible. To this end, many Kin who live in villages "disappear" for days at a time, returning with generators, electrical equipment, food, or other needed items. Their ability to venture into the irradiated cities makes them indispensable.

In some places, the Kin and the Herd have also struck up a strange symbiosis. In such places, the Herd knows full well what the Kin are, but have made distinctions between good and bad Kin. While their Kin don't cause any trouble, only Drain from a few people a night, and keep the supply of hard to obtain items coming, they're considered good Kin. Step out of line, though, and they can count on being staked, or worse. The members of the Commune who agree to exist under these conditions must be very careful, and the tension is always high.

Far more common, however, is ignorance among the Herd. Most have no idea what the Kin are, and despite the occasional rumors, still refuse to believe in the existence of such creatures. The Commune fosters this opinion (as it always has), knowing that ignorant humans can be much less troubling than their informed brethren. "We don't need any more stakes running around," said one well known Elder. "So just keep'em in the dark as long as you can."

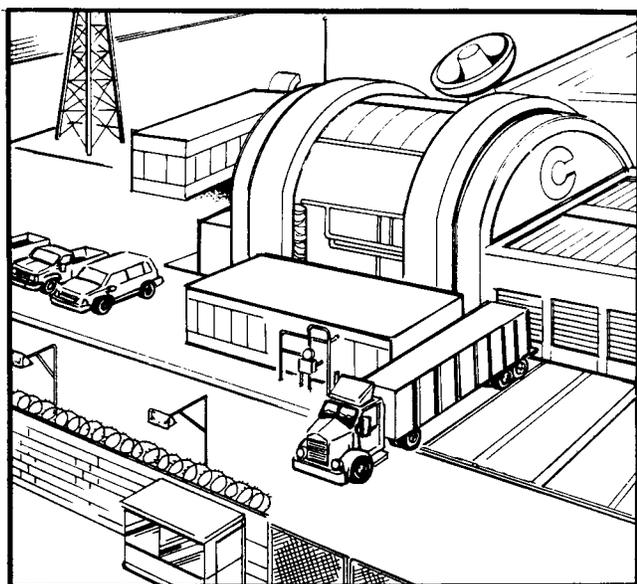
Most prominent Kin involved with the pre-war Commune have gone into hiding, knowing that the Complex would be targeting them first, and that stakes would be circulating descriptions of them to anyone willing to listen. Most of those that fled chose Rathole as their destination and now serve as an informal advisory board to Lord Flesh himself. In exchange for their words of wisdom, Flesh is willing to let some of their less savory appetites slide for the time being.

Some of the Commune's Elders, however, have chosen to remain in the world at large, using their impressive skills and intelligence to aid in the rebuilding of the Commune. Among these are Golgotha, Captain N Tropy, and Parliament. This trio of Kin chose to side with the Commune, in spite of some very hefty offers from the Complex to side with them. As Golgotha put it: "Humans were never meant to be cattle. Trying to subjugate them would be like trying to tame fire. The results are likely to be as spectacularly disastrous." Golgotha, Golly to his friends, is still the informal head of the Commune, as he was before the war, a fact that few were aware of.

Besides the new Elders that it counts among its number, the Commune is slowly drawing in a

human contingent. These are mostly men and women helped directly by the Commune but more and more folks are seeking them out based on what they have heard from others. At present, the herd are treated decently, but time has taught the Commune caution, and no herd is made privy to their secrets. Still, the growing presence of the herd within the Commune is an important step in the right direction.

## THE COMPLEX



Now more than ever the Complex is the complete opposite of the Commune. They were prepared where the Commune was not, warriors while the Commune talked peace, and where the Commune seeks to rebuild and start anew, the Complex seeks only to destroy and loot.

The Complex is strongly suspected as the driving force behind the war, as it is well known that they had agents positioned in all of the governments of the major countries involved in the conflict. Coupled with the knowledge of the Complex's role in the disbanding of the Failsafe Coalition, the evidence is pretty damning.

Not that the Complex much cares what anybody else thinks. They are, after all, the most powerful force in post-war America, and proud of it. Their Keeps, and the surrounding walled-off land, stand as grim reminders of this fact.

In the years preceding the war, the Complex funnelled a large sum of cash, and a much larger amount of materials and labor, out of the Failsafe Coalition. By deceiving the leader of that organization, they managed to stock themselves well for the war that they knew was on the way.

Making the organization believe that it was constructing bomb shelters, they had the Keeps built. These underground fortresses were designed to withstand tremendous forces and extremes of weather. They were stocked with the latest in medical technology and weaponry. Add to this the extensive supplies of preserved foodstuffs and a water distillery, and you have an almost perfect self-contained living environment.

Almost perfect because the Keeps, though built behind a veil of false reports and forged documents, were still built for humans, not for Kin. This meant that the Kin were not able to place orders for the several hundred skin bags they needed.

As the war loomed on the horizon, the Complex worked frantically to finish stocking their Keeps. Their agents worked the streets of every major city, spiriting away the dregs of humanity for storage in the Keeps (stockpiling food). They also kidnapped scores of technically trained people. After the war started, the Complex would need all the medical personnel, mechanics, electricians, and computer jockeys they could get their claws on.

When at last the war broke out, the Complex was prepared. Their people (and the Complex had seriously swollen in size by this time) knew exactly where to go, and who was in charge of each Keep. They evacuated the cities in an orderly fashion, making their way to the Keeps with little difficulty.

Once in the Keeps, the leaders set about the task of organizing personnel. It had been agreed before the war that the most important goal to accomplish after the war had started would be the acquisition of new sources of food and technology. This directive led to the formation of the Seeker patrols, and the much larger Stalker patrols. Seeker patrols journey into the wreckage of the cities and bring back usable items of technology. Stalker patrols hunt among the human refugees for food stock.

Over the past year this has worked quite well for the Keeps, and the Complex has prospered. Now, however, things are not as pleasant as they had been: rouge scavenger gangs have begun to interfere with the patrols, attacking, in some few cases even managing to kill them. The Brotherhood of Mother Earth, too, has presented a problem, as it also wish to destroy the Kin.

The most pressing concern of the time, however, is the slow, but steady, breakdown of the Keeps. While it is possible to hold technical people prisoner, it is very difficult to force them

## The Kin

to do their best work. Machinery breaks down regularly, and parts are hard to come by. Some of the so-called experts recruited by the Complex have proven themselves to be anything but, and entropy, as well as sabotage, is slowly taking its toll on the Keeps.

Despite all of this, the Keeps are still quite strong, and they do have electricity, running water, food, and waste disposal. This alone is enough to make some herd voluntarily give up their freedom, and a little bit of blood or life force. Every day several herd stagger and stumble into the Keeps under their own power, selling their bodies to the Kin for food and shelter.

The Complex has taken a surprisingly pacifistic tack with most of the communities that surround their Keeps. They do not harm these communities in any way, preferring to keep their presence unknown. They have been largely successful as well, and there are some communities within ten miles of a Keep who have no idea who their neighbors are, or even that they have any neighbors.

Overall, the Keeps are smooth running systems, self-reliant and capable of withstanding almost any assault. If someone doesn't come up with some ideas on how to stop the Complex soon, they will become the dominant power of the new World.

## PATROLS

It is impossible to provide a typical description of a Seeker or Stalker patrol, as they are made up of a variety of races. Vampyres, Werewolves, Wyghts, and Animates are the most common members, but don't feel limited by that. Hafgryr, Magadons, and other races could also be used.

## Seeker Patrols

Seeker Patrols generally have the mission of entering cities and looting for equipment. Ghosts are common in these patrols, due to their ability to explore past walls or fallen debris. Seeker patrols also scout out communities or squats for potential kidnap victims, gathering intelligence on defenses and population.

The size of a Seeker patrol depends on its mission. Scouting a new community may only require two or three people, while a full expedition into a city may require several dozen Kin. Seeker patrols are heavily armed. Most carry Uzis or M-16's, with at least three full reloads for their weapons.

## Stalker Patrols

Stalker patrols conduct raids on communities or sweep through the countryside searching for herd to bring back to the Keep. A Stalker patrol may number as many as a hundred Kin. If they are sweeping the countryside, these Kin will be scattered in small units, searching a large area. If they are raiding a community, they will be concentrated in one force.

Most Stalkers carry pistols, and about half will be armed with Uzis or M-16's. Stalkers who do not carry heavy firepower will have a number of nets. Most Stalkers are chosen for having the Martial Arts (Soft) Skill, or some Edge that allows the capture of herd without bloodshed. Their main job is to replenish the herd stocks of their Keep, and wanton killing is punished severely.

## RED MOONRISE



If any Kin Faction has prospered since the War, it has been Red Moonrise. The violence and destruction that occurred during the brief war thrilled them to no end, and when they got together and thought about all the blood that was still waiting to be shed, well, they got all worked up.

Red Moonrise made its presence felt in a big way just two short weeks after the war. Members of its Rotting Stumps cell (based in St. Louis) mingled in with the thousands of refugees fleeing the burning city. They travelled freely with the herd, disguising their true nature until the herd began to trust them. Then they struck.

The bonfire of bodies could be seen for miles, and the stench of frying flesh and burning hair filled the air. In any event, it was one of Red Moonrise's greatest moments, and one which they still brag about to this day.

The only good thing to come about as a result of the St. Louis Burning was that it attracted attention to Moonrise, and that faction has become one of the top targets on Mother Earth's hit list. Commune Kin have also heard of the exploit, and are actively hunting Moonrisers because of it. To top it off, Target Alpha is making the final destruction of Red Moonrise One of its top priorities. The Moonrisers have managed to tick off just about everybody who is anybody in the post-war world. It is likely that it is a faction that will not be functional much longer.

At present, however, it is very much at large. Its members, more uninhibited and far less cautions than their brethren in the Commune, or even the Complex, roam far and wide, creating a trail of destruction that even the scavvy gangs are starting to envy.

Encounters with members of Red Moonrise are almost inevitably going to end in bloodshed. Those that know something of the organization's bizarre customs and almost tribal honor codes may be able to reduce the bloodshed somewhat with a one-on-one duel with the leader of an encountered cell. The winner becomes the new cell leader.

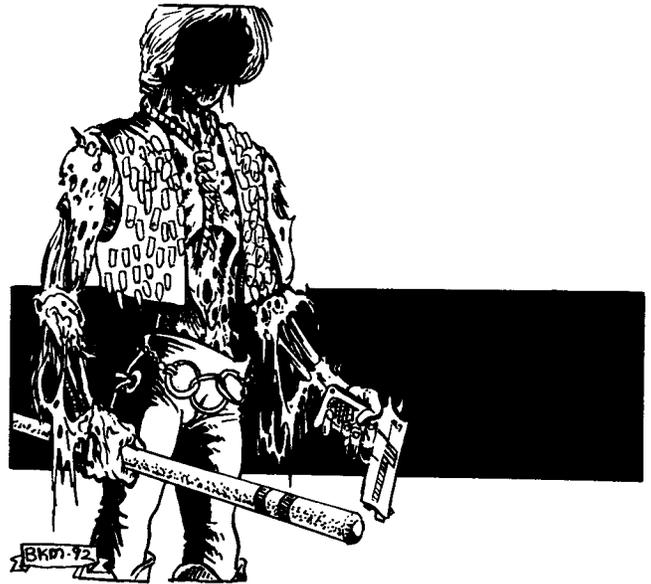
This plan has a tendency to backfire, however, as characters are forced to commit more and more atrocious acts of violence to stay in their position and retain the good graces of the gang. Like animals, Moonrisers can smell weakness, and they will waste no time in jumping on anyone they see as weaker than themselves.

Typical cells are smaller than they were in pre-war days, due mainly to the internal fighting that is constantly going on. Without the necessity to keep it somewhat quiet, the huge gangs that existed at the time of the war banged each other to pieces in fights over territory. Nowadays, a cell consists of no more than ten or twenty Kin, usually well-armed, with lots of pyrotechnics.

Perhaps the most notorious of Cells is the Rotting Stumps. The tremendous body count they racked up coming out of St. Louis is almost legendary to other cells, and the Rotting Stumps are one of the largest cells left. The Rotting Stumps number anywhere from twenty to fifty members, depending on how bad their losses were during their last combat and how effective

Gang Green (the leader) has been at recruitment lately. Below are the descriptions of three of the more important members of the Rotting Stumps.

### Gang Green



**Race:** Ekimmu

**STR:** 41

**DEX:** 38

**FIT:** 43

**INT:** 18

**WILL:** 25

**Max Humanity:** 45

**Edges:** Armor (15); Claws (72); Drain, fear (85); Danger Sense (67); Fear Projection (62)

**Skills:** Pistol (54), Rifle (63), Streetfighting (89), Explosives (90), Streetwise (60)

**Faction:** Red Moonrise

**Description:** Gang Green is (or at least says he is), the baddest of the Moonrisers. He carries around a collection of first knuckles on his belt, one for each of his kills. He has quite a collection, and there are more fingers visible than leather on the belt. Green's weak point is his pride. While he has never been beaten in hand-to-hand combat, it's only a matter of time before his policy of taking all challengers is going to catch up to him. He is a strong leader of his gang though, and has led them on many, many successful exploits. It will probably be a while before anyone puts Gang Green down for the count.

**PER:** 28

**ATT:** 3

**LUCK:** 30

**HTH:** 8

**SP:** 73.

## Pus Boy



**Race:** Ghoul

**STR:** 29

**DEX:** 32

**FIT:** 17

**INT:** 9

**WILL:** 15

**Max Humanity:** 50

**Edges:** Armor (10), Sense Acuity (47)

**Skills:** Streetfighting (70), Stealth (50)

**Faction:** Red Moonrise

**Description:** Pus Boy is Gang Green's chief lieutenant and chief yes man. Gang let's Pus Boy hang around as much for his mindless fawning as for any real value he has as an assistant, though Pus Boy is a fairly good scout in his own right, and can be counted on to keep Gang Green informed of possible trouble. Pus Boy has saved Green's hide on more than a few occasions, and once even pulled him out of the jaws of some Complex Gorehounds. His most annoying habit is easily his constant swallowing and wringing of his hands. If you encounter Gang Green, you are going to come across Pus Boy, usually inciting Green to more and more excessive violence.

**PER:** 21

**ATT:** 4

**LUCK:** 15

**HTH:** 6

**SP:** 32

## Slick



**Race:** Magadon

**STR:** 48

**DEX:** 23

**FIT:** 45

**INT:** 27

**WILL:** 30

**Max Humanity:** 45

**Edges:** Armor (25); Claws (70); Drain, raw flesh (40); Alter Form (67); Telepathy (56)

**Skills:** Streetfighting (80), Disguise (75), Intimidation (56), Kin Etiquette (42), Mimic (67)

**Faction:** Red Moonrise

**Description:** Slick is probably a lot smarter than Gang Green: smart enough not to challenge a leader that can get the Rotting Stumps all worked up, and smart enough to know to stay out of the spotlight. He gets his ideas through to Green through Pus Boy by convincing the Ghoul that it's an idea that he can take credit for. This usually works, and is one reason that Pus Boy's worth is so over-rated by Green. Slick is patient, knowing that sooner or later, he will be the one leading the Stumps. For now, he is Green's personal assassin and agent of subterfuge. He is utilized in infiltrating enemy camps, and in eliminating annoying foes, a job he relishes.

**PER:** 26

**ATT:** 15

**LUCK:** 25

**HTH:** 10

**SP:** 70

# WITCHES

"Hey, Bone, you sure this Sammy's gonna be here?"

"Yeah, I'm sure, and don't say Sammy again. Say Witch. It's gonna be hard enough to bargain with this guy without you makin' him mad." Bone turned away from Leech, who'd asked the question, and bent down to talk to Opal.

"How you feelin', jack?"

"Not so hot. Feel like I'm gonna puke again. That damn herd with his Rad-Gold. We shoulda killed him slower."

Leech broke back into the conversation. "You sure this...Witch can help Opal? I mean, what can he do that you can't? You're a Flinger."

Opal started to retch, and Bone turned away. There was something obscene in watching a Kin puke like a herd. It just wasn't right.

"Yeah, I'm a Flinger, and until a year ago, I'd never heard of RadGold. I didn't know Kin could get radiation sickness from the damn stuff. I didn't bother to get a Detoxify Spell researched. But Witches have that Spell, and we're gonna get them to fix Opal right up." Bone grinned at Opal, who bent over in another spasm of retching. "Don't worry Opal, you'll be all right. This Witch'll help you. Used to know him before the 'Rise. He's okay."

Bone stood up and looked for some sign of the approaching Witch. The Sammy could help Opal, no question about it.

"I just hope we can afford the price," Bone whispered to himself.

This section contains guidelines on using Witches for a *NIGHTLIFE* campaign. Much of the information is of a general nature, and can be used in a regular *NIGHTLIFE* campaign, not just one set in KinRise. These guidelines are based on the guidelines on magic found in the *MAGIC* Sourcebook.

Witches are true humans who band together in covens to perform magic. The coven performs group Rituals to draw power from nature. That

power may then be used by the group as a whole, or through individual members.

## INDIVIDUAL WITCHES

An individual Witch has most of the powers of a Sorcerer. A Witch can learn, store, and cast Black or White Magic Spells, limited only by the amount of SP they wish to expend and their knowledge of the Spells. Witches cannot use Street Magic, a recent innovation of Sorcerers. Witches cannot Drain as individuals, however, and can only regain expended SP by normal healing or by the action of their coven. Of course, they may also regain SP by way of healing magic.

Individual Witches may store Black or White Magic Spells as Sorcerers do, by using one of the five basic Rituals outlined in the Magic Sourcebook. This is rarely done, however, as most Witches store Spells as Covens (see Ceremonial Magic, below).

## COVEN SIZE AND STRUCTURE

A coven usually consists of 26 Witches, preferably thirteen couples. This size is traditional, and most covens try to stay as close as possible to it. Covens that have just been formed may have as few as two members, though such a coven would be unable to perform many Ceremonies (see Ceremonies), and would be much weaker than a more traditional coven.

In addition to the traditional twenty-six core members, a coven will probably contain a number of humans who are training to be Witches. This number varies greatly from coven to coven. Some covens are like huge extended families, while others contain mostly adults with a few trainees.

Each coven is led by one couple, the *Flamen* (male) and the *Flamenca* (female). In most covens, the *Flamenca* is the more powerful of the two, and has more prerogatives within the coven. The other twelve couples of a coven are theoretically equal in standing, though most covens do have a pecking order.

Though the majority of covens have an equal number of male and female members, this is not always the case. Sometimes the male/female ratio becomes unbalanced. Most covens strive to restore the balance as soon as possible. Some covens, however, don't care about this balance. The Greenwich Village Coven in New York City, for instance, was made up entirely of males.

## **CLAVES**

Thirteen covens in the same general area form a Clave. Again, thirteen is traditional, but some Claves have more or less covens. Witches are completely loyal to their coven and, to a lesser extent, their Clave.

Each Clave is led by a Flamen from one of the covens, newly elected at each Spring Solstice.

## **WITCH MAGIC**

Witch covens are the only practitioners of Herbal (or Root) Magic and Talismanic Magic. These Arts require Rituals known only to Witches, who would rather die than pass such information to anyone but a member of their own coven.

Witches maintain an oral tradition of their history and Rituals, and rarely keep any written records.

Though most covens know the Ceremonies necessary to create magic items, there is a tendency to specialize. For example, one coven may routinely create and sell certain types of talismans, while another may deal in enchanted weapons.

Being truly human, Witches will grow old and die, unless the coven performs Ceremonies to keep its members young. Some covens do this routinely, while others believe that such immortality is against the order of nature.

Most of the Spells cast by covens are identical to those cast by Sorcerers, and require the expenditure of SP. Witches cannot Drain human or animal life force directly, but can perform Ceremonies to gather life energy from nature.

## **POWER FLOW**

A Witch Coven, by simply existing, draws power from nature that is available for use. This is called the Power Flow or Power Pool. The Power Flow is like a river of life force that flows through the Coven, and is focussed through the Flamen. This power is usually used in Rituals, and the amount that may be tapped in one hour is equal to the FIT of the Flamen or the number of Witches in the coven, whichever is lower. The same amount may be drawn quickly, but it would then take an hour for the Coven's Power Flow to refill.

The Power Flow goes through the Flamen, but is controlled by the Flamenca. The Power Flow is available to the Flamenca, even if she is not physically close to her followers. The Flow

of SP can be increased by performing Ceremonies (see below).

## **POWER FLOW USES**

The SP gained from a Power Flow may be used in several ways. First, it can be used to cast or store Spells. Second, it can be used to heal lost SP. If a Witch is being Drained, the Power Flow may be used to replace the SP Drained (up to the limit of the Power Flow).

## **CHANNELLING THE POWER FLOW**

Normally, the Flamenca receives the Power Flow, but she may choose to direct it to any member of their Coven. If one of the lower ranking members of the Coven were sent on a dangerous mission, for example, the Flamenca may choose to direct the Power Flow to them.

## **CEREMONIES**

Ceremonies are what make Witches powerful. By using a Ceremony, a Coven can increase the normal amount of life force (SP) that they can draw from nature by a factor of five. For example, if the normal Power Flow of a Coven was 23 SP per hour, it would become 115 SP per hour during a Ceremony. Messing with a Witch coven when they are gathered together and performing a Ceremony is a way of inviting a lot of pain. Even more powerful are the Ceremonies performed during the Solstices and Equinoxes.

A Ceremony performed on a Solstice or Equinox (which begins at the exact middle of the night before) is extremely powerful. Such a Ceremony allows a coven to increase their Power Flow by a factor of ten. Thus, the coven in the example above, with a normal Power Flow of 23 SP per hour, can now draw 230 SP per hour without having to dip into their own SP.

## **CONCURRENT COVEN CEREMONIES**

Two or more covens may pool their Power Flows if they perform the same Ceremony at the same time. The Power that could be produced by an entire Clave working together on Midsummer's Eve is mind-boggling. This has never occurred, at least, as far as anyone who is not a Witch knows.

## **RITUAL MAGIC**

By definition, all Witch Magic is Ritual Magic, as White and Black Magic requires the performance of specific Rituals. These Rituals,

numbered I through V, are described in the *MAGIC* Sourcebook Witch Covens incorporate elements of these Rituals into their Ceremonies when they wish to store normal White or Black Magic Spells. Witches only need to spend one quarter of the time Sorcerers do on such Rituals, as more people are concentrating on drawing the power.

## WHITE VERSUS BLACK MAGIC

Ceremonies are rooted in White Magic, drawing power from nature in the form of SP. This power, in turn, may be used to store either White or Black Magic Spells. The designations of White and Black only refer to the power source of the magic, not to some deep philosophical difference in the uses of the magic. Power is power, and it is its use, not where it comes from, that makes the difference.

## SPELLS

Most of the Spells that Witches use are indistinguishable from the White or Black Magic Spells that Sorcerers use. There are, however, Spells that only Witches can use, mainly because they require the power of a Coven behind them to provide the SP. A Sorcerer would be unable to expend the necessary amounts of SP. In the old days, when dungeons were filled with political prisoners, a Sorcerer had more life force available. Nowadays, however, a Sorcerer just can't capture and Drain the requisite number of people without attracting attention, at least not in the United States.

## CEREMONIAL SPELLS

Some Witch Spells require that a certain number of Witches be present and participating in a Ceremony to cast the Spell. These Spells are what truly sets Witches apart from Sorcerers, and no Sorcerer can cast a Witch Ceremonial Spell. Such Spells are described in more detail below.

Witch Covens may also cast normal Spells as a group, instead of storing them with certain individuals. This casting as a coven must occur during the Ceremony to store the Spell. This type of Spellcasting is almost always used when Summoning and Binding Demons, because the Basic Abilities of the coven are summed when they are casting as a group. This makes it highly unlikely that a Demon will be able to overpower the coven in a battle of wills.

## STORAGE LIMITS

A Coven stores White or Black Magic as a Coven. The MA of all the Witches taking part in a Ceremony are totalled. The result is the maximum total SP Costs of Spells that may be stored. Each Spell must be stored with a particular individual. The stored Spells may all be stored with one individual, or stored among several individuals. In either case, the MA of the specific individual doesn't count, only the total MA of the Coven.

Witches may also store Spells the way Sorcerers do, by performing a Ritual by themselves. This is uncommon, as a single Witch does not usually wish to expend the SP necessary to store the Spell.

## FAMILIARS

Witches can bind Familiars, just as Sorcerers do. The Ritual to bind a Familiar is done in private, as having other Witches around would confuse the animal involved and endanger the bonding.

## WHITE AND BLACK MAGIC SPELLS FOR WITCHES

The White and Black Magic Spells listed below are Spells that are common among Witches, but not among Sorcerers. Most deal with nature, and the urban Sorcerers of the twentieth century rarely bothered to use them. A Sorcerer could have one of the following Spells researched by a Crowley (if they saw it used or heard about it). By the same token, Witches can use any White or Black Magic Spell normally used by Sorcerers. Covens have purchased Spells from Crowleys, but prefer to research their own. Once a coven has a Spell, all members of the coven are taught it.

## EXPLANATION OF TERMS

**Cost:** The amount of SP that the Witch or Coven must expend to store or cast the Spell. Cost may also include the loss of MA.

**Type:** Black or White Magic.

**Base Price:** The base price that a Crowley charges to research and develop a Spell for a Flinger. A Crowley will also charge an additional \$100 for each point of Occult Knowledge Skill Score they possess. The Base Price also lists the Max Humanity (MH) that is lost by the Flinger when they

## Witches

learn the Spell. Most Witches learn Spells from other Witches of their coven, so they usually don't have to pay the monetary price. In the world of KinRise, a Crowley would work for barter.

**Duration:** The maximum amount of time that a Caster may concentrate on a Spell. Please note that the effects of some Spells may continue beyond the stated Duration, or be permanent. Unless otherwise stated in the Spell Description, a Spell's effects cease upon the conclusion of the Duration.

**Target:** What the Spell affects. May be stated as a number of people, a specific object, or an area.

**Range:** The distance at which the Spell may be started. Unless otherwise specified, a target may move beyond the stated Range without breaking the Spell.

**Escape Roll:** The Basic Ability that is rolled against to determine if some or all of the effects of the Spell may be nullified or avoided.

**Magic Ritual:** The Magic Ritual that must be performed to store the Spell. Rituals are numbered from I-V, or are defined as Special. Rituals I-V may be found in the *MAGIC Sourcebook* in section on Magic Rituals. Special Rituals are described in the body of the Spell Description.

## WHITE MAGIC SPELLS

### Absence

**Cost:** 3 SP

**Type:** White Magic

**Price:** \$5000, 1 Max Humanity

**Duration:** 1d10 BT

**Target:** 1 small object (no more than 1 cubic yard)

**Range:** Touch

**Escape Roll:** None

**Magic Ritual:** III

**Description:** The absence Spell will cause a single item to not be there. It does not disappear, but for the duration of the Spell, no one but the Caster will notice it or be able to affect it in any way. Useful for sneaking things past guards or town border checks. Note that this is different from Fade, and mirrors will not reveal the presence of an Absent object.

### Aim

**Cost:** 1 SP/-10 to Combat Skill Roll

**Type:** White Magic

**Price:** \$2000, 1 Max Humanity

**Duration:** 1 Attack

**Target:** One Weapon

**Range:** Touch

**Escape Roll:** None

**Magic Ritual:** I

**Description:** Aim is used to increase the accuracy of any weapon it is cast upon. This Spell will give the wielder of this weapon a -10 modifier to one Combat Skill Roll (while using the affected weapon) for every 1 SP the Caster expends in the casting (maximum of 5 SP). The first attack made with this weapon will receive the bonus, and after that the weapon functions as normal.

### Box

**Cost:** 1 SP per day of Duration

**Type:** White Magic

**Price:** \$7000, 2 Max Humanity

**Duration:** 1 day per SP expended

**Target:** One item

**Range:** Touch

**Escape Roll:** None

**Magic Ritual:** II

**Description:** Box creates a field of magical force around any one item no more than 2 cubic yards in volume. This Box can only be opened by the Spellcaster, though it can be moved by anyone. For every day the Caster desires the Box to exist, he must expend 1 SP during the storage or casting of the Box Spell. The Box appears as a faintly glowing wooden construction. The Box is airtight, so hiding a person in one will probably be a fatal experience.

The Box may be forced open by inflicting damage on it. A Box will have 20 points of Armor Score and 20 SP for each day remaining of the Duration (including the current day). For example, a Box with three days of Duration left would have 60 points of Armor Score and 60 SP. Once SP is reduced to zero, the Box disappears. Any additional Damage Potential from the attack that broke the Box is applied to the SP of the objects in the Box.

### Catch

**Cost:** 2 SP

**Type:** White Magic

**Price:** \$1000, 1 Max Humanity

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Target:** Up to MA number of small animals (no more than 2 pounds weight each)

**Range:** INT in feet

**Escape Roll:** None

**Magic Ritual:** I

**Description:** Catch allows the Spellcaster to capture any small animals within range, up to a number equal to the MA of the Caster. The captured creatures will come to the Caster's feet, then collapse. This is normally used to gather food or to summon a creature in order to cast the Messenger Spell on it. It has no effect on creatures involved in combat, familiars, or animals heavier than two pounds.

### Detoxify

**Cost:** 5 SP

**Type:** White Magic

**Price:** \$35,000, 5 Max Humanity

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** One individual

**Escape Roll:** Against FIT for 1/2 damage, Toxxixx only

**Magic Ritual:** IV

**Description:** Detoxify is used to remove any sort of toxin from a single individual. This Spell will also remove one radiation exposure from a creature, and is most often used on humans, as a bargaining chip. Detoxify will not restore health lost due to radiation sickness, but will remove the cause of the sickness, allowing the victim to recover normally. If the character receiving the Detoxify Spell is in the later stages of a fatal form of radiation sickness, they must make a FIT Roll to recover.

This Spell can also be used to combat Toxxixx, causing ten points of damage to any Toxxixx the Spell is cast upon. Toxxixx have an Escape Roll against FIT in order to avoid 1/2 the damage of a Detoxify Spell.

### Messenger

**Cost:** 1 SP

**Type:** White Magic

**Price:** \$3000, 1 Max Humanity

**Duration:** As long as it takes for the creature to deliver the message or INT in days, whichever is less

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** One Small Animal

**Escape Roll:** WILL

**Magic Ritual:** II

**Description:** This Spell is the primary form of communication between distant covens. To use this Spell, a small animal must be captured and held in the Caster's hands. The message (which must be no more than the Caster's MA in seconds long) is whispered to the animal. The animal is then released, and will head for the recip-

ient of the message. Once it finds the recipient, the whispering voice of the sender relates the message, and the animal is released from the Spell. Most covens have captured birds on hand for delivering messages. In the wild, Witches will use the Catch Spell to procure a messenger.

The Caster must know the recipient by sight, and the general area they will be. The animal will travel to the area specified, stopping only to feed or rest as needed. Once in the general area specified, it will search for the recipient. If the recipient is not near the area the messenger was sent to, the animal will wait until the Duration of the Spell lapses, and will be released from the Spell.

There is a chance that the Messenger animal will not reach the recipient, either because the recipient is too far away or because the animal is injured or killed during the trip. The Caster will know when the Message is delivered, or if the Spell is broken without delivery.

### Spring

**Cost:** 1 SP

**Type:** White Magic

**Price:** \$4000, 1 Max Humanity

**Duration:** Until broken or ten gallons of water is provided

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** a rock (100 pounds minimum) or stretch of earth

**Escape Roll:** None

**Magic Ritual:** II

**Description:** This Spell causes a stream of water to flow from a rock (of at least 100 pounds) or stretch of earth. The Spring will last until 10 gallons of fresh water has been provided, or until the Caster ceases to maintain the Spell. The Caster determines the amount of water flow. The Spring can provide up to a gallon per BT, or any amount of water less than that. The flow is variable, so the Caster can cause the water to flow quickly to fill up a container, then seep slowly until another container is readied. Maintaining a Spring is the same as maintaining any other Spell once it is cast, so other Spells may be cast while a Witch is maintaining a Spring.

### Trackless Walk

**Cost:** 4 SP

**Type:** White Magic

**Price:** \$6000, 1 Max Humanity

**Duration:** One hour

**Range:** N/A

**Target:** The Caster

## Witches

**Escape Roll:** None

**Magic Ritual:** I

**Description:** Trackless Walk allows the Witch casting it to move soundlessly and without leaving any sort of tracks for one full hour. This makes it impossible for the Witch to be tracked by any mundane means (tracking Spells and Edges will still function normally). This Spell does NOT make the Witch invisible, and unless he is successfully hiding, will be easily seen if out in the open.

Because Trackless Walk provides the ability to move silently, a -25 modifier is applied to all Stealth, Tracking, or Fishing Skill Rolls made during the Duration of the Spell.

## BLACK MAGIC SPELLS

### Asphands



**Cost:** 5 SP

**Type:** Black Magic

**Price:** \$15,000, 4 Max Humanity

**Duration:** Until triggered, then 1 BT

**Target:** One person

**Range:** INT in feet

**Escape Roll:** Against FIT for no effect

**Magic Ritual:** V

**Description:** Asphands is a Spell used by Witches to keep supposed friendly companions from attacking them. Once cast on a person, the Spell will remain in effect until it is triggered. The triggering will occur anytime the affected character attempts to attack the Caster. When this occurs, the attacker's hands become snakes, each one striking once at the person's body and automatically hitting. Each snake has a Damage

Potential of 5. The snakes are not poisonous, as the purpose of this Spell is to warn the Caster that someone is being treacherous. The arms of the victim return to normal the BT after the Spell takes effect. Anything that the person was holding will be dropped during the Asphands' Duration.

The target of an Asphands Spell will shout or scream loudly, both from the horror of their arms turning into snakes and the pain of the bite if it can get through Armor Score (if applicable). Someone who is already attempting to be quiet (such as a person sneaking up on another person) is allowed an Escape Roll against WILL with a +20 modifier to remain silent.

### Convince

**Cost:** 10 SP

**Type:** Black Magic

**Price:** \$30,000, 7 Max Humanity

**Duration:** Caster's INT in hours

**Range:** Ten feet

**Target:** One being or a group of beings (no more than 1/2 the Caster's INT in number)

**Escape Roll:** Against INT for no effect

**Magic Ritual:** IV

**Description:** The Convince Spell will cause one character or a group of characters (as listed above) to believe any one fact that the Witch tells them for a number of hours equal to the INT of the Caster. This fact can be anything, from "the sky is really green" to "you never saw anyone come through here, you're sure of that." Illusionary terrain features can also be created for the target character's minds: "Right over there is a river of lava that you cannot cross," or even "the world is split in half now and that tree marks the end of your half." Characters affected by the Convince Spell will cling to their beliefs unless provided with absolute proof that the "fact" told them during a Convince Spell is false. Absolute proof is usually hard to provide. A character under the effects of a Convince Spell won't believe someone telling them that the things they see aren't there. The proof must be direct and absolute. For example, if someone was Convinced that a river of lava is blocking their way, they won't believe it isn't there unless someone picks them up and throws them into it. Once they land and realize that they haven't been burned to a crisp, the Convince Spell will be broken.

Convince Spells that tell a person that some dangerous object is really harmless will be bro-

ken when the target of the Convince Spell takes damage from the object (absolute proof).

Convince Spells that attempt to lead a character into danger have less chance of working. The subconscious mind of a person still receives the correct data, and will send out danger signals if a person is about to step off of a cliff because they believe that there is actually solid ground there. Because of this, the target of a Convince Spell makes another Escape Roll with a -20 modifier every time they put themselves into danger due to the Convince Spell.

**Example:** A Witch casts a Convince Spell on a person and tells him that the bottle of acid she just gave him is actually a bottle of beer. The Escape Roll against INT was a failure, so he believes that the bottle contains beer. When he lifts the bottle to his lips, though, his subconscious mind screams that this is acid, and not to drink it. Another Escape Roll is made, this time with a modifier of -20. This Escape Roll is a success, so the human does not drink the acid. If the Escape Roll had been a failure, however, the human would have gulped acid, taken damage, and realized that this was not beer. Depending on how much he drank, he would either be dying or in great pain. In either case, the Convince Spell would be broken when he first took damage.

Convince Spells can be used to cause someone to harm someone they normally wouldn't. Telling someone that their closest friend is really a psychotic murderer, however, will probably result in a fight.

### Disassemble

**Cost:** 3 SP

**Type:** Black Magic

**Price:** \$5000, 3 Max Humanity

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Target:** One multi-piece, non-natural item of less than fifty pounds

**Range:** INT in feet

**Escape Roll:** Against DEX of character holding item with a -50 modifier.

**Magic Ritual:** II

**Description:** Disassemble causes any one multi-piece, non-natural item to fall apart. This item can be repaired, but has been completely taken apart, doubling (or in the case of extremely complicated machinery, such as watches,

tripling) the normal repair time. If an item is held by someone, they can attempt to shield the item from the Spell, giving the item an Escape Roll based on the holding character's DEX. If the item is not being held, there is no Escape Roll for that item. This is most often used by Witches to render technological weapons, such as rifles and pistols, ineffective.

### Flash

**Cost:** 2 SP

**Type:** Black Magic

**Price:** \$1000, 1 Max Humanity

**Duration:** Instantaneous

**Range:** INT feet in diameter

**Target:** All sighted creatures facing the Caster

**Escape Roll:** Against PER for no effect

**Magic Ritual:** I

**Description:** Flash causes an ultra-bright burst of light to explode from the Caster's head. Anyone facing the Caster of this Spell this Spell (and within the Caster's INT in feet) must make an Escape Roll against PER or be blinded for 1 BT. This Spell is almost always used by Witches in order to escape, as the extremely short duration of its effect makes it almost impossible to effectively exploit in combat. It can also be used as a signal flare of sorts, as the flash itself is visible for INT hundreds of yards on level ground, and INT/2 miles if cast while standing on a high hill. This is a real good way to draw lots of nasty attention, though.

### Flicker

**Cost:** 4 SP

**Type:** Black Magic

**Price:** \$7000, 3 Max Humanity

**Duration:** INT Score+1d10 BT

**Range:** N/A

**Target:** None

**Escape Roll:** INT of those viewing the Caster

**Magic Ritual:** II

**Description:** When this Spell is used it causes the Caster's body to flicker rapidly in and out of sight. This makes it very difficult to strike the Caster in combat, causing a +20 modifier to be applied to all Combat Skill Rolls against the Caster for the Spell's duration.

### Giggle

**Cost:** 3 SP

**Type:** Black Magic

**Price:** \$2000, 2 Max Humanity

**Duration:** 20 BT minus the WILL of the target

**Range:** INT in feet

## Witches

**Target:** One being

**Escape Roll:** Against WILL for no effect

**Magic Ritual:** III

**Description:** This Spell will cause the target to break down in a fit of giggles. During this time the character must make a successful WILL Roll to do anything but roll about on the ground, giggling hysterically. If the target takes damage, the Spell is broken. A successful Escape Roll against WILL negates this Spell, though only one Escape Roll is allowed (at the time the Spell is first cast).

### Stumblefield

**Cost:** 5 SP

**Type:** Black Magic

**Price:** \$15,000, 4 Max Humanity

**Duration:** 1 BT

**Range:** Touch

**Target:** One section of Ground equal to MA/2 in sq. ft.

**Escape Roll:** DEX

**Magic Ritual:** IV

**Description:** This Spell causes any section of Earth to become a Stumblefield. The area of this section of earth is equal to the Caster's MA/2 in square feet. Any non-Witches entering a Stumblefield must make their Escape Roll against DEX or fall down immediately. They will remain on the ground for 1 BT before being able to rise, and once risen, must make another Escape Roll if attempting any action other than leaving the Stumblefield. Characters who do make their Escape Roll still are only able to move 10 feet per BT as it seems that the very earth distorts under their feet. Every BT another Escape Roll must be made, until the character either makes it across the Stumblefield or turns back the way they came.

Characters who attempt any action at all in a Stumblefield will be forced to make another Escape Roll against DEX or automatically fail in their attempt.

### Trickery

**Cost:** 2 SP

**Type:** Black Magic

**Price:** \$10,000, 2 Max Humanity

**Duration:** 15 minutes

**Range:** Speaking distance (no more than 10 feet)

**Target:** One being

**Escape Roll:** Against INT for no effect

**Magic Ritual:** III

**Description:** Trickery is a Spell used by Witches in their bargaining with others. When used, this Spell causes any one being (who does not make a successful Escape Roll against INT) to believe anything the Witch says for the duration of the Spell. This is NOT the same as Convince, because the Spellcaster cannot make the target believe things that are physically impossible (no making up of new terrain features), and all the lies that the target is made to believe must have some basis in fact. For instance, it would be possible for the Witch to tell someone that the basket of grass he is holding is made of solid gold, but it would be impossible for the same Witch to tell his target that the basket was filled with fresh steaks. The basket exists, so it can be exaggerated by the Witch, but the meat does not exist at all, and no amount of trickery is going to make the target believe otherwise.

## CEREMONIAL SPELLS

The Ceremonial Spells of a Witch coven require that several Witches (from two to twenty-six) take part in the gathering of the magical energy and the casting of the Spell. Each Ceremony begins with the usual Ceremony of gathering power from nature. Special Rituals are incorporated into the basic Ceremony to produce a unique Ceremony to create the effects desired.

Some Ceremonies may only be performed at certain times, most commonly the Spring Equinox. An Equinox or Solstice lasts twenty-four hours. Any Ceremonies that must be performed during an equinox or solstice must be begun and completed within that time frame. For example, a coven may perform a Ceremony that takes eight hours and a Ceremony that takes sixteen hours during an equinox, but may not perform two Ceremonies that take sixteen hours apiece.

There are many different Witch Ceremonies, and they tend to differ from coven to coven. Some of the more important Ceremonies are listed below.

### CLEANSE

This Ceremony was developed during the twentieth century by an enterprising Witch coven. It removes toxins and radioactive material from objects or the earth, converting such material to inert dust. This is a powerful Ceremony, and requires at least sixteen Witches to perform. The Ceremony may be performed at any time, and takes twelve hours. When the Ceremony is completed, the ten acre area (a cir-

cle of about 400 feet radius) around the Ceremonial site is cleansed. Any radiation or toxins the coven might have picked up by being in the area are also gone.

This Ceremony was also discovered by the Sidhe. By some unknown method, they manage to imbue seeds with this cleansing action, and scatter them to help purify the earth. Witch covens are very interested in finding out the secret of these Seeds of Cleansing, but have been unable to do so.

### ENHANCE

This Ceremony allows the Witches of a coven to enhance their strength, health, coordination, and ability to reason. It draws upon the power of nature to push their bodies and minds toward the human ideal.

This Ceremony is one that can only take place during the Spring Equinox. It requires a full coven of twenty-six Witches to perform. The Ceremony lasts for at least 16 hours. At the end of these sixteen hours, each Witch participating in the Ceremony gains an additional point of the Basic Ability they were personally striving to enhance. Since each Witch may attempt to enhance a different Ability, no two Enhance Ceremonies are the same. Anyone watching would see a complicated dance, constantly changing and reforming as the Witches celebrate the different aspects of human ability.

If the Ceremony continues until the end of the equinox (another eight hours) an additional point of Basic Ability increase will be gained.

LUCK may not be increased by an Enhance Ceremony, only STR, DEX, FIT, INT, WILL, PER, and ATT. Magic Ability may also be increased, but only on the Spring equinox when the moon is in a favorable phase, which only occurs about once every twenty years or so.

### HEX

Hex is a Ceremony that varies in power depending on the number of Witches taking part in it. The traditional number of Witches is six, and some theorize that the name of the Ceremony is based on that. At least three Witches must take part in this Ceremony. A full coven rarely performs a Hex, as that much power is considered incredible overkill.

A Hex takes at least four hours to perform, and may take no longer than twelve hours. In order to make the Hex work, the Witches must have something of the victim's body, either a lock of hair, fingernail clippings, a scrap of skin,

or a few drops of blood. If this is available, the coven may try to Hex the victim.

The effects of a Hex, in game terms, can vary greatly. The Witches may choose to annoy the victim or make him suffer. Impotence, pain, stiffness of the joints, sudden aging, all are a possibility when a Hex is cast. Most Hexes will cause a +5 to +20 modifier be applied to Skill and Edge Rolls.

The victim gets an Escape Roll against WILL to stop the effects of a Hex (which are mostly psychosomatic). A modifier of -1 is applied to the Escape Roll for every 10 miles of distance the victim is from the coven.

Fortunately for most victims of a Hex, a Witch coven rarely keeps it going past the next solstice or equinox. They have more important things to do, and 1 to 3 months of punishment is usually deemed sufficient. If Witches are mad enough to extend the punishment, they are usually mad enough to hunt the offender down and handle him in a more permanent manner.

### QUICKEN

Quicken is what allows a coven to grow fruits and vegetables, even when the temperature hovers around 50° F and the sun doesn't show its face.

Quicken requires at least two Witches for the Ceremony, and must be performed between sunrise and noon (even if the sun doesn't show itself). If a full coven performs the Ceremony, the results are enhanced.

Quicken takes an hour to perform, and when two Witches are taking part, allows plants to grow normally in the environment after the KinRise. The Quicken Ceremony must be performed every week, or plants will sicken and die from the lack of sun and warmth.

If more Witches take part, the plants begin to grow and mature faster, allowing for more harvests. If a full coven takes part, the average growing season becomes one week.

Quicken keeps a Witch coven in food, and also gives them something to trade with the rest of the world.

### TALISMAN

Talisman is actually a set of Ceremonies whose purpose is to create magic items. This does not include the charms and minerals of Root or Folk Magic, which can be made by a single Witch. Talisman is used to make the magic weapons and other items that are much in demand in the post-war world.

## Witches

A Talisman Ceremony may take hours, or many days, depending on the power of the item to be made. The number of Witches necessary also varies, and can be as many as a full coven of twenty-six.

The types of enchantments that may be placed on items are found in the *MAGIC* Sourcebook.

### YOUTH

Youth is a Ceremony to restore vitality to the members of a coven. Some covens will not use the Youth Ceremony, believing that it is against nature to stay young forever. Most covens don't share this view, however, and use the Youth Ceremony to live extended lives.

A full Coven of twenty-six Witches is required to perform the Youth Ceremony. It may only be performed during the Spring Equinox, and takes a minimum of eight hours to complete. At the end of the first eight hours, the effects of 1 year of aging are removed from the bodies of the Witches participating in the Ceremony. For every hour the Ceremony continues after the minimum of eight hours has been reached, the

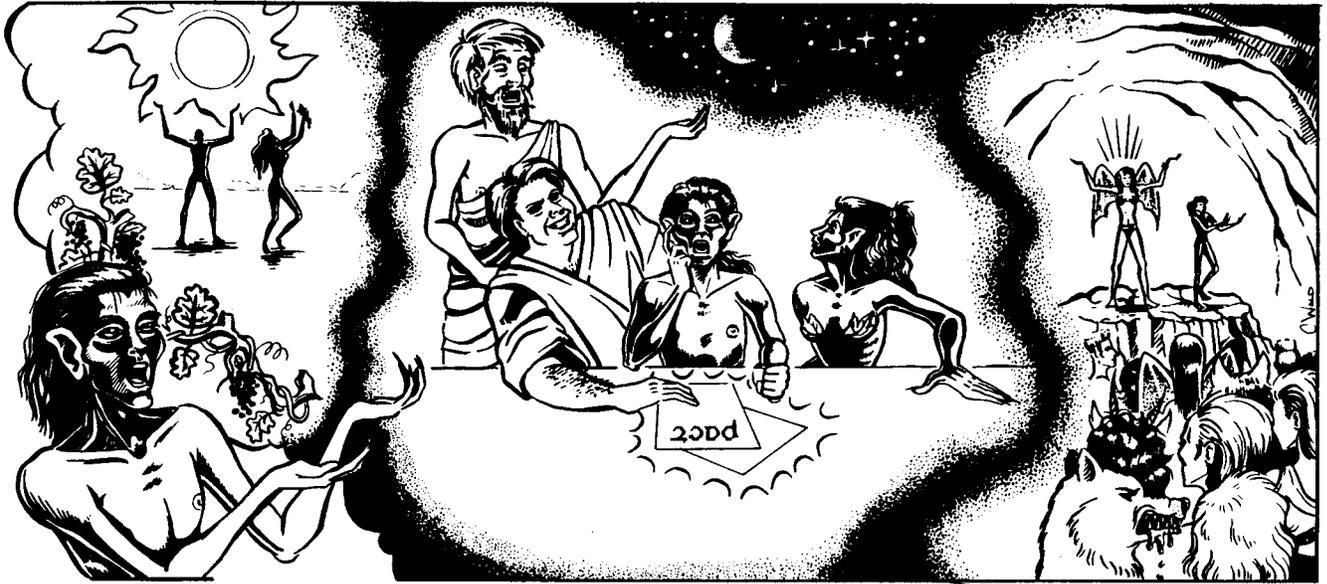
effects of another year of aging is removed. For example, if a coven performed the Youth Ceremony for twelve hours, the effects of five years of aging would be reversed.

The minds of the Witches are left undisturbed by this Ceremony. No one will lose the memories of what happened during the past. The only effects are that their bodies will become more youthful.

A single member of the coven may choose to stop the effects of the Youth Ceremony for themselves at any time without stopping the effects for other members of the coven. If, for example, the Flamenca of the coven wishes to stop the reversal of aging when her body reaches a physical age of 25, she may, even if other members of the coven wish to continue the reversal for themselves.

It is theoretically possible for the Witches taking part in the Youth Ceremony to regress back to the bodies of children. This is pointless for most Witches, and the reversal is usually stopped when physical age is in the late teens to early twenties.

# THE SIDHE



The Sidhe, a relatively minor and mostly unknown race of Kin throughout modern times, has reappeared as a fairly strong new faction since the KinRise.

For years the Sidhe roamed freely throughout the rainforests and jungles of Africa and South America, sometimes appearing as short, dark-skinned natives.

When the rainforests were cut and burned, the Sidhe moved north, into the United States and Canada. It is supposed that the Sidhe of Europe and Africa were destroyed.

The Sidhe are such a secretive race that even Kin know little of their ways. They lived for years without being seen, until after the KinRise, when they began to restore the land.

For some unknown reason, some Sidhe have changed their appearance from the pygmy-like native of the rainforest, to the fair skinned elven-looking creature of today.

Though still shrouded in mystery, some information has been gathered about the Sidhe since the 'Rise.

The Sidhe are devoted to restoring the earth to its natural state, and if this means that some of the Herd have to move out of their homes and back into caves, well, that's just the way it's going to have to be.

Most of the Sidhe do not have an active dislike for humanity, but they do not trust this race. After all, how can you call someone friend after they blow your planet up? The Sidhe view the Herd as a somewhat necessary evil: necessary because without them, the Kin would slowly perish, upsetting the natural order of things.

## APPEARANCE & MANNERISMS

Sidhe have changed somewhat in appearance in recent years, and now look much different than before the KinRise. They say it is because they are becoming more like their ancestors of millennia before, but who really knows?

The Sidhe are a people small in stature when compared to herd or Kin norms, though human pygmies may be an offshoot, as they are approximately the same height. The Sidhe, rarely much over 36" tall, vary widely in coloration. Some have skin the color of black coffee, with dark brown or black eyes and hair. Others are pale, blond, and blue-eyed. The coloration of Sidhe varies between these two extremes, though most clans are made up of individuals of similar appearance. The arms and legs of the Sidhe look like they are too long for their short torsos, giving them a frail appearance. They wear very little in the way of clothing, and no jewelry or ornamentation, except during a Ceremony (see Ceremonies). Their speech is sing-song, sometimes punctuated by whistles and clicks. Though small in stature, their great strength rivals that of any Kin. When speaking, they have an annoying habit of staring up at the sky and at the ground, conspicuously avoiding making eye contact (which they believe opens them up for all sorts of nasty contamination).

## CULTURE

The Sidhe are not numerous in North America, numbering only a few thousand. They are nomadic and wander in seemingly aimless patterns, going from place to place and working

## *The Sidhe*

their magic to restore the earth to a pristine state. Occasionally they run afoul of the Herd, but rarely will they openly fight, preferring instead to use a Hex Ceremony to punish the upstart humans (see Sidhe Magic). They are on very good terms with the Gypsies, who view the Sidhe as good luck and a protection against evil.

There is also cooperation among the Sidhe and Witches. This may be due to the Witches' close ties with nature.

Sidhe live in clan groups, usually numbering no more than twenty to thirty Sidhe. These clans dwell in hidden groves that the Sidhe have restored, and are usually concealed to confuse and misguide those attempting to find them. Clans are guided by Seers, Sidhe who serve more as spiritual counselors and advisors than leaders. Still, when a Seer talks, all other Sidhe listen.

Most of the Sidhe spend their time in the clan, helping to improve upon the natural beauty of their surroundings, or creating magical items for use by the Seeding Parties. Few of them have any desire to leave the clan, and Seeding Parties are usually formed by random draw.

### **SIDHE NAMES**

Sidhe names are usually flowing and filled with sibilants (Sulisasina, Askinas, Russaakros, etc.) and their clans are identified by fanciful titles (Light Bringers, Storm Children, Protectors of the Forest, etc.), that are unique and instantly identifiable. Sidhe keep track of each other by some unknown method, so no two groups will have the same name.

### **SIDHE MYTHOLOGY**

Strangely enough, while the Sidhe consider themselves and the other races of the Kin to be members of the natural order, they do not consider humanity to be natural. Their personal mythology tells them that before the first humans appeared (as a result of a Sidhe experiment in immortality) all the Kin could walk in the sun and eat what they chose.

When the Herd first came to the Earth though, they tricked the Kin, their glib tongues telling tales of how the night was far more wondrous than the day, and of how food itself would pale when compared with the glories of the dark. The Herd thought to trick the Kin into leaving the day to them, but the hoax went horribly wrong.

The Herd, in their immature state, were clever, but failed to see the long term impact of their actions. They used their newfound powers

to form magical contracts for the leaders of the Kin to sign, contracts designed to leave the Kin helpless and weak while humans took the best of the Earth for themselves. Even the Sidhe, the creators of humans, were wooed into agreeing to the magical contracts.

Instead of weakening the Kin, the magical pacts designed by the Herd expanded the Kin's abilities further, making them incredibly powerful. This was not without a price. Other portions of the Pact worked as the Herd planned, and many of the Kin were banished to the night forever. The few Kin lucky enough to avoid this curse did not entirely cheat fate, however. Some became dependent on the flesh or blood of humanity to exist, as their pacts had stated that they would never again be allowed to eat of the fruits of the earth. Still others found they could not bear to touch silver or iron or any number of other of the earth's products.

The Kin were distressed, and fearful of their new status, unsure of how to continue their lives. It was at this time that the Sidhe called the other Kin together for the Great Conclave.

At this meeting (where it was said that every Kin was present) the fate of the Kin was decided. They would accept their fate, but the Herd would never be safe from them again. Angered by the trickery the Herd had perpetrated on them, the Kin decided to revel in their powers, and to do whatever was necessary to survive. Several of the Sorcerers present also worked a powerful curse on humanity: whenever a human would die under extraordinary circumstances, his spirit would become enslaved to its former life, unable to leave the earth. And so were Ghosts, Ekimmu, and their like created.

As a last blow to the Herd, who had deceived them so, the Sorcerers also insured that many of the races of the Kin could cause herd to become Kin, a fitting punishment, so they could understand the suffering they have caused.

The teller of this tale always smiles at its conclusion, as if it were all a joke. Knowing the Sidhe sense of humor, it just might be.

Needless to say, most of the Kin look a bit askance at the Sidhe when they hear of this legend, but they find it very difficult to refute the arguments posited by the Sidhe. Nowadays, quite a few Kin stop to listen when the Sidhe talk, if only because it appears that the Sidhe are capable of fixing the damage done to the Earth by the Spasm War.

## SEEDING PARTIES



Outside of their clans, Sidhe are usually encountered in small seeding groups on their way to purify some new section of land for later colonization. These seeding groups are not violent, but they are notorious for asking people with better things to do to help them with trivial tasks.

Those who agree to help are left unmolested, and are occasionally even rewarded with gifts of Seeds of Purification or other non-combat items of value. Those who refuse to give aid to the Sidhe face their wrath. While seemingly pleasant enough at having been turned down, the Sidhe are already plotting the methods by which the poor Kin or herd will be punished. They probably Hex offenders, causing all manner of problems for the pitiable fools until the Sidhe feel they have suffered enough (which usually means that their victims don't much feel like continuing their existence).

Seeding parties usually consist of three to five Sidhe, armed with powerful blowguns. They are adverse to fighting, and are far more likely to run from a fight than to stay.

### Seeding Party Member

<b>STR:</b> 35	<b>PER:</b> 25
<b>DEX:</b> 25	<b>ATT:</b> 30
<b>FIT:</b> 25	<b>LUCK:</b> 30
<b>INT:</b> 25	<b>HTH:</b> 7
<b>WILL:</b> 35	<b>SP:</b> 55

**Max Humanity:** 50

**Edges:** Drain, life force (60); Nocturnal Vision (85); Travel (46); Weapons Immunity (35)

**Skills:** Blowgun (100), Bow (120), Sword (95)

**Faction:** Sidhe

**Description:** Three of the Sidhe present will be armed with Blowguns and will have 3d10 poison darts apiece. Ten of these are magical and have the Accuracy and Attunement enchantments cast upon them. The Attunement is usually against Toxxixx and Trolles, though some other combination may be chosen by the CP.

One of the Sidhe is the Seed Bearer and is protected by a wide variety of concretions and enchanted minerals. The Bearer may have up to 2 concretions and 1 mineral on his person. Typically these may include Bat, Crab, Alectorus, Amber, Antimony, Coral, and Ruby. If it is thought that there will be encounters with humans, the highly prized Tiger Concretion will be used as well, mostly to swindle humans out their valuables. This has done nothing to improve the impression that most humans have of the Sidhe as flighty swindlers. The Bearer will also have a magical spear with the following enchantments possible: Accuracy, Attunement (CP's choice), Danger Sensor, and Protection. This spear will never be thrown.

The fifth and final member of the Seeding party is usually a warrior charged with the protection of the Bearer and with the destruction of any Toxxixx or Trolles they come across. This Sidhe always has an Armor Edge Score of at least 20. He will be armed with a sword, and will generally be the first to enter the fray if the archers fail to bring down an opponent. The other members of the party will then pull back, away from the fight, and use their blowguns to protect the warrior.

This represents an average seeding party. There will always be stronger and weaker parties out there, and each party should be tailored to the player's characters to provide a challenge without being too overwhelming. The Sidhe are powerful creatures and should not be underestimated. A small group of Sidhe armed with Blowguns and a few bits of root magic can be quite a handful in combat.

## SIDHE MAGIC

Sidhe are skilled in some forms of Witch Magic. Indeed, according to them, they taught the Witches how to use Root Magic and Ceremonial Magic. These two forms of magic are the only ones that Sidhe may use. They may not use the types of Spells that Sorcerers may cast.

## SIDHE CEREMONIAL MAGIC



Sidhe Ceremonial Magic is very similar to Witch Ceremonial Magic and Sidhe may use any of the Witch Ceremonies, except for Youth and Enhance. They have no use for the former, and the latter has no effect on them. They also have unique Ceremonies that Witches are ignorant of. Sidhe Ceremonies are frequent, but rarely observed by outsiders.

A Sidhe Ceremony is accompanied by singing, dancing, and colorful costumes made from natural materials. It is rumored that at least some of these Ceremonies ensure that the existence of the Sidhe continue. Sidhe children have never been seen by outsiders, so some believe that the Ceremonies they perform are necessary to procreation. No one knows for sure except the Sidhe, and they don't talk about their family life.

The Ceremonial Leaders of the Sidhe clans are known as Seers, and they are the only Sidhe with the knowledge necessary to perform a Ceremony.

Before a Ceremony, the performing Sidhe are brought together and given their roles. It is said by the Sidhe that every Ceremony is actually a play, a musical that tells something of the history of the Sidhe. For this reason, they must all wear masks that give them the faces necessary to enact their roles. These masks are very elaborate and range from ethereal beauty to infernal grotesqueness. The Seer always plays the part of the First Sidhe, and the other members of the clan play the parts of other Kin, heroes of the Sidhe, and some few even play the parts of Demons and the Herd. While all of these Cere-

monies are extraordinarily beautiful to watch, they are also hazardous to one's sanity. Any non-Sidhe who dares to spy upon such a Ceremony must make a successful Escape Roll versus WILL, or be drawn into the Ritual by what they have seen. This applies only to those Ceremonies known only to Sidhe, not the other Ceremonies that they have in common with Witches.

### HIDE

Hide is a Ceremony that the Witches would dearly love to get their hands on, but the Sidhe won't part with the secret. Hide creates an area of confusion and illusion around the Ceremony center, extending 1/4 mile out in radius. Sidhe are immune to this area of confusion, but humans, Kin, and other supernatural creatures are not.

The Hide Ceremony takes twelve hours to complete if there are only ten Sidhe participating. For every two additional Sidhe, the time necessary for the Ceremony is decreased by hour. The limit is twenty-six Sidhe, the same size as a normal Witch coven. With twenty-six Sidhe, the time needed to complete the Ceremony is four hours.

The Hide Ceremony must take place on the night of the full moon. It lasts for one month, until nightfall of the next full moon. This means that there will be a four to twelve hour stretch of time when the Sidhe clan will be exposed. Sidhe are always extra vigilant on the night of the full moon.

As soon as any person enters the affected area, he will become slightly confused and feel more than a little tired. At this point, characters must make an Escape Roll against WILL, or succumb to the desire to take a nice long nap. Characters that do fall asleep will find themselves transported to a different location (far from the clan) when they awake (the Sidhe moved them as they slept). If the intruders are a group and some succeed, they will not be able to awaken their comrades until they carry them out of the affected area.

If the intruders do not succumb to sleep, an Escape Roll against INT is made. If this fails, the character failing will not be able to move towards the center of the affected area. If they try to do so, they will walk in circles and end up on the edge of the affected area. Such a person may be led to the center by a person who is not affected, but there is the difficulty of knowing who is going in the right direction. Also, when

the group reaches the center, the misdirection is still in effect, and the confused person will probably lose his way, even if he's in combat.

Those characters who manage to pass through the area of illusions and confusions are still in no great position. The Sidhe will have long ago been warned of their approach by their Seer. All the Sidhe will be armed, and several will have poisoned darts loaded into their blowguns and ready to fly. Characters intent on combat probably have a tough fight on their hands.

### **CREATE SEEDS OF CLEANSING**

The Sidhe have combined the Witch Ceremony of Cleansing with their superior form of Root Magic to create Seeds of Cleansing. This Ceremony takes 12 hours to complete, and requires that twenty-six Sidhe take part.

The object of the Ceremony is up to 100 pounds of normal grass seed. When the Ceremony is completed, the grass seed has been magically imbued with the ability to turn toxins and radioactive matter into inert material. The Sidhe send out parties to scatter the Seeds of Cleansing. The grass that grows from these seeds will survive with almost no light and very

cold weather. As well as drawing radioactivity and toxins out of the soil, it produces vast amounts of oxygen. Some believe that this is the most important function of the grass.

The grass grown from the Seeds of Cleansing does not produce seeds of its own, and slowly loses its magical power over the course of a few years. A hundred pounds is enough to seed 100 acres of land effectively, so the process to clean the planet will be a slow one.

## **SIDHE AND WITCHES**

The difficulties in cooperation that existed between these two groups are legendary. Witches have long sought out the Sidhe for their expertise in natural magic, and the Sidhe have long lied and tricked the Witches.

An uneasy peace has settled over these two groups since the KinRise, as they try to work together.

Witches and Sidhe are working toward the same goal, the restoration of the earth. The Sidhe, however, do not care if humans play any part greater than food in the restored world.

# THE BROTHERHOOD OF MOTHER EARTH



Facer D was mad, real mad. And what was worse, he was mad at himself. Of all the stupid things to go and do, getting caught by the Brotherhood of Mother Earth had to be at the top of the list. It really wasn't his fault, though. No herd had any right being as strong as the guy who wrestled him to the ground and held him while the others chained his wrists and ankles. Hell, the guy wasn't even breathing hard afterward!

Facer's captors had been leading him toward Saint Louis for a couple of hours now. Leading him, because Facer had gotten tired of being dragged and started walking. He decided to get some answers, even if it meant getting clubbed.

"Where you mama's boys takin' me?"

"Shut up, monster," the strong one said, without turning to look at Facer.

"Monster? Look who's talking. You're the one with scales, not me.

Facer's ears rang with the force of the once-man's blow. No herd, he thought again, has any right to be that strong.

Eventually, the group reached its destination, the Citadel of Mother Earth herself. Facer had never seen it this close up, and couldn't help but whistle in awe. The one who'd hit him before turned to him and Facer tensed to take another blow. Instead, the once-man smiled.

"Yes, monster, it's grand, the grandest thing any of us has ever seen."

Facer thought the Citadel could use a coat of paint, but he didn't mention that. Instead, he decided to try for some information again.

"So what happens now that we're here?"

The once-man must have been glad to get back to the Citadel, because he smiled even wider.

"Now? You get to dine with Mother Earth. It's quite an honor."

Facer didn't like the guy's smile, but dinner with Mother Earth didn't sound so bad. At least he'd get to see her before they scattered him. Facer didn't have any illusions. He was dead, and knew it. But there might be a chance to

get away during dinner, so he didn't completely give up hope.

They led him to a small room with a curtain at one end and locked his chains to a ring on the floor. They left him there, alone, and Facer began to think he'd been made a fool of. As he tested the strength of the ring and his chains, he muttered to himself: "Right, dinner with the big mama herself. How'd I fall for that one?"

Just then, the curtains parted, and the most beautiful woman Facer had ever seen stepped into the room. He stared for a moment, then realized that this must be Mother Earth. Someone else might have begged, but Facer had had it with the Brotherhood and their precious Mother Earth.

"So you're the bitch who's been causin' all this trouble round here."

Mother Earth smiled. "Such bad manners! I expect better of my dinner guests." She moved forward. Facer gauged the distance to her, getting ready to wrap his chains around her neck. With Mother Earth as a hostage, he'd have no problem getting out of here.

"Dinner, hah. You got nothing here I'd eat." Just another step, thought Facer, and I'll have her.

Mother Earth took that step and caught Facer's wrist as he tried to loop the chain around her neck. She was strong, stronger than the guy who'd caught him.

"You don't understand," Mother Earth crooned, "you're not eating, you're the main course."

Facer looked at her then, looked at her aura. He started to scream. He didn't stop for a long time.

Of all the factions existing in the KinRise world, few are more powerful (or more feared) than Mother Earth and her Brotherhood. This group came into existence some years before the War, though at the time it was not nearly as influential as it has become.

Mother Earth began her following with a small core of twenty or so members, dedicated more to the woman herself than to her ideals.

These ideals were extreme, even for post-millennial times. Mother Earth preached a message of re-creation through destruction.

"To save the planet," she was often quoted as saying, "we must first destroy its civilizations. We must burn out the corruption that we may start again fresh."

While Mother Earth's message sounded far from reasonable to most people, the youth of America were more than a little impressed. Here was a highly charismatic woman, a woman who promised them a new world, and there was only one catch: her followers would have to destroy everything the generations before them had created. To the nihilistic youths of the early twenty-first century, this was not such a big catch.

As Mother Earth's word began to spread, and her following to grow, so did her wealth. With this wealth came the desire for more wealth, all to further the cause, of course.

To further her cause, Mother Earth got into the drug trade. She started using her followers as pushers, selling severely cut cocaine, crack, and other hard recreational pharmaceuticals. The money came rolling in.

The federal government and local police both came down hard on Mother Earth numerous times. Her tracks were cleverly hidden behind a screen of under-aged followers, however, and she always managed to elude the law. Some of her older followers got spooked by the enormous drug deals Mother Earth was undertaking and turned her in. Palms were greased, however, and Mother Earth waltzed through the justice machine unscathed.

Mother Earth's big break came three years after her first appearance. A Sorcerer sided with the now rapidly expanding Brotherhood of Mother Earth, and a whole new can of worms was opened.

Mother Earth became intrigued with magic, and specifically with the implications of dimensional Summonings. She vigorously recruited Sorcerers to aid her in her research. With these Sorcerers came more information on the hidden side of the world. Unfortunately, Mother Earth was made aware of the other races of the Kin.

Mother Earth viewed all of the Kin (conveniently forgetting, at least for the time being, that Sorcerers were also Kin) as abominations. She earmarked the Kin for destruction at some later date.

During Mother Earth's hybrid experiments with drugs and sorcery, she discovered a powerful psychedelic she dubbed Soulwhip. This drug granted the user visions of other dimensions, of

## *The Brotherhood of Mother Earth*

paces long forgotten and best not disturbed. When taken in very large doses, it could also cause horrific alterations in both body and mind.

One incident will forever remain in the minds of all who witnessed it. A young woman took dose of Soulwhip three times larger than she had been advised. Later that night, as she danced at a fashionable club, she suddenly transformed and went on a killing spree that is legendary. Her hands sprouted the cold, insectile appendages of a gigantic mantis, and her mouth had split open to reveal a pair of mandibles.

Target Alpha jumped all over the incident, invoking a press blackout and booting most local authorities out. They managed to hush it up quickly, but rumors still ran rampant.

Despite this rather unpredictable side effect, Soulwhip gathered quite a following. Since it was only available to members of the Brotherhood of Mother Earth, so did Mother Earth. She had permanent bases now, big buildings done in cold, black concrete and gleaming steel. Mother Earth called them Bastions of Brotherhood. They sprang up like wildfire in the wake of Soulwhip's passing.

Target Alpha and the Kin both began all-out operations against Mother Earth shortly before the Spasm War, doing their best to shut down her drug operations and her Brotherhood. Unfortunately, their efforts netted only temporary results: shut down one bastion and another sprang up in another town, another state.

As the threat of the nuclear war to come loomed blacker and blacker on the horizon, Mother Earth intensified her researches. She delved deep into the arcane, alone now, for she had become a formidable Sorcerer. Alone too, because no other Sorcerer dared to follow where Mother Earth now trod.

Less than a week before the War, Mother Earth disappeared. She left behind nothing for her followers.

The Brotherhood began to crumble immediately. Though the upper levels of the Masters attempted to deny that Mother Earth was gone, their inability to produce the leader of their organization led to the start of its disintegration.

A week later, people had bigger problems to worry about. The War was on, and few knew what to do. People scattered like snowflakes in a firestorm, fleeing the cities for the country.

Before the first month passed, Mother Earth reappeared. Her message was the same, but she was a different woman. She gathered around her the remnants of her Brotherhood, and many newcomers came as well.

Mother Earth could heal the sick, give sight to the blind, and perform other magics. She swore to lead her Brotherhood to glory, to a new world of their own making. There the Brotherhood would rule the masses. There the Brotherhood would make the decisions.

Over the course of the next year, Mother Earth's following grew and her Mentors were sent far and wide to start new followings of the Brotherhood. Today, the Brotherhood of Mother Earth is the single largest organization that exists, its followers numbering in the thousands. The Brotherhood has also gained allies in some of the scavvy gangs, as Mother Earth's violent message appeals to them.

The followers of Mother Earth believe in polarities. Either you are with the Brotherhood or you oppose, either you are Good or Evil. There are no gray areas, no half-way points. They are fanatics, and this alone would make them dangerous enough.

Add to this the supernatural powers that Mother Earth grants her followers (her bioversions are extremely transformative, see below). Also consider the powers that her Mentors and Examiners wield, and you begin to see the true threat of this nihilistic organization.

Despite the ravages already visited upon the people of Earth, Mother Earth still believes that the remnants of the old civilization must be swept aside to make way for the new. She preaches total destruction of all those who are not good and pure members of the Brotherhood, and it is beginning to look like she has the power to make good on her promises.

The presence of Mother Earth makes the world of KinRise a much, much darker place to live.

## **ORGANIZATION**

The Brotherhood of Mother Earth is a streamlined organization, with only three branches: the Masters (who lead the Following of Mother Earth and distribute her truth), the Advocates (who design and implement biotechnology), and the Examiners (who are a combined police force and army for Mother Earth). Advocates and Examiners have only appeared since the KinRise. Before the Spasm War, only Masters were deemed necessary. Above the three branches is Mother Earth herself, who rules the Brotherhood with an iron hand.

## Mother Earth



**Race:** Unique

**STR:** 47

**DEX:** 32

**FIT:** 43

**INT:** 45

**WILL:** 61

**Max Humanity:** 25

**Edges:** Armor (35); Claws (90); Drain, human or Kin life force (67); Alter Form (78); Aura Sight (63); Body Control (70); Travel (89)

**Flaws:** Unknown (CP's discretion)

**Skills:** Ancient Greek (80); Biology (56); Brotherhood Etiquette (100); Chemistry (73); Hebrew (83); Kin Etiquette (40); Kin Lore (91); Latin (90); Library Research, personal (82); Medicine (63); Occult Etiquette (70); Occult Knowledge (82); Old English (97); Physics (70)

**Description:** Mother Earth appears to be a normal human woman, somewhat past middle age, but still strikingly handsome. No one is sure what her true form is. Kin who have seen her aura (and lived to tell the tale) describe it as a roiling mass of black, with incomprehensible shapes growing and feeding on each other within it.

Mother Earth was born Joanne Magruder about 40 years before the Spasm War. Though she attended college as a pre-med student, she never went on to medical school. Instead, she became involved with a number of radical organizations. When she was in her early thirties, she formed her own group, which became the Brotherhood of Mother Earth. She did not im-

mediately take on the name of Mother Earth, but after a few years, her followers began to call her that.

Mother Earth was a driven woman, and probably would have been destroyed by the Kin or a government strike team if her researches into the Twisted Dimensions had not converted her into the monster she is today. Though she abhors the Kin, she has more in common with them than with humans, having Edges and being able to Drain. Her trip through the Tee Dees has ripped away the last vestiges of humanity. Mother Earth is a complete sociopath, caring nothing for the suffering of others as she moves forward toward her goal of remaking humanity using genetic material from the Twisted Dimensions.

Mother Earth can be very charming when things are going her way. She will even dine with captured enemies, showing them every courtesy before Draining away their life force. Though she usually appears as she did before journeying to the Twisted Dimensions, she will occasionally use her Alter Form Edge to appear at different ages. In the Brotherhood, this is referred to as her passing through different seasons. Mother Earth may appear to be a child (spring), a young woman (summer), a mature matron (fall), or a kindly looking grandmother (winter). Her choice of form has nothing to do with the seasons themselves, and are only whims. All her forms, however, are beautiful, or at least handsome.

## THE MASTERS

The Masters make up the largest of the three branches, containing the philosophical leadership of the Brotherhood (outside Mother Earth herself, who doesn't fall under the heading of any branch). The Masters are overseen by the Grand Master. Beneath the Grand Master are, in descending order of rank, Mentors, Instructors, and Teachers. These titles are only used as a form of address when speaking to someone of lower rank. For example, a Mentor may, when speaking directly to a Teacher, address him as "Teacher." A Teacher, however, would use the honorific of "Master" when speaking to a Mentor. A lower ranking member of the Brotherhood would only use the title of his superior to describe that superior's position. For example, a Teacher may say: "Master Gordon is the Mentor of the Hicksville block." The title of Master is also used when addressing a Master of equal rank.

## The Brotherhood of Mother Earth

The clothing of the Masters reflects their place in the Brotherhood. They are sometimes referred to as the green circle, or the forest or trees of Mother Earth's truth.

### THE GRAND MASTER

At the top of the Masters' hierarchy is the Grand Master. Along with the High Examiner and the Arch Advocate, he is Mother Earth's go-between with the lower levels of the Brotherhood. It is the Grand Master's duty to insure that the words of Mother Earth are faithfully copied and disseminated throughout the many followings. He is also the one person (other than Mother Earth) who is allowed to make decisions on the official interpretation of Brotherhood laws. This is a difficult chore, mainly because all of Mother Earth's many predictions and recitations are included. Because Mother Earth does contradict herself, it is quite a nightmare to weave the many inconsistencies into a solid tapestry which can be used as the basis for a lasting organization. This task is little envied by subordinates.

### Charles Stromberg, Grand Master



Race: Human

STR: 16

DEX: 30

FIT: 25

INT: 35

WILL: 38

Max Humanity: 25

PER: 30

ATT: 0

LUCK: 25

HTH: 3

SP: 50

**Skills:** Pistol (70), Wing Chi (80), Brotherhood Etiquette (100), Kin Etiquette (70), Kin Lore (75) Knife (75)

**Biotech:** Biogun, Healing, Rad Glands, Scales (10), Spurs (7), True Sight

**Description:** Charles Stromberg, the current Grand Master, reports only to Mother Earth herself. Twisted by bioversion, Stromberg appears only marginally human.

Stromberg was a radical ecologist before the Spasm War. He was, and is now, against all technology. Mother Earth's message of tearing down civilization appealed to the core of his being, and he became her most loyal follower. He has been the Grand Master for almost five years.

Stromberg wears a white robe with green trim, a brown belt, and a black hood. These are the colors of the Masters, and the Grand Master wears them all.

### MENTORS

Below the Grand Master are the Mentors, who serve as the guiding hand for The Brotherhood. Most Mentors lead a single block of the Following, and are expected to lead their block away from the foul teachings of past civilizations and to the truth of Mother Earth. Such Mentors have the most hands-on job in the Brotherhood, working directly with the Following.

Some Mentors, however, lead no specific block, and work directly for the Grand Master or Mother Earth. Though their rank is no higher than a Mentor in charge of a block, Mentors who are elevated to positions high in the Brotherhood have a great deal of power.

Mentors that do not lead blocks may be called upon to do a variety of tasks. Some act as travelling arbitrators to settle disputes between blocks. Others teach Instructors and Teachers their duties. Others lead recruiting parties to expand the ranks of the Following. The leader of a bastion is also usually a Mentor.

Mentors coordinate bioversions, organize large meetings between blocks, and perform all of the more important functions of the Brotherhood. They also lead the occasional purge on small communities, burning them to the ground to cleanse them of the Kin that inhabit them. In many cases, Mentors will visit a village and use Seed of Plenty to show Mother Earth's good will and try and ensnare another community of poor suckers into the fold. If this fails...well,

come springtime, Seed of Blight can become the ultimate in high-pressure sales tactics.

The most important task a Mentor may have, however, is to copy and disseminate the truth of Mother Earth to the Following. This is a menial task for people so high in the hierarchy of the Brotherhood, but Mother Earth insists that Mentors be the only people allowed to copy her ravings, as she fears perversions of her truth may creep in if anyone else does so.

Mentors report only to the Grand Master and are considered the most trustworthy members of the Brotherhood (outside of the Examiners). For this reason they are let in on the true nature of the Kin, so they may better conquer them. Unfortunately for Mother Earth, this is already leading to some mixed emotions among the Mentors. Why aren't the Sorcerers in the Brotherhood's employ considered evil too, and why are they allowed to create Animates, birthing new Kin?

For now, Mother Earth's authority has kept these little thoughts hidden away, but they are starting to take root. In the coming year, relations may get a little hot.

Right now, though, the Mentors still believe in their cause, and they are sure as hell not going to betray the Brotherhood. They will fight to the death to protect their followings, viewing every member as a Child of Mother Earth.

### Typical Mentor

Race: Human

STR: 12                      PER: 25  
DEX: 20                      ATT: 0  
FIT: 12                      LUCK: 12  
INT: 25                      HTH: 2  
WILL: 30                    SP: 24

Max Humanity: 30

Skills: Knife (60), Pistol (50), Brotherhood Etiquette (100), Kin Lore (40)

Biotech: 50% Biogun, 100% Healing, 5% Poison Sacs, 100% Rad Glands, 20% Scales, 20% Spurs, 100% True Sight.

Description: Mentors wear green robes. According to Mother Earth's truth, Mentors are the leaves of the Masters.

### INSTRUCTORS

Below the Mentors are the Instructors. Though an Instructor may lead a block of the Following, this is becoming rarer. A block lead by an Instructor is usually small, and if the Instructor can make it grow, his promotion to Mentor is almost assured. Leader of a block is a

coveted position for an Instructor, as most serve as aides of Mentors. Many Instructors lead recruiting parties of Teachers and select followers, usually on missions that Mentors don't want to go on.

### Typical Instructor

Race: Human

STR: 12                      PER: 15  
DEX: 15                      ATT: 0  
FIT: 12                      LUCK: 12  
INT: 15                      HTH: 2  
WILL: 20                    SP: 24

Max Humanity: 35

Skills: Knife (60), Martial Arts (70), Pistol (60), Rifle (60), Brotherhood Etiquette (100), First Aid (30), Scavenging (80)

Biotech: 20% Biogun, 5% Healing, 5% Poison Sacs, 50% Rad Glands, 10% Scales, 5% Spurs, 5% True Sight.

Description: Instructors are considered to be the trunk of the Masters. They wear brown robes to reflect this.

### TEACHERS

The lowest rung on the ladder of Mastery is occupied by the Teachers, trainees who serve the Instructors and Mentors. Though being a Teacher elevates a person above the Following and frees them from other work, it's still no picnic. Teachers are used as clerks, gophers, messengers, and are assigned tasks no one else wants to do. These tasks may be simply unpleasant, or may be as dangerous as contacting a scavvy.

Teachers are not allowed to speak unless spoken to by a higher ranking member of the Brotherhood, and are not allowed to discuss anything with outsiders. They are shy and reclusive, so intent are they on their studies, but their minds are like sponges and their ears acute. Be careful what you say around a Teacher. It will likely be repeated to someone important.

### Typical Teacher

Race: Human

STR: 10                      PER: 10  
DEX: 13                      ATT: 0  
FIT: 10                      LUCK: 10  
INT: 10                      HTH: 2  
WILL: 17                    SP: 20

Max Humanity: 40

Skills: Knife (50), Pistol (50), Streetfighting (45), Brotherhood Etiquette (50)

## The Brotherhood of Mother Earth

**Biotech:** 5% Biogun, 1% Healing, 5% Poison Sacs, 25% Rad Glands, 10% Scales, 20% Spurs, 1% True Sight.

**Description:** Teachers are the roots of the Masters. Their black robes signify that they have reached the darkness and ignorance necessary to begin the assimilation of Mother Earth's truth. Mother Earth's creed says that all previous knowledge and civilization must be destroyed, so darkness and ignorance of prior knowledge is necessary.

### THE ADVOCATES

The Advocate Branch of the Brotherhood performs bioversions and experiments with new biotechnology. Advocates also produce new biotech and make sure that existing biotech continues to function properly. Advocates are also responsible for the bioversion pools, which must be constantly adjusted and expanded to handle the influx of new people to Mother Earth's Brotherhood.

Advocates are less formal (within their own branch) than other branches of the Brotherhood. Working with new bioverts and the bioversion pools (which can be tricky) leads to a "let's get the work done" attitude.

The proper form of address for the Advocate Branch is simply "Advocate." Friendships form more easily in this branch, as all levels work together, and first name use between members of different rings is common. Advocates all wear blue robes, a symbol of the sky that will return when the world has been cleansed.

This branch is quiet and rarely seen. They spend so much time in the Brotherhood libraries that many have forgotten how to deal with people. It takes a sincere effort on their part to remember their manners when around their superiors. This alone has made the Advocates unpopular, but Mother Earth still regards them as some of the most valuable of her followers. Advocates travelling in the wild are rare. When they do, they are usually biotech'd to the max and armed for bear.

### THE ARCH ADVOCATE

The Arch Advocate reports directly to Mother Earth. It is his responsibility to inform Mother Earth of every bioversion. She also supervises the experiments in the field of biotechnology. This is a demanding job, but one which is regarded as one of the most powerful positions in the Brotherhood. The robe of the Arch

Advocate is trimmed in white, the only outward symbol of her status.

### Fatima Qurat, Arch Advocate



**Race:** Human

**STR:** 17

**DEX:** 22

**FIT:** 16

**INT:** 24

**WILL:** 30

**PER:** 28

**ATT:** 0

**LUCK:** 75

**HTH:** 3

**SP:** 91

**Max Humanity:** 30

**Skills:** Knife (55), Pistol (60), Biochemistry (94), Biotechnology (91), Brotherhood Etiquette (83), Kin Lore (62)

**Biotech:** Biogun, Healing, Rad Glands, Scales (15), Spurs (10), True Sight

**Description:** Fatima Qurat was a former Lebanese student, trained in Biochemistry and Genetics in America, who stayed in the United States after completing her degree. She is a short, stocky woman with classically beautiful Mediterranean features. Unfortunately, her beauty doesn't extend to her body, which has been warped by bioversion.

Before the war, Qurat worked for a genetic engineering firm. Not satisfied with creating better strains of soybean, she wanted to work on improving humans. Illicit experiments cost her her job a month before the Spasm War. After the war, Mother Earth showed Qurat a way to continue her work. Qurat built the Advocate branch for Mother Earth, and while she doesn't care too much about philosophy, the Masters and Examiners stay out of her way. She has built a base of

power in the Brotherhood, rooted in the biotechnology she creates for Mother Earth.

### ADVOCATE RINGS

Below the Arch Advocate are the Advocate Rings, numbered one through five, with five being the highest. An Advocate's ranking, as they move up through the rings, is marked by a simple ceremony and plain gold band on the ring finger of their left hand. A member of the first ring is difficult to detect because the ring looks like a wedding ring. When two, three, four, or five rings are worn on the same finger, their purpose is more obvious. Each Advocate manufactures the rings they will wear.

The Advocates of the First Ring counsel those who have undergone bioversion, helping them through any emotional or physical crises. They help them adjust to their new forms (where applicable). While they are respected, they are also the most warmly appreciated of all the members of the Advocate Branch, mainly because they are so kind to those in their care.

The Advocates of the Second Ring are responsible for preparing the ceremonial robes for those bioverted. They also assist the third through fifth rings, whose responsibility it is to make sure that the bioversion pools are operating properly and are mixed correctly for the bioversions at hand.

The third, fourth, and fifth rings are the people skilled in the techniques of creating biotech. The higher the ring, the more skilled in biotechnology the Advocate.

### Typical Advocate, Ring 3, 4, or 5

**Race:** Human

**STR:** 15

**PER:** 30

**DEX:** 10

**ATT:** 0

**FIT:** 15

**LUCK:** 15

**INT:** 30

**HTH:** 3

**WILL:** 30

**SP:** 30

**Max Humanity:** 35

**Skills:** Knife (55), Pistol (60), Biotechnology (70), Brotherhood Etiquette (80), Kin Lore (50)

**Biotech:** 75% Biogun, 10% Healing, 5% Poison Sacs, 100% Rad Glands, 20% Scales, 40% Spurs, 5% True Sight

**Description:** When determining an Advocate's Skills, add ten points to the scores of the following Skills for every Ring he has achieved past the third: Biotechnology, Brotherhood Etiquette, and Kin Lore. Thus, an Advocate of the Fourth Ring would have a Biotechnology Skill Score of

80 (70 as a base, plus 10 for being of the Fourth Ring). This represents the continued study that the Advocate must undergo to achieve the next Ring.

Advocates wear blue robes, to represent the sky that will return when the world is cleansed.

### THE EXAMINERS

The last branch, and perhaps the most important, is made up of the Examiners. Examiners are responsible for insuring that the members of the Brotherhood, from the lowliest recruit to The Grand Master himself, do not violate the laws of The Brotherhood. For this reason the Examiners are the most feared of all the branches, as one can never be sure what Examiners will report as a breach of the law. Examiners wear black robes with concealing cowls. The sleeves are usually long enough to cover the hands. It is rare to see any part of an Examiner's body.

The Examiners are also responsible for obtaining information from less than talkative sources. They are rumored to be the most proficient torturers in existence, and are usually called in to interrogate Kin. They are directly responsible for a large portion of the information the Brotherhood possesses on groups such as the Complex and the Reconstructionists.

Examiners travel among the Following, their black robes and high-peaked hoods an imposing sight for all who see them. They hunt out corruption with hot passion, often departing en masse to do battle with Kin. Though those highly placed in other branches are often cynical, and use their stations, and the information these stations bring, as tools to greater power, not so the Examiners. These men and women are fanatics.

### THE HIGH EXAMINER

**Race:** Human

**STR:** 42

**PER:** 30

**DEX:** 15

**ATT:** 0

**FIT:** 48

**LUCK:** 72

**INT:** 21

**HTH:** 8

**WILL:** 36

**SP:** 130

**Max Humanity:** 5

**Skills:** Biogun (75), Knife (70), Pistol (70), Rifle (70), Wing Chi (80), Intimidation (90), Kin Lore (80), Scavenging (70)

**Biotech:** 2 Bioguns, Healing, Poison Sacs, Rad Glands, Scales (25), Spurs (15), True Sight

**Description:** The High Examiner is the head of the Examiners, and his or her identity is the

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most carefully guarded secret in the Brotherhood. No one has ever seen the High Examiner's face (other than perhaps Mother Earth) and lived to describe it. The High Examiner wears a black robe that conceals even the gender of the wearer. This allows freedom of movement within the ranks of the followers and the other branches without being noticed. It also allows the High Examiner to weed out the impure from the shadows, so those who violate the laws never know who their accuser was. This tactic insures adherence to the teachings of Mother Earth (supposedly) because each member of the Following must always assume that they are being watched.



### TYPICAL EXAMINER

Race: Human

STR: 30

DEX: 25

FIT: 25

INT: 20

WILL: 40

PER: 30

ATT: 0

LUCK: 30

HTH: 6

SP: 55

Max Humanity: 25

Skills: Biogun (70), Knife (70), Pistol (70), Rifle (70), Wing Chi (80), Intimidation (90), Kin Lore (80), Scavenging (70)

Biotech: 100% Biogun, 40% Healing, 50% Poison Sacs, 100% Rad Glands, 60% Scales, 80% Spurs, 100% True Sight.

**Description:** The Examiners are the most fearsome of all members of the Brotherhood. Clad in their black cloaks and peaked, face-covering hoods, they are a sight to inspire terror among all people, including the Kin. It is the Examiners' duty to destroy what does not conform to

Mother Earth's truth, and to crush any opposition to the Brotherhood's ends. They are ruthless and without compassion, and this is reflected by their low Humanity Scores.

Examiners hunt even among their own kind, with a special sect known as The Seekers Within. The Seekers are amazingly diligent, hunting out corruption in all levels of the Brotherhood, and some say watchdogging Mother Earth herself.

The Kin are especially nervous when it comes to the Examiners, as they know entirely too much about the weaknesses of the Kin. The Examiners hunt down Kin with alarming ferocity, and to date, they are the Kin's greatest enemies.

### ARCHITECTS

The Architects are sometimes considered a fourth branch of The Brotherhood, even though they are under the command of the High Examiner. Architects are drawn from all of the other branches. The Architects are headquartered at the construction site for the Citadel near the ruins of St. Louis, but may travel to other construction sites as needed. They operate independently and report directly to Mother Earth. Their independence from the other branches insures that the secrets of the Citadel and other bastions are known to only those few who have a need to know.

The Architects construct buildings and are best known for their work on the Citadel. This huge construct, built from the wreckage of St. Louis, rests on the bank of the Mississippi River. Its six walls are built from slabs of concrete topped with wickedly sharp spikes of twisted steel. The whole building has the look of something blasted and burned. Mother Earth's Symbol (the black sphere in flames) emblazoned on each of the windowless walls does much to enhance this effect.

### THE FOLLOWING

Most of the folks in the Brotherhood do not belong to any of the three branches of its organization, though many report regularly to an Examiner. Most are simply followers, taken in by the eco-nonsense of the Brotherhood's philosophy. There are thousands of members of the Following spread throughout the continent. The word followers is used to describe these people, though that description technically includes the members of the three branches as well. The Following numbers up to 15,000 or more. This does

not include the massive encampment near the ruins of St. Louis (where Mother Earth has her headquarters) that numbers approximately three thousand, or the members of the three branches.

The Following is divided into blocks, each block being overseen by a Mentor or Instructor. Teachers commonly aid the leader of a block in his duties. There are hundreds of blocks, most having ten to thirty members. While most blocks have no permanent place for meetings, they stay pretty much in one place. They may meet in abandoned buildings now and then, or even in caves or other natural shelters. Their need for secrecy keeps them hidden, so they will move their meeting places frequently to avoid detection.

### Recruits

**Race:** Human

**STR:** 10

**DEX:** 13

**FIT:** 8

**INT:** 10

**WILL:** 15

**PER:** 10

**ATT:** 10

**LUCK:** 10

**HTH:** 2

**SP:** 18

**Max Humanity:** 45

**Skills:** Knife (45), Rifle (50), Streetfighting (30), Brotherhood Etiquette (20)

**Biotech:** none

**Description:** Recruits have most likely been contacted by a travelling group of Examiners or Masters on a recruiting tour. They are eager to join the Brotherhood and are on their way to the nearest Brotherhood block or bastion. They are not suspicious of outsiders, and will attempt to persuade player characters to join the Brotherhood. They do not possess any biotech and have not undergone the Bioversion of Initiation.

Recruits travel in groups of 10-100 (1d10 x 10). They normally are filthy and diseased, and more than a few are radded out. That, however, describes most of the Herd in the KinRise world. Recruits are usually armed with knives and assorted handguns, though some may be wearing swords (depending on their degree of trade with the Gypsies). They don't usually wear any armor. They are always clothed as instructed by their recruiters (which is to say they wear black rag cloaks).

As long as they do not discover that the player characters are Kin, things will be all right. If they do find that the enemies of Mother Earth are among them, they will try to destroy the Kin at any cost.

### Followers

**Race:** Human

**STR:** 10

**DEX:** 13

**FIT:** 10

**INT:** 10

**WILL:** 17

**PER:** 10

**ATT:** 8

**LUCK:** 10

**HTH:** 2

**SP:** 20

**Max Humanity:** 40

**Skills:** Knife (50), Pistol (50), Rifle (50), Streetfighting (45), Brotherhood Etiquette (40)

**Biotech:** 5% Biogun, 1% Healing, 5% Poison Sacs, 25% Rad Glands, 10% Scales, 20% Spurs, 1% True Sight.

**Description:** The Brotherhood follower is a human who has been active in the Brotherhood for a while and has some understanding of what it stands for. They are far more fanatic than recruits are, as well as more paranoid. After all, aren't the enemies of Mother Earth everywhere?

Followers are often found wandering as recruiters being led by a Mentor, an Instructor, or an Examiner, depending on the nature of the journey. They do not usually carry Seed, but they are often grafted with biotech of some sort.

These people are not at all friendly, and it is doubtful that they will even talk to anyone outside of the Brotherhood without the express permission of someone higher up in the Brotherhood Hierarchy.

Followers are used as the basic fighting force of the Brotherhood of Mother Earth and are sometimes used as agents of infiltration as well.

When not hiding their identity, followers will normally be found wearing something simple and plain, and usually black. Robes with the symbol of the Brotherhood (a black globe in flames) are a favorite. They hide the effects of biotech and it is easy to conceal weapons beneath them.

## BASTIONS

Bastions are permanent bases for the Brotherhood. Some are obvious fortresses, while others are hidden camps. A bastion usually has representatives from all three branches. A Mentor is nominally in charge of a bastion, but will usually not act without consulting the members of the other branches. There may be one or several blocks in or near a bastion. The Mentor in charge of the bastion may also serve as the leader of a block.

Advocates are usually in the majority at a bastion. They perform bioversions and are responsible for the biotech. This has caused dis-

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gruntled feelings among the Mentors, who feel that their power is being usurped by common mechanics. The Grand Master is pushing to get his minions trained in the ways of the Advocates as soon as possible. Naturally, the Advocates are not thrilled with this prospect, as they know full well that it would result in the speedy dissolution of their branch.

The Examiners are the balance in this power struggle, and the glue that holds a bastion together. They make sure that no one gets out of hand, and insure the loyalty of all the people at a bastion. It is not uncommon for an Examiner to report those unhappy with the balance of power as violators or lawbreakers. The distrust of the Examiners (there are at least a few at every bastion) keeps the Masters and the Advocates from really going at it.

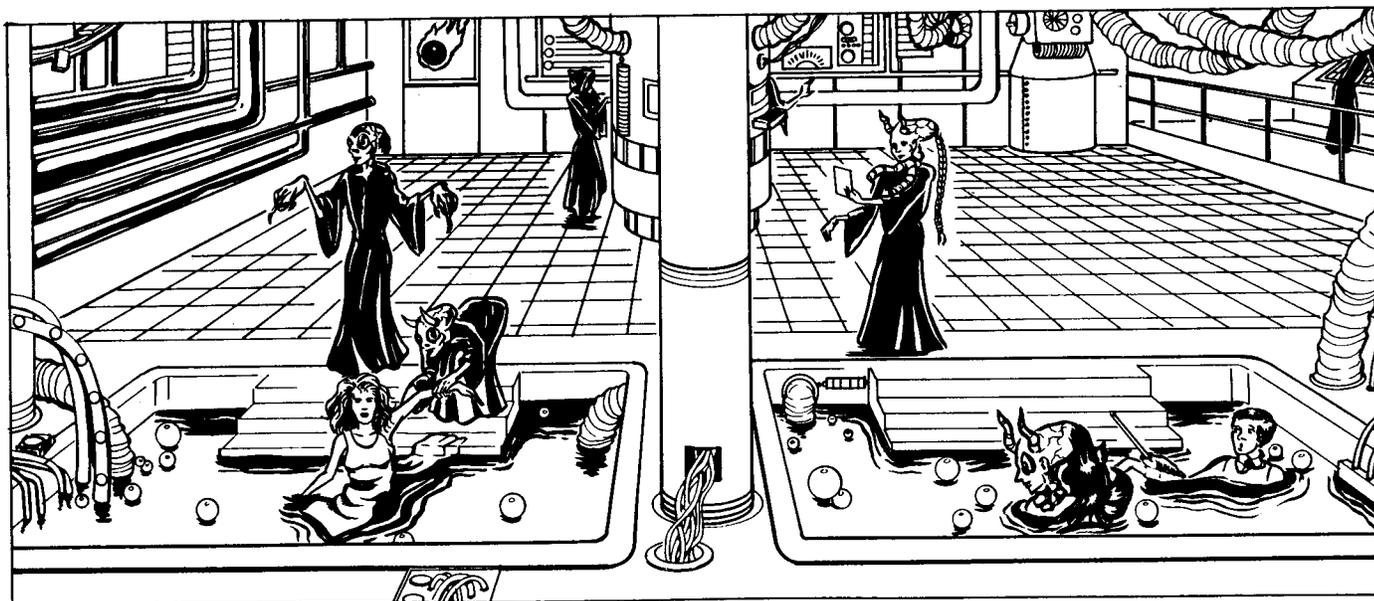
A bastion is the scene of all bioversions for its block, and any nearby blocks that do not yet have a bastion. The bioversion pools are within

the building or encampment. Bastions are also used as an armory. All manner of weapons can usually be found here, as well as a large amount of Seed (see Biotechnology).

Sorcerers are often stationed at the bastions, though they are shunned by all other members of the Brotherhood. Still, they are placed there by order of Mother Earth, and they do aid in communications.

About every three months, all of the followers gather at a nearby bastion for their bioversions and an examination of loyalty. This usually lasts for most of a week, during which a single person may undergo many bioversions. In this way the Advocates add to the use of biotechnology and speed its acceptance among the people of the Brotherhood. The Advocates also use this time to check up on what is happening with the results of past bioversions, and will excise any biotech that has failed or gone corrupt.

# BIOTECHNOLOGY



Biotechnology is the mainstay of Mother Earth's researches, and one of the reasons that her Brotherhood is so powerful. Though many people were resistant to the whole concept at first, most of the Following are starting to come around. This is due mainly to the fact that members do not want to be labeled as lawbreakers by the Examiners.

Just what is biotechnology? Well, it's not really a technology, but Mother Earth uses that name to confuse people outside of the Brotherhood. It is biological, but involves biologies far removed from the carbon-based system we are all so fond of.

Biotech, as used here, is anything which alters the biology of a life form, with the intent to improve or increase usefulness. So when the members of the Brotherhood get Bioguns grafted onto their arms, that's biotech. When your character plays crunchy-munchy with their faces, that's not. That's just fun.

So why isn't biotech considered a science? Simple. The field owes more to magic than it does to any sort of normal technology. It was discovered by Mother Earth during her travels through the Twisted Dimensions, and probably would be impossible without the aid of some of the TD's more gruesome inhabitants.

Still, Mother Earth has come a long way toward perfecting the art of biotech, and it is reasonably safe, though more than a little disgusting. Application of the process is handled by the Advocates.

## BIOVERSIONS

Biotech that is grafted to a follower is produced by bioversion. Rewarding bioversions are only given to those deserving (that is, any member of a following who hasn't hacked off the Instructors or Mentors too badly), and are administered about every three months. The Instructors keep track of all the members of their block, and report the type and number of bioversions that need to be administered. The Advocates at the bastions use this information to prepare the bioversion pools. Then, every three months, all the blocks meet at their bastions and get their due.

Not all the bioversions, however, are rewarding. The dread Bioversion of Punishment leads to frightening mutations and painful additions to the offender's physiology. Fortunately, the effects are not permanent and are eventually replaced by a beneficial modification. Even through punishment Mother Earth rewards, or so the saying goes.

## BIOVERSION SIDE EFFECTS

The whole bioversion process is secret (as you may have already guessed), very controlled, and always under the watchful eye of its keepers. The biovert is told exactly what to expect from the little bath, but nothing else about the process. This has minimized the fear that most folks feel from getting their bodies changed over. Still, the process can be traumatic and sometimes leads to violent outbursts on the part of the recently bioverted, and even death.

## HOMICIDAL RAGE

For every bioversion, the biovert must make a successful Escape Roll against WILL, or go into a homicidal rage which lasts for 1d10 hours, attacking everyone in sight. This is especially dangerous to anyone in the area if the biovert is Kin. Each bioversion (after the first) adds a +10 cumulative modifier to this roll, making it more and more likely for a failure to result.

## Death From Shock

The safe period of time between bioversions is one month. If a second bioversion is performed before one month passes, then an Escape Roll must be made against FIT. If this fails, the biovert will die of shock. Kin will resurrect normally. If a third bioversion is attempted within the same month, make another Escape Roll. The same goes for the fourth or fifth bioversions, and so on.

This one month period limits the number of bioversions that can be safely performed on a single human. For the most part, Mother Earth doesn't want to expend Followers needlessly. She watches and waits, slowly building a stronger and stronger army of bioverts. Eventually, the alien genetic material brought in from the Twisted Dees will be able to survive and reproduce on Earth. When that happens, life as we know it will probably be doomed.

## TYPES OF BIOVERSIONS

There are three main types of bioversion used within the Brotherhood of Mother Earth. The first of these is the Bioversion of Initiation, the ceremony that officially brings a new member into the Brotherhood. The second is the Bioversion of Punishment, used to punish those who are reported to have broken the law or turned away from the truth of Mother Earth. The third type of bioversion is the Bioversion of Mother Earth, where the biovert gains a new piece of biotechnology.

### BIOVERSION OF INITIATION

The Bioversion of Initiation has the effect of binding a person to the Brotherhood. The biovert must make an Escape Roll against WILL any time he attempts to harm a faithful member within the Brotherhood. This insures at least some loyalty from all members of the Brotherhood.

### BIOVERSION OF PUNISHMENT

The second type of bioversion is the Bioversion of Punishment, the most dread type used within the Brotherhood. Those subjected to this punishment are doomed to torment beyond their comprehension. Their bodies are wracked with frightening changes, and they are reduced to the state of a beast. It is during this time that they must contemplate the error of their ways. Unfortunately for the ones suffering the Punishment, they are unable to communicate (due to the changes in their bodies), and must lie at the mercy of the Mentors or Examiners (who will decide when the subject has had enough). This usually takes longer than expected, sometimes days, during which the poor follower is confined to a small, lightless room. When the allotted time is up, they are brought out and given the Bioversion of Mother Earth. This helps to restore both mind and body, as well as adding a new bit of biotech. The biovert is then released back into the world, with only the vaguest memory of their punishment, but with much less desire to again bring on the wrath of the Brotherhood.

### BIOVERSION OF MOTHER EARTH

The third type of bioversion is the Bioversion of Mother Earth. This grafts new biotech onto the followers. It is normally a pleasant process, with the biovert stripped by attendants and clothed in light robes before being gently led to the bioversion pool. The biovert is then dunked beneath the slime for a few moments as energy is channeled through them. After that, they are led to another pool where the process continues, and the biotech begins to grow. Within a few minutes, the biovert has a new biotech growth.

There is a Max Humanity Cost and an Attractiveness loss associated with each bioversion. The Max Humanity Cost for acquiring each bioversion is handled in the same manner as outlined for Kin Edges in *NIGHTLIFE*. There may also be a Humanity Cost associated with each use of the biotechnology. The ATT Costs listed are cumulative, and measure both repulsiveness and inhuman body structure. When ATT reaches zero, the appearance of the biovert's body has changed so much that it no longer looks human. ATT does not become negative.

The effects of ATT Loss apply mainly to non-Brotherhood members. The Following (especially younger members) view these modifications as symbols of Mother Earth's favor. If

the process continues, such modifications will be considered an increase in ATT within a generation.

Please note that masks and hoods, and heavy clothing or robes, will cover most modifications and hide ATT Loss.

### BIOVERSIONS TO INCREASE BASIC ABILITIES

Bioversions that increase Basic Abilities have almost no visible side effects, at least not the first time. Each of these bioversions can increase one Basic Ability by 3 points. This has no visible mutation until a Basic Ability has been increased twice. There is little or no loss of Humanity involved in raising a Basic Ability by 3 points with one bioversion, but the effects, both mental and physical, of subsequent bioversions are noticeable and bestow an inhuman quality.

The second bioversion to modify a Basic Ability produces the costs and effects listed for each type, including the ATT Loss and Max Humanity Costs. Each subsequent bioversion (after the second) accentuates the change in appearance, and also incurs the other penalties. The Max Humanity Costs and ATT Loss are taken for every bioversion after the first.

Only the listed Basic Abilities may be increased by bioversion. LUCK, WILL, and ATT may not be increased in this manner.

#### Strength



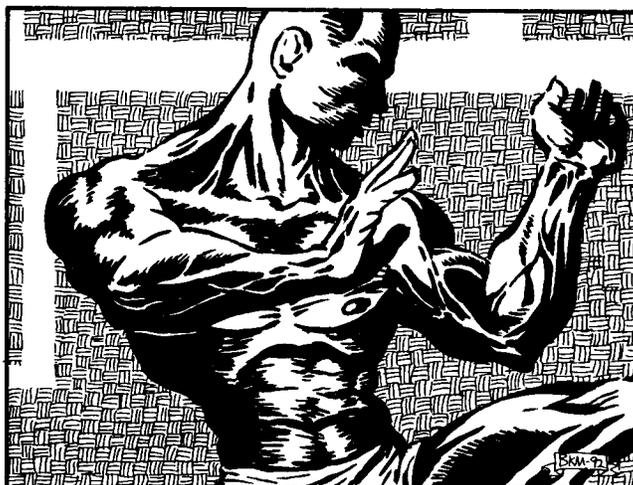
Humanity Costs: 3/0 (after the first)

ATT Loss: 2

Effects: Muscles become extremely angular and pronounced, lined with bulging thick blue veins that appear ready to burst from the flesh. The

arms and shoulders thicken, along with the neck, thighs, and calves.

#### Dexterity



Humanity Costs: 3/0 (after the first)

ATT Loss: 1

Effects: The look of the biovert's body doesn't change, but the movements of the body do. Random movement and fidgeting disappear, and the whole effect is one of balanced, precise, machinelike control.

#### Fitness



Humanity Costs: 3/0 (after the first)

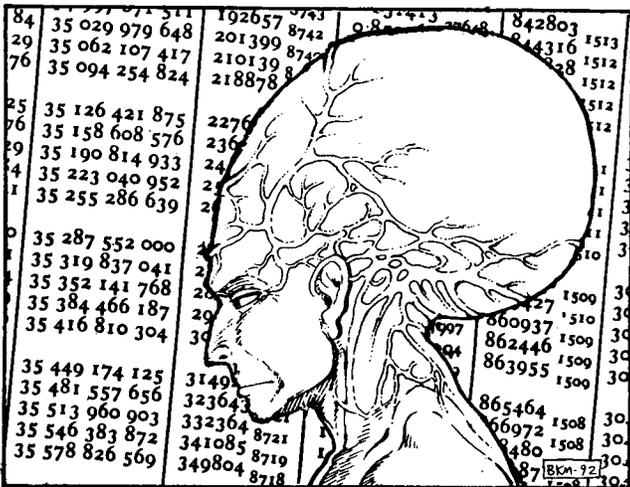
ATT Loss: 1

Effects: The biovert's body becomes extremely efficient, using less energy than normal. At rest, the biovert breathes very slowly and has a strong, steady, slow heartbeat. Body temperature drops. Blood vessels enlarge, and veins near the skin become very prominent. The chest and

## Biotechnology

throat of the biovert expand to allow better air flow into the lungs. Subcutaneous fat is reduced until the muscles stand out in sharp relief.

### Intellect



**Humanity Costs:** 3/0 (after the first)

**ATT Loss:** 1

**Effects:** The biovert's cranium expands, giving him a head that appears elongated. With each subsequent bioversion, the process continues, until the biovert has a pear-shaped head.

### Perception



**Humanity Costs:** 3/0 (after the first)

**ATT Loss:** 2

**Effects:** Recipients of this bioversion will experience several changes in their sensory apparatus. Their ears will grow larger and stand out from the sides of their head. Their eyes will bulge from their sockets and, with subsequent bioversions, will slide back toward the sides of

the head. The nasal cavity expands, giving the biovert a snout as the nostrils migrate to the front of the nose. The number of nerve ending under the skin increases, providing better touch sensitivity.

### BIOGUN

**Humanity Costs:** 10/1

**ATT Loss:** 3

**Description:** This is an organic projectile weapon and a piece of biotech valued by Examiners. It is repulsive, looking like a fat slug with a long proboscis growing out the biovert's body. It has a range of 75 feet, and has a Damage Potential of 7. The gun fires living missiles composed of calcium and a bit of muscle tissue. This discharge is accompanied by the sound of a loud sneeze. These missiles fly at their target, little teeth grinding away. Anyone hit (and damaged) by this weapon may suffer additional damage. An Escape Roll against Luck is allowed, but if failed, the victim will take an additional point of damage per BT for 1d10 BT. This additional damage is from the chewing of the missile, stuck in the victim's body.

The nervous system of a Biogun is linked to the biovert's optic nerves, so a successful roll against PER is required for a hit. The biovert may also develop the Biogun Skill, which is based on PER. A Biogun may fire once a BT. A Biogun will have 4d10 missiles ready per day.

### HEALING

**Humanity Costs:** 10/2

**ATT Loss:** 10

**Description:** This modification can only be used once on a given character per day. It will restore 2d10 of lost SP. When used to heal diseases or neutralize toxins, the biovert adds her FIT to the FIT of the poisoned or diseased character. The victim is then allowed an Escape Roll versus his modified FIT to shake off the effects of the disease or poison. This bioversion is most commonly given to Masters.

### POISON SACS

**Humanity Costs:** 5/5

**ATT Loss:** 5

**Description:** This modification creates several tiny sacs on the skin of a character's body. These sacs contain a virulent poison which can be used to coat a weapon. The sacs can also be removed and thrown by the character (or another person). Either of these options takes one BT to accomplish. The poison is Class II. At any time

a character will have 1d10 sacs available for harvesting. The sacs are replaced at a rate of 1d10 per twenty four hour period, to a maximum of 10. Characters with this modification appear to have pustulent blisters covering their body.

### **RAD GLANDS**

**Humanity Costs:** 4/0

**ATT Loss:** 1

**Description:** Rad Glands are capable of ridding the biovert's body of radiation exposures at a rate of one per eight hours, eliminating the effects of radiation in some areas. They cause a disfiguring of the neck, armpits and groin area, as lymph nodes there are converted into the lumpy rad glands.

### **SCALES**

**Humanity Costs:** 10/0

**ATT Loss:** 3

**Special:** DEX is limited to 40-Scales Score. See below for more information.

**Description:** This bit of biotechnology works exactly like the Armor Edge does for the Kin. Damage Potential is reduced by the Scales Score before being applied against SP. The first bioversion for this modification gives the recipient a **Scales Score of 5**. The skin grows scaly plates, very similar in appearance to snakeskin. Each additional bioversion gives the biovert **1 point of Scales Score**. As the Scales Score grows, so does the thickness of the plates on the skin.

Please note that this Scales Score is gained by adding material to the outside of the body, which limits DEX and movement. For every point of Scales Score a person gains in this manner, their DEX Score is limited by 1 point. Please note that this is a limit, not a subtraction.

**Example:** Suppose a person with a DEX of 25 receives their first Scales bioversion. Their Scales Score is 5, so their DEX is limited to 35. No problem yet, because their DEX is only 25. As Scales increases, however, it will limit the DEX of the biovert. When the biovert's Scales Score reaches 16, their DEX score will become limited to 24, and they will lose the use of 1 point of their DEX. This limit is absolute, and cannot be passed by bioversions to raise DEX. It is conceivable that Scales may be raised to the point where movement becomes impossible.

### **SPURS**

**Humanity Costs:** 5/0

**ATT Loss:** 3

**Description:** Spurs are bony extrusions that project through the skin of the biovert's body. The choice of where the Spurs are located is up to the Advocates preparing the bioversion pool. Spurs are most commonly located on the backs of the hands, the elbows, or the knees. They are not retractable, and may be dangerous to the biovert himself if he is not careful.

The first bioversion provides spurs of about four inches of length, and adds 5 to the biovert's HTH Damage Score. Subsequent dunkings will add more Spurs or increase the length and strength of existing Spurs. For each bioversion after the first, the additional Damage Potential increases by 1 point. For example, if a biovert is given 3 Spurs bioversions, his Spurs Score will be 7.

### **TRUE SIGHT**

**Humanity Costs:** 2

**ATT Loss:** 2

**Description:** True Sight causes the eyes of the biovert to swell up to twice their normal size and turn milky green in color. The modification works exactly like the Aura Sight Edge, though it always works as long as the person concentrates on it. There is no need for a Skill Roll, but the character using this modification must remain still and stare at a person for 2 BT to read an aura. This makes the user a little conspicuous. This piece of biotech is most often given to Examiners.

### **SEED OF MOTHER EARTH**

Mother Earth doesn't limit her use of biotech to humans. She has Advocates experimenting with all forms of life and unlife. One of the more useful results of this research (from the Brotherhood's viewpoint) is the Seed of Mother Earth.

The Seed of Mother Earth is bacteria and virus cultures that have gone through a bioversion process. In dormant form it appears to be a lump of dirt, with differing colors depending on the type of Seed. Seed becomes dormant within a few minutes of finishing the bioversion process, and will remain in this state until it loses viability, or is activated.

## **SHELF LIFE**

The shelf life of Seed is very limited. Most Seed will go bad within a month of its bioversion. This is fortunate for adversaries of Mother Earth, for a dependable supply of Seed could make the Brotherhood unbeatable. Because of this short shelf life, there is a 10% chance that Seed will have gone bad by the time the Brotherhood gets around to activating it.

## **ACTIVATION OF SEED**

Seed lies dormant until it is activated by a Ritual performed by a Master or Examiner. This Ritual transfers SP to the Seed, allowing it to activate. This process is called "forcing." The Ritual used has some elements in common with Witch Ceremonies, in that the SP of the greater group may be used by a smaller segment.

## **THE SP POOL**

The Brotherhood has a shared pool of SP that Masters and Examiners may draw from. The strength of this pool depends on the number of the Following. For each member of the Following, the pool gains 1/10 of an SP. With the current membership of the Following at 15,000, the SP pool is equal to 1500.

The Master of a Ritual may draw 5 points from the pool once per hour. For every follower present, the amount of SP that may be drawn increases by 1. For example, a Mentor with twenty followers may perform a Ritual that draws 25 SP from the pool per hour.

Please note that the SP can be drawn from the pool quickly, and the hour's allotment may be drawn in a few minutes.

The SP of the pool is a measure of how much may be drawn each hour by all Masters and Examiners, everywhere on the continent. So far, this hasn't proved to be much of a limit to the Brotherhood. But if many attacks on the Brotherhood occurred simultaneously, it is conceivable that the pool would be drained, and some Masters and Examiners left without the ability to call on its SP.

## **ADDITIONAL SP NEEDED**

Each type of Seed has a Cost, which is the amount of SP that must be expended to force it. If the Cost of a type of Seed is more than a group can produce per hour, the Ritual must be continued until the number of SP gathered is sufficient, or the SP must be expended by the people in the Ritual.

## **USING SEED**

Most types of Seed have only indirect use in Combat, but some must be thrown at the victim (e.g., Seed of Fire). When this is necessary, use the Throwing Skill or DEX Ability. The range that a cannister or lump of Seed may be thrown is STR+20 yards.

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF SEED**

**Cost:** The amount of SP that must be drawn from the Brotherhood SP Pool or from the followers on hand to activate the Seed.

**Duration:** The length of time that Seed will remain active and ready to use after being forced.

**Target:** What or who the Seed may be used on.

**Escape Roll:** If the Seed may be used against creatures, a roll is made against the Basic Ability listed to avoid or lessen the effect of Seed.

**Effect:** What the Seed actually does.

**Aftereffects:** Temporary or permanent conditions that are produced in the user or victim by the Seed.

## **TYPES OF SEED**

There are many types of Seed, and the Advocates of the Brotherhood are always working on new ones. The Seed they have developed so far is listed below.

### **Seed of Blight**

**Cost:** 15 SP

**Duration:** 4 weeks

**Target:** Ten acres of land

**Escape Roll:** None

**Effect:** Blight Seed is white. When crumbled and scattered across up to ten acres of land (this can be accomplished by throwing the dust into the air upwind of the land), it causes every plant and microorganism on that land to die within hours. Nothing will grow on the land until the Duration of the Seed expires. Mature fruits and vegetables on the land will be laced with a poisonous substance, making it unfit to eat.

The Brotherhood often uses Seed of Blight to set a community up for persuasion to join. Often, the Brotherhood is seen as rescuing force, using their Seed of Plenty to grow food for a starving community.

**Aftereffects:** Harvests will be poor from this stretch of land for several years, and anything that grows on it will contain at least some of the

poison that is left in the aftereffects of the Seed of Blight.

### Seed of Control

**Cost:** 40 SP

**Duration:** 1d10 hours

**Target:** One creature

**Escape Roll:** Against FIT for no effect

**Effect:** This Seed is attuned to a particular person when forced. Once forced, it may be used to control another creature, either natural or Kin. The creature must ingest the Seed. This can be a problem, unless the creature is a voracious one, like a Roachboy. Once the Seed has been ingested, the creature must Escape against FIT. If this is a success, the Seed has been destroyed by the creature's immune system. If the FIT Roll is a failure, the creature comes under the mental control of the Mentor or Examiner the Seed is attuned to. This effect lasts until the creature dies, 2d10 hours later.

**Aftereffects:** Death. The Seed of Control is a microbe that works its way into a creature's brain and takes over voluntary functions. This works fine at first, but the microbes feed on brain tissue, and will damage the host's central nervous system in just a few hours. 1d10 hours after being fed the Seed, the host creature will fly into a murderous rage, attacking everything it senses for the next 1d10 hours. After that period of time, the brain is too damaged to allow for movement, and the creature slowly dies of metabolic shutdown.

### Seed of Fire

**Cost:** 5 SP

**Duration:** 3 days

**Target:** One creature or object

**Escape Roll:** None

**Effect:** This Seed is gray, with a coarse black graininess visible in its composition. When forced, it becomes highly unstable, and any sharp impact will set it off. Just dropping it or falling on it will be enough.

When jarred sufficiently, a Seed of Fire will burst into living flame. This flame will move to cover a circle of about 10 feet in diameter on a flat surface, or will flow to cover up to two people. The flame will burn for 5 BT, causing 1d10 of flame damage a BT (remember to double damage for Kin, and ignore Armor Edge). This flame cannot be smothered or beaten out, but submersion in water will halve the amount of damage taken.

**Aftereffects:** None, other than burn scars. The Seed burns itself out completely.

### Seed of Guidance

**Cost:** 10 SP

**Duration:** 1 week

**Target:** n/a

**Escape Roll:** none

**Effect:** The Seed of Guidance is blue, and glows with a weak blue light after forcing. Once forced, it will glow brightest when held between the user and Mother Earth (or a large group of followers). The Seed of Guidance can lead a travelling follower to safety, finding hidden bastions.

**Aftereffects:** None

### Seed of Healing

**Cost:** 40 SP

**Duration:** 1 hour

**Target:** One creature

**Escape Roll:** None

**Effect:** A rare and powerful Seed, the Seed of Healing is better described as a Seed of Draining. It is white in color. Once forced, it only remains viable for one hour. Any creature that crushes the Seed against its skin (most commonly the hands) has the ability to Drain life force from animals, humans, and Kin by touch, at a rate of 5 SP per BT. This ability cannot be turned off, and the user will Drain life force from any creature he touches with the afflicted area of his skin. Draining via a Seed of Healing may have the following effects:

- The user will heal themselves as per the Drain Edge in *NIGHTLIFE* if they Drain humans or Kin.
- One exposure to radiation is removed per 10 SP Drained (after FIT and SP have been restored to maximum normal score).
- Lost limbs may be regrown, but several hundred SP would be required to do so.
- Diseases may be cured by Draining at least 20 SP over what is needed to restore FIT and SP to normal maximum score. Once this has been done, the user makes a FIT Roll. If it succeeds, the disease is cured, and the user rapidly returns to normal. For every 1 SP above twenty that is Drained, a -1 modifier is applied to the FIT Roll.

**Aftereffects:** None that are physical, but there is a 10% cumulative chance that the user will become addicted to the feeling of Draining with every use of the Seed of Healing, causing them to seek out the experience like a drug.

### **Seed of Pain**

**Cost:** 10 SP

**Duration:** 1 day

**Target:** One creature

**Escape Roll:** Against WILL for no effect

**Effect:** This Seed is light red in color, and may be crumbled into a fine dust. When breathed or ingested, the Seed causes blinding waves of pain. No physical damage is actually done. The pain is so intense that a WILL Roll must be made to perform any action, and even if this is a success, a +30 modifier is applied to all Skill and Edge Rolls.

**Aftereffects:** In humans, there is a chance that the Seed will cause nerve damage and recurrences of the pain, though to a lesser degree. During times of great stress (such as combat, hard work, etc.) a successful FIT Roll must be made. If this fails, the pain recurs for a period of 1-10 (1d10) hours. A successful WILL Roll will allow the victim to ignore the pain. If this fails, a +10 modifier must be added to all Skill and Edge Rolls.

### **Seed of Plenty**

**Cost:** 20 SP

**Duration:** 2 weeks

**Target:** 1 acre of ground

**Escape Roll:** None

**Effect:** The Seed of Plenty combines with the plants growing in the ground it is scattered on. Once it does so, it causes a fantastic increase in the growth rate, and the ability to grow with no light. The plants on the affected acre may be

harvested every two days, so 7 harvests are possible if the Seed is used soon after forcing. The amount of food produced will feed several hundred people for a month.

With the threat of starvation hanging over every community, it is difficult to resist joining the Brotherhood of Mother Earth, which promises unlimited food.

**Aftereffects:** Aftereffects are rare, but they do happen. Sometimes the Seed is passed on through the food that is harvested, and immature animals or humans experience growth spurts (say about a year's growth in one night).

### **Seed of Power**

**Cost:** 20 SP

**Duration:** 1 week

**Target:** One creature

**Escape Roll:** None

**Effect:** Once ingested, this green Seed will double the apparent FIT and STR of the user for a period of six hours. SP and HTH are increased by the appropriate amount, and the user also gets a -20 modifier on the use of hand-to-hand weapons.

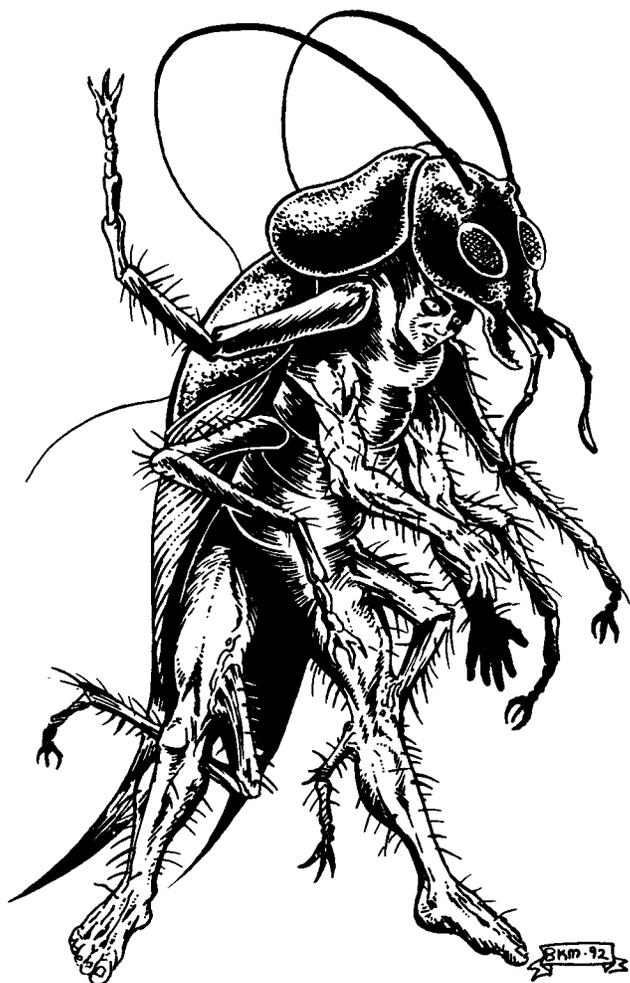
Please note that SP is artificially raised while this Seed is in effect, and the extra SP will disappear after the six hour period of Effect. If this causes the user to go below zero SP, they are unconscious and dying if they are human, and dead if they are Kin.

**Aftereffects:** There is a 10% cumulative chance that 1 FIT point will be lost after the six hour period of effect wears off.

# NEW RACES

**Note:** Unless stated otherwise, Skill and Edge Scores for the following races are assumed to be equal to 60.

## ROACHBOYS



**STR:** 80                   **PER:** 20  
**DEX:** 40                   **ATT:** 0  
**FIT:** 60                   **LUCK:** 20  
**INT:** 5                    **HTH:** 16  
**WILL:** 20                **SP:** 80

**Max Humanity:** 0

**Edges:** Armor (30), Claws (150), Nocturnal Vision, Poison Gas Attack, 3 Attacks per BT

**Flaws:** Substance Vulnerability (Fire triple normal damage), Compulsion to attack all creatures

**Humanity Damage Modifier:** n/a

**Skills:** Stealth, Tracking, Unarmed Combat, Rifle (20% chance), Pistol (20% chance)

**Description:** The Roachboy is one of the most dangerous new creatures to appear after the KinRise. It is a strange and disgusting mix of human and roach, thought to have somehow been brought about by supernatural energies combined with nuclear force.

Solitary and territorial, Roachboys appear to be giant roaches walking upright. Closer examination, however, reveals a human physiology interwoven with the gargantuan insectile being. A pale human face can be seen below the mandibles, its eyes wide with insane pain and rage. A pair of deceptively thin human arms are also visible, protruding from the front of the things bodies (these are incredibly strong despite their appearance and have the same STR as the other four arms). Human legs are an integral part of the Roachboy's powerful legs. In various other areas, patches of skin and other human body parts are evident.

The Roachboy has eight limbs. As well as four insectile arms equipped with claws, there are two human arms which may be capable of using a modern weapon. It also has two legs, which are a conglomeration of roach carapace and human flesh and bone.

There is a twenty percent chance that the Roachboy will have Rifle Skill. It is up to the CP to determine the type of weapon and amount of ammunition. It is the last remnants of human intelligence that grant the Roachboy the knowledge to use a weapon.

If hard pressed, the Roachboy will unleash its poison gas attack. The use of this Edge results in a release of vile internal gasses in an explosive roar.

The gas covers an area twenty feet in diameter, and anyone within the area of effect must make a successful FIT Roll or find themselves completely incapable of taking any action other than retching and staggering blindly about. Success of this Escape Roll is still not bliss, as the gas causes the eyes to smart and burn, and skin to blister. Characters must move at once from the area, if able. This Edge may only be used 2-3 times a day.

Eaten characters die the true death unless their remains can be retrieved within 10 hours (10% chance of finding remains each hour). After that time, the digestive juices will have destroyed them.

## HELLRATS

STR: 1                    PER: 40  
DEX: 5                    ATT: 0  
FIT: 5                    LUCK: 3  
INT: 3                    HTH: 0  
WILL: 6                   SP: 8

Max Humanity: n/a

Edges: Fiery Breath (30), Nocturnal Vision (90)

Flaws: Environmental Damage (Fire double Damage)

Humanity Damage Modifier: n/a

Skills: Bite (50) for 1 SP of Damage Potential

**Description:** Hellrats are mutant vermin, imbued with supernatural powers from their long dwelling within the depths of the Wormholes. They travel in packs of 3-30 (3d10) and are always hungering for a taste of flesh. They

do not know what fear is, and will attack relentlessly in waves, hurling themselves at their foes while biting and expelling their Fiery Breath. Hellrats are feared by travellers in the wormholes, and are the most commonly encountered creatures in those dank and humid tunnels.

Hellrats appear as oversized rats (some are nearly 30 inches from head to tip of tail) with dirty white and pale pink flesh. They are loud, chittering and squealing continually as they move in for the kill, making it impossible for them to surprise anyone.

Hellrats are occasionally domesticated by extremely brave (or, more likely, extremely stupid) Crawlies. Domesticated Hellrats can be commanded to attack by their Crawly masters, and will do so with the same ferocity as their feral cousins.



## VER-MEN

STR: 5                    PER: 50  
DEX: 15                   ATT: 10  
FIT: 10                   LUCK: 10  
INT: 10                   HTH: 1  
WILL: 15                   SP: 20

Max Humanity: 25

Edges: Nocturnal Vision (90), Animal Control (Rats), Ratform, Claws (40)

Flaws: Repulsion (bright lights)

Humanity Damage Modifier: n/a

Skills: Club, Unarmed Combat

**Description:** Ver-Men are a strange cross-breed of human and rat. They dwell in the dank and twisting tunnels of the upper Wormholes, and only extreme circumstances force them to come to the surface world.

Ver-Men hate all other races, and will do anything in their power to bring about the destruction of any other races that they meet. They will not talk to any other race, and will (depending on the strength of the Ver-Men in proportion to the strength of the opposition) ambush or attack any creatures they meet.

Ver-Men are usually encountered with a swarm of 5-50 rats about their feet. These rats will normally be ordered to attack by the Animal Control (rat) Edge to provide a distraction for the attacks of the Ver-Men. There are normally 1d10 Ver-Men present.

Ver-Men wear no armor and use large wooden clubs (Damage Potential: 12) in combat. If desperate, they will drop the clubs and attack with their claws. This usually occurs only if they have been cornered.

Ver-Men appear to be smallish humanoids (between 3 and 5 feet in height) with humped shoulders and rodent faces. They are covered in dingy fur that runs from light brown to black in color. They may also be encountered as a group of rats, who will usually get out of the way, only to attack later, when least expected.

## ATOMIC ZOMBIES



STR: 35  
DEX: 20  
FIT: 35  
INT: 5  
WILL: 5

PER: 20  
ATT: 15  
LUCK: 20  
HTH: 7  
SP: 55

**Max Humanity:** 0

**Edges:** Armor (10), Drain (life force)

**Flaws:** Substance Vulnerability (Fire, double normal damage), Command

**Humanity Damage Modifier:** +1-1 per 10

**Skills:** None

**Description:** Atomic Zombies were created when those who were killed in atomic blasts found that their souls could not pass on. While this was certainly not the case with every person who perished during the War, it did occur fairly often. Atomic Zombies creatures roam about aimlessly, hating all living things and doing their best to make sure that such beings are destroyed as soon as possible. They cannot be cured, or put to rest as it were, by spicy foods placed in their mouths. Their attacks are extremely dangerous to the Herd. Any successful attack by an Atomic Zombie on a herd causes 1 exposure of radiation to that herd. Kin despise the Atomic Zombies because they contaminate

the remaining humans, and most Kin will go out of their way to make sure Atomic Zombies get killed.

## CRAWLIES



STR: 15  
DEX: 35  
FIT: 30  
INT: 20  
WILL: 20

PER: 30  
ATT: 5  
LUCK: 20  
HTH: 3  
SP: 50

**Max Humanity:** 50

**Edges:** Nocturnal Vision, Necropathy

**Flaws:** Environmental Harm (bright lights 10 SP/BT), Mute

**Humanity Damage Modifier:** +1/-1 per 5 points

**Skills:** Stealth, Knife, Club, Knifemithing, Carving

**Description:** Crawlies are denizens of the Wormholes who have begun to make their way to the surface. They generally travel in packs of three or more.

Crawlies appear to be human, though bent, twisted humans that are nearly albino from the years they have spent deep beneath the surface of the Earth.

They are usually armed with beautifully ornate knives or expertly carved cudgels made from human thigh bones. The knives have a Damage Potential of 10 points, and the cudgels have a Damage Potential of 12 points.

Unable to speak to the living, these creatures roam the wasteland in search of the dead with which they can converse. This little impediment has skewed their concept of death slightly, and

## New Races

Crawlies have been known to kill folks just to have a conversation.

Most human communities are not sure how to respond to the Crawlies. Much of the time, the twisted little people are completely harmless. They spend their time digging up graves, which they always restore to their original condition after they talk to the occupant. Still, Crawlies have been known to commit heinous acts of violence, so they are usually chased away from communities.

## FUNGOIDS



**STR:** 40                      **PER:** 35  
**DEX:** 10                      **ATT:** 0  
**FIT:** 40                      **LUCK:** 20  
**INT:** 0                      **HTH:** 8  
**WILL:** 0                      **SP:** 60

**Max Humanity:** 0

**Edges:** Armor (10), Drain (Kin or Human SP), Infection

**Flaws:** Vulnerability to Fire (double damage), Environmental Damage, Running Water (10 SP/BT)

**Humanity Damage Modifier:** n/a

**Skills:** None

**Ability Modifiers:** STR (+20), DEX (-10), FIT (+20), INT (drops to zero), WILL (drops to zero), PER (+15), ATT (drops to zero)

**Description:** Fungoids have only begun appearing over the past few months, leading many of the Kin to theorize that they are not of supernatural origin. It is a commonly held belief that they are a batch of viral and fungal agents, re-

leased from a biological weapons cache during the War.

What is known about the fungoids is this: they are voracious and dangerous in the extreme.

Fungoids appear as a human, Kin, or animal with fibrous lumps sprouting from bodily orifices and slimy tendrils growing up from their skin. They walk with a clumsy, shambling gait and are incapable of speech. Fungoids are a hideous crossbreed of virus and fungus capable of taking control of their host body via the Infection Edge.

Fungoids encountered outside of a host body appear as a slimy mass of toadstools. When any being (human, animal, or Kin) approaches within 5 feet of one of these, it will burst, throwing spores into the air.

The CP must roll against the Fungoid's Infection Edge. Success means there is a chance that anyone within 5 feet of the bursting toadstool has been Infected. All potential victims are allowed an Escape Roll against FIT. If this roll fails, the terrible process of fungal infestation has begun.

Over the next twenty-four hours, the victim will lose all of his hair, sprout fungus from his flesh, and lose muscular coordination and intelligence. This process is so painful that the character will be unable to perform any actions for its duration. After twenty-four hours have passed, the character or animal is a fungoid, and all of the Ability Modifiers listed above are applied. Since fungoids are unintelligent (reacting only instinctively), they have no Skills.

The course of the infestation may be stopped by a successful Nine Eleven Spell. Medical attention (a successful Medical Skill Roll and a course of antibiotics) will also kill the Fungoid infestation. Ghosts may be Infested, but only in Corporeal Form.

Infected hosts attack blindly and feel no pain. They will Drain a victim to near death if possible, then infect them.

The Ability Scores given are for a human Fungoid. Animal or Kin Fungoids may be generated by applying the Ability Modifiers to the Abilities of the infested creature.

## NUCLEAR LARVAE



STR: 10                      PER: 20  
 DEX: 5                        ATT: 0  
 FIT: 15                      LUCK: 10  
 INT: 10                      HTH: 2  
 WILL: 5                      SP: 25

Max Humanity: 10

Edges: Drain (human or Kin life force), Fiery Breath, Flight, Possession

Flaws: Must inhabit a body (see below) or suffer 1 SP/day damage

Humanity Damage Modifier: +1/-1 per 10 points

Skills: Tracking, Stealth, Lying, Tailing

Description: Nuclear Larvae were created by the herd who were killed in the first wave of the nuclear assault. Not knowing that they were dead led these unfortunates into their new existence.

Nuclear Larvae appear to be eels with human heads and arms. They are small creatures, no more than twenty inches long, and quite ugly. Their faces resemble infants, wrinkled and lined as they cry out in pain. Their skin is a pasty white, mottled with sores and blisters, and their eyes are dead black, appearing almost sightless.

These creatures are never seen in groups of less than 5, and usually congregate in much larger packs of twenty or more. When encountered, their only purpose is to get into someone through the use of their Possession Edge. Up to five Nuclear Larvae can enter a single adult body, though this is not the preferred method of co-habitation.

Typical strategy for a Nuclear Larvae group is to fall on an unsuspecting victim, preferably a sleeping victim, and use their Possession Edge. Because they fly and are so small, Nuclear Larvae have very high Stealth Skill Scores that aid them in ambush.

Nuclear Larvae have a unique form of Possession. The very act of them being in a body is equal to an exposure of radiation (See the sucking Rads section of Chapter One for more information). Add one exposure for every Larvae Possessing a body after the first. Also, every Larvae in a host body will add 1 exposure per week of Possession. If five Larvae are in someone, that person is not going to last very long. This is also why Kin, who are immune to radiation, but not to the Possession Edge of the Nuclear Larvae, are such prized hosts. As a final note on the Larvae's unique form of Possession, all larvae inhabiting the body can add their attributes to the Possessed character's, making their host very powerful.

Larvae not in a host take 1 SP/damage per day. This makes it unlikely that anyone will ever encounter a Nuclear Larvae with full SP, so CPs should subtract 1d10 SP from each hostless Larva encountered.

## SKELETONS



STR: 30                      PER: 20  
 DEX: 25                      ATT: 0  
 FIT: 25                      LUCK: 30  
 INT: 10                      HTH: 6  
 WILL: 10                    SP: 55  
 Max Humanity: 10

## New Races

**Edges:** Claws, Drain (Kin or human flesh), Armor (10)

**Flaws:** Environmental Harm: Sunlight, 10 SP/BT. Substance Vulnerabilities: Fire, double damage; Heavy wooden clubs, double damage

**Humanity Damage Modifier:** n/a

**Skills:** Stealth, Tracking, Unarmed Combat

**Description:** Skeletons are the dead whose lust for life has brought them, at least partially, back to the world. Their existence is torment however, as they are lacking their flesh. After stripping a victim (through their Drain Edge), they affix the loose strips of flesh to their bony frames, creating a rather repulsive sight.

Skeletons jump right into combat, usually from an ambush position, and attack with their razor sharp talons. They are terrifying in battle, as they make no sound, and always seem to be smiling. Skeletons feel no pain and attack ruthlessly.

## WRAITHS

**STR:** 10

**DEX:** 25

**FIT:** 10

**INT:** 12

**WILL:** 20

**Max Humanity:** 0

**Edges:** Claws (30), Drain (50, life force of humans and Kin), Corporeality, Weapons Immunity

**Flaws:** Silver (double damage), Repulsion (silver)

**Humanity Damage Modifier:** n/a

**Skills:** Unarmed Combat (70)

**PER:** 15

**ATT:** 20

**LUCK:** 10

**HTH:** 2

**SP:** 20

**Description:** Wraiths are creatures from the Twisted Dimensions, and are thought by many to be the remnants of humans taken to the Twisted Dees by Demons. They normally appear as dust devils, spinning lazily about. They can assume Corporeal form, in which they have the appearance of hazy humans. They may still drain in their dust devil form.



Wraiths are intensely curious about human affairs and may follow a group for hours or even days before their hunger overcomes curiosity and they attempt to Drain their target's life force. They usually attempt to do this as the target sleeps, and prefer to do so in Corporeal form, allowing them to use their claws if necessary. They are vulnerable to silver weapons, and this is common knowledge among the Kin.

# ECONOMICS

Money is an obsolete concept within the KinRise world. The government, which had instituted such ideas as a gold standard and credit, was gone, blown to smoke and ashes along with most everything else.

Barter is the name of the game now, your goods for mine, your services for my goods, your goods for my services. In a way, it isn't so bad. There are very few rich people, and by comparison, there are very few poor. The economic wave of the Old America is flatlined, replaced by the static situation which exists now.

So, how do you get what you want? Easy. You find someone with something that you want, and give him something that he wants.

Which, really, is every bit as simple (and every bit as complex) as it sounds.

See, standards are different everywhere you go. A rural town that has been favored by the Sidhe might be practically giving food away for a few guns, but a whole truckload of automatic weapons couldn't buy you a loaf of bread in a scavvy camp on the fringe of Nuke York City. It's all relative.

So how does an enterprising CP go about making sure that he isn't shafting his players by making them pay too much for items?

You can't, and you shouldn't try. What you should be doing is making sure that you are consistent. What this means is knowing something about how much the herd in your campaign area value different items.

For instance: In Dogtown, food is relatively plentiful (owing to the mushrooms that they

grow, as well as a small group of Sidhe who aid them in farming), though industrial items are rare. Dogtowners aren't going to value food as much as they will the items of a now defunct civilization. By the same token, the Ozarks people had plenty of guns before the war, and aren't real interested in having more now. However, they are pretty low on ammunition, and would probably cough up some good stuff for a few hundred shotgun shells.

This doesn't take long to work out. Just think a little about the different communities that your players are going to be travelling through, and work out the simple facts of life

Which isn't to say that you can't change things whenever you feel like. Just make sure there is a logical reason for the change.

One thing can cause rapid fluctuations in economics, and that is the Gypsies. About 50% of all communities are on the so-called Gypsy Road. This means that the Gypsies pass through for trading about once a month, sometimes a little more often, sometimes a little less. These villages are a bit more self-sufficient than those communities that do not trade with the Gypsies. Their regular trading has offered them a wider variety of goods and services.

While the Gypsies are good, expanding the trade and bringing back important social concepts such as credit, they are also bad. They can, at a whim, crush a village, simply by never trading there again.

# MO' SLANG

**Badlands:** Areas where scavvy gangs roam.

**Big Mama:** Derogatory term for Mother Earth.

**Biotech:** The improvements made to a body by the process of bioversion.

**Bioversion:** Process where the body is warped with genetic material from the Twisted Dimensions.

**Biovert:** A person who has undergone Bioversion. Mostly used by the Brotherhood of Mother Earth, though it is being picked up as a derogatory term by others.

**Bugs:** Roachboys.

**Burnout:** Someone who dies of radiation sickness. Burning Out means dying of radiation sickness.

**Chasms:** Fissures in the earth that lead to the Wormholes. Sources of heat.

**Clean Meat:** Herd that are free of radiation and safe to feed on.

**Genny:** Electrical generator.

**Glow:** The aura of an irradiated herd, or simply radiation.

**Glowing:** Radioactive. Used mainly by Kin, since only they can see the aura of irradiated creatures. May also apply to objects or areas.

**Guard Dog:** Also known as Watchdog. Complex term for a Kin who protects a herd community.

**Hot Blooded:** Contaminated herd or Kin.

**Jips:** Derogatory term for Gypsies.

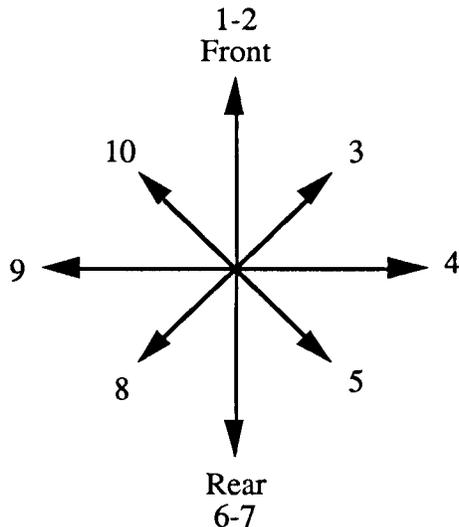
**Keeps:** Self-contained bomb shelters built by the Complex before the Spasm War.

*Turn to page 93 for Even Mo' Slang*

# ENCOUNTER TABLES

## DISTANCE AND DIRECTION OF ENCOUNTERS

The distance of a random encounter is d00 feet in a city, and d00 yards in the wilderness. Direction is determined by rolling 1d10 and referencing the diagram below.



The asterisk represents the character, or a group of characters, facing north. Thus a 1,2 means that the encounter is approaching from directly ahead, or north, and a 6,7 is from directly behind, or south.

Characters have a chance to notice an encounter before it gets to them, and thus have a chance to avoid many encounters altogether. When an encounter is about to occur, each character makes a PER Roll.

A successful roll indicates that a particular character is aware that something is approaching and may take steps to avoid being seen (such as using the Stealth Skill or altering one's course to avoid combat).

The creature about to be encountered also gets a PER Roll to notice the party. If the encountered being also succeeds, the party has been noticed as well. In either case, if one party's PER Roll succeeds and the other's fails, the successful group may attempt to gain surprise on the side who failed.

If both groups see each other, then they may act accordingly, trying to close to combat range, or avoid each other. CPs should use common sense and the information on the random encounter tables when judging the actions of a specific encounter.

**Example:** The CP determines that, while travelling through the ruins of New York, the characters have an encounter. The d00 roll was 83, which indicates an encounter with some of Mother Earth's Advocates. For distance, he rolls 53 feet, and direction is 4 (which indicates that the Advocates are 53 feet off to the groups right).

The PCs are successful in their first PER Roll. They now have the option of hiding, running, closing to combat range, or whatever they want to do. If the Advocates also succeed, both parties are aware of the other's existence. There is the chance that the Advocates will see the characters before the characters are aware of them, and set up an ambush.

## CITY ENCOUNTERS

As you can see from the table below, hanging out for any length of time in a city is bad for your health. Far better to just do what you have to do, and get out. Remember that these cities have been trashed beyond all comprehension by Nuclear War, and that the buildings are in extremely poor shape (see the short piece of fiction preceding the Introduction for a description of just one of these cities). It is likely that floors and ceilings will collapse, imperiling the characters, and even the roads themselves are prone to crumbling, dumping unsuspecting Kin into the sewers. Just keep in mind how dangerous the cities are and do your best to keep the players on their toes.

The random table is just a tool. Only use it if the plot is dragging and you need something to spice it up a bit. Keep in mind that the table can be deadly. Random encounters should always be secondary to the story at hand, so disregard them if they will seriously alter the flow of a scenario.

Roll a d00 and consult the table below for city encounters.

### 01-30 Nothing

This city is currently as dead as it appears to be. Still, whenever you roll this result, have the party notice some strange sound they hadn't heard before (echoes of their own footsteps are GREAT tension builders), or do have a rat or other innocuous critter spook them. Cities are scary places. Make sure the players realize that.

### 31-40 Irradiated Herd

A lone, crazed herd wanders up to the party. It is obvious that he is dying of radiation sickness and that the end is at hand. To make the characters' day a little more difficult, the herd begins following them, ranting and raving and crying at the top of his lungs. His words are mostly nonsensical, but he can be used as a plot device to impart vital (or bogus) information to the characters. If he keeps making all kinds of noise, he's bound to attract some sort of nasty, sooner or later.

### 41-50 Cave-in

A piece of building collapses, or the ground crumbles under the group. All characters must attempt to make an Escape Roll against DEX or be crushed (or swallowed up). Those who fail their roll take 2d10 damage, and must be extricated from the wreckage or the hole. If the ground crumbles, there's no telling what might be down there.

### 51-55 Advocates

A group of Mother Earth's Advocates show up, all of them are at least of the Third Circle, and are armed for bear. They are in search of a generator (or any other item the players may have already found!) and will kill anyone who gets in their way. See the section on The Brotherhood of Mother Earth later on for details on the Advocates. There will be up to two Advocates for each Kin present.

### 56-60 Complex Seekers

A group of Complex Seekers (only at half strength) run across the group. There are two for each Kin present, though all are wounded to half their SP. Still, they have a few powerful weapons among them, and are more than willing to use them.

### 61-65 Rogue Kin

A group of rogue Kin, roughly resembling the party, decides to rough the characters up. These Kin may be talked out of their fighting mode, but will do nothing to aid the party and may (35% chance) stalk the party until a later time, when they will attack again.

### 66-70 Sidhe

A number of Sidhe (1 for every character present) approaches the party. They are not necessarily looking for trouble, but will ask the characters to help them with some task (normally a job that only another Sidhe could

understand the reason for completing). If the players agree to help the Sidhe, all is well, and the Sidhe will even throw in a gift of their Cleansing Seeds (enough for 3 acres to be seeded) for the players' efforts. If the party refused to aid the Sidhe, they will depart. They will attempt to follow the characters and wreak havoc on them at a later date (usually taking potshots at the characters with their bows or using their magical capabilities and Edges to make life hard for the characters).

### 71-75 Fungoids!

That's right, groaning, hissing, slumping, slithering fungoids comin' this a-way. There are two fungoids per character (which type of fungoid is up to the CP, though dog or man fungoids are suggested) and they are hungry. See the Fungoid description in the New Races section of the Kin chapter for more information on fungoid attitudes and how to deal with them.

### 76-80 Hellrats

Hellrats—and a lot of them. See the New Races section of the Kin chapter for information concerning Hellrats. There are 1-5 (1d10+2) Hellrats for every character present. They are extremely vicious, and there is a 10% chance that any one of them is carrying the dreaded *Mycobacterium vrykolacis* (Nerve Rot) in its system.

### 81-85 Advocates

More of Mother Earth's buddies. There are up to 3 Advocates for every character present. They are currently on the lookout for one of their boss's escaped projects and are not at all happy to see the characters. These Adepts are all of the fourth Circle and have Seed and biotech. Their exact abilities and possessions are left to the CP's discretion.

### 86-90 Complex Goons

This time, though, they have their full SP total, and they have just uncovered a decent cache of weapons (1d10 long knives, 1d10 crossbows, up to 4 shotguns and up to 3 Uzis). There is no ammo here, however, so the Complexers can't readily use the weapons at hand. There is one goon for each and every character present, and these are equipped with a standard Seeker kit (see the Complex section of the Kin Chapter for more information on this). They have the advantage of being able to fire from under cover, and of being hidden somewhat in the dark (the cache they discovered happens to

## *Encounter Tables*

be in an abandoned garage). They are paranoid, and the characters probably would not have noticed them at all if the Complexers hadn't been so sure that the characters had been following them and were after their stuff. This little nagging worry caused the Complex Kin to start blazing away at the characters, thus revealing their hiding place.

### **91 Gang of Trolles**

There are three of these ugly brutes, each armed with a shotgun. They have claimed this particular section of the city as their own, and are not at all pleased to see the characters. This scene does not have to end in a bloody confrontation (which the characters would probably lose) as the Trolles can be talked out of fighting if the characters cough up a good weapon or two. This is what they consider to be the toll for passing through their turf. As long as the characters pay up, no sweat. Otherwise, start rolling initiative dice.

### **92 Nuclear Larvae**

A group of manifested Nuclear Larvae. Note that these critters are not currently inhabiting a host and are desperate to get into one. All Kin are in danger from these beasts and should try to escape from them. Unless you don't mind having a conglomerate of deranged souls taking control of your body and eventually wearing it out.

### **93 Skinthieves**

Just what you didn't want to see. Skinthieves, coming for you. There is one Skinthief present for each character, though there are many more waiting in the shadows. In addition to those present, there are 1d10 others eager to try their hand at claiming a new skin. For each of the original thieves that falls in battle, one reinforcement will enter the fray.

### **94 Gypsies**

A group of envirosuited Gypsies. While they don't want any trouble from the Kin (they KNOW what will happen if you mess with the Kin) they are eager to do a little trading. Assume that they have several weapons on them for trade, and possibly even one or two tech items. They will trade these for more and different weapons or gadgets, or magical supplies of any kind. They are also information brokers and may be able to tell the characters where to find the item they are looking for (40% chance of correct info, though they will always tell the characters

something!). As a side note, there will be 2d10 Gypsies present, all uncontaminated by virtue of their suits.

### **95 Target Alpha**

A Target Alpha Reclamation team, complete with all the equipment and personnel for a Field squad (see the Alpha Section of the Herd chapter for more information). They know the characters are Kin and give them the standard options: join us or die. Not a pleasant choice, and a firefight of some sort is bound to ensue. When the encounter begins, there are 1d10 agents in sight. The rest of the squad is elsewhere. There is a 30% chance that this is an ambush laid ahead of time, in which case the other members of the squad have placed themselves in strategic locations around the ambush sight. Otherwise, they are some distance off, and will only be able to join the battle after 1d10 BT. If, that is, the agents present manage to radio out. Otherwise it will be twice that long before the gunshots and screams draw them into the fray.

### **96 Zipperheads**

One and a half for every character present (round down). They are hungry, and the only way out for the characters is to run or fight.

### **97 Suckers**

Two per character present, three if the conflict occurs underground.

### **98 Tapefaces**

Three per character present. No way out of this one except to fight.

### **99 Roachboy**

This wild Roachboy is on the rampage and looking for food. He will launch himself out of the nearest convenient doorway as the characters draw near, attempting to get surprise. He will attack with both pincers first, using their length to keep distance between himself and his opponents. Once he has a Kin successfully within his grasp, he will draw it near in order to bite it. If the fight is going particularly poorly for the Roachboy, it will use its Poison Gas attack, then try to escape.

### **00 Examiners**

Some of Mother Earth's Examiners. This is bad news. So bad, in fact, that you may want to think twice about springing this particular random encounter on players. Then again, maybe not. At the least there is one Examiner for every

two characters present. They are heavily biotech'd and carry a number of forced Seed, probably including Seed of Fire. They will allow the Player Characters a chance to join the Brotherhood of Mother Earth. If the Kin do not see the wisdom inherent in this, the Examiners attack.

## BADLAND ENCOUNTERS

Roll a d00 and consult the following table for badland encounters.

### 01-30 No encounter

The wastelands seems quiet as a gigantic graveyard. Still, there are sounds that reverberate throughout the artificial night (was that the sound of your own footsteps, or the subtle whisper of a Roachboy's approach?). Keep the players guessing and don't let anybody get too complacent. This is a dangerous place to be—make it seem that way.

### 31-40 Skeletons

A group of skeletons. There are 1d10 approaching. They are armed as indicated in the New Races section of the Kin Chapter. Like all of their kind, they are mindlessly hunting the flesh that they need to cover their bones.

### 41-45 Atomic Zombies

Spontaneously created by the destruction of so many of the Herd at one time, these walking dead are hungering for the taste of flesh. They, like skeletons, have no concept of tactics, and use weapons very poorly. But there are a lot of them. 1d10+4 are present.

### 46-50 Gobllyne raiders!

There are 1d10 of the critters, armed with shotguns and knives. They will do their best to attack from hidden areas, and to stay away from direct confrontation. After all, going hand to hand with more powerful Kin isn't their idea of a lot of fun. This could be a harassment encounter, wherein the Gobllynes taunt and heckle the party, but do little actual damage. An excellent way to get a party to waste time and energy is to have the Gobllynes so irritate the character that they go on a wild goose chase through the hills. This can also lead to some rather unpleasant encounters with the Gobllynes' newfound friends, the Guteaters.

### 51-60 Gypsy Band

This group of brightly dressed travellers is a welcome sight. As traders extraordinaire, they are at least somewhat likely to have any one item that the players are currently looking for. This ranges from a 10% to 30% chance, depending on how rare the item is, and on how finding it too soon could screw up the CP's plans for the adventure.

### 61-65 Scavenger Gang Outrunners

There are two of the outrunners for every one of the characters. They are armed with a variety of small arms and the leader has an Uzi for quick disposal of enemies. Unfortunately for him, this Uzi has only twenty-one shots in its magazine. The outrunners believe themselves to be far tougher than they actually are, and thus will spend a fair amount of time bragging and taunting the players. They are not afraid to fight, at least until they start getting killed. If more than half of their number is slain, they will leave as quickly as possible, doing anything in their power to aid their escape.

### 66-70 Sidhe Seeding Party

This party is equipped exactly as described in the Sidhe section of the Kin Chapter. They will not harm or otherwise obstruct the party, though they will expect the characters to help them seed the land for one hour. If the characters refuse, the Sidhe will put a minor hex on them, as detailed in the Sidhe Magic Section.

### 71-75 Kikulaluits

There is one Kiky for every one character present. They are not looking for a fight, but are looking for food for the Herd they keep for feeding. If the characters are foolish enough to show that they do have food, the Kikys will not hesitate to start fighting. The Kikys are armed with crowbars (cold iron, of course) and the leader is in possession of a shotgun with six shots. This weapon will only be used if at least a third of the Kikys have been downed, at which time the leader will start blazing away like crazy. These are desperate Kin, and are not likely to respond kindly to attempts to talk them out of fighting. Give them the food, and all will go well, if not....well, we gave you a choice, pal.

### 76-80 Nakani

What is that sound? Is it the whistling of the wind across the wasteland? Or is it Nakani? Actually, there is a fifty-fifty chance of it being either one, thus making this encounter a good

one for keeping players on their toes. While the Nakani will not directly harm the Player Characters, they will attempt to Dominate one member of the party, and then use this character as a tool with which to attack humans. This has the dual effect of killing humans, and of making a human lover appear to be some terrible monster. This, they hope, will alienate the Dominated Kin enough for him to join them in their gleeful destruction of humanity. Remember that Kin get a -50 modifier against the Dominate Edge Escape Roll.

### **81-85 Gang of Toxxixx**

There are two Toxxixx for each of the Kin present, and they are not happy. The nuclear war has left them more than a bit crazed, and they will attack anyone they meet on sight. They are not, however, stupid and will approach the party as friends hoping to catch them off guard. They are likely to attack any time the group is unwary, or when confronted by a more powerful foe (which they will ally themselves with.) They may travel with the party for several days before revealing their true nature. Such revelations always come at the worst times.

### **86-91 Crawlies**

Mutants that aren't amused to see the party, and feel that it's their duty to the remnants of society to make sure the characters cease drawing breath, with all due haste. There are three Crawlies per character and each is armed with one of their special knives. There is the standard 10% chance of a crawly possessing one Spell, ready to cast, but no more than one out of three will have Spells.

### **92 Wraiths**

Small dust devils appear some distance from the characters, whistling faintly. These are Wraiths, curiously checking out the characters from a safe distance. As always, this curiosity quickly turns to hunger. The wraiths manifest at the end of the day that the dust devils are spotted, observing the characters more closely with their Mistform. This will last for several hours, during which the wraiths will make no hostile actions against the characters. If the wraiths are not dispersed before the characters bed down for the night, however, they will attempt to feed on the characters. They will not become corporeal, either, preferring to attack while immaterial.

### **93 Withered Men**

For every character in the party, two Withered Men appear, wandering toward the party, a soft moan on their lips. They will attack without hesitation, seeking weapons and herd prey.

### **94 Gang of Magadons**

There is one Magadon for every character present, and they are armed with baseball bats and .38 Specials (6 shots loaded, and 6 more in a quick loader). They're interested in a fight more than anything, though if the party can point the Mags in the direction of easier pickings, the gang might be persuaded to leave the characters alone. Or not. If the characters can come up with a suitably exciting job to do (Hey, come with us, we're on our way to ambush some Alphas), there is a 60% chance that the gang will join up with the characters for the duration of the job (though there could be some ugliness over the division of the spoils!).

### **95-96 Recruits**

A group of new recruits for Mother Earth. They have no Seed or biotech, but beneath their robes each carries a sWitchblade and some of them have shotguns loaded up with silver slugs. There are 3d10 of them, minimum of 6. The recruits will let the Player Characters join them if they don't recognize the PCs as Kin (depends on situation). The presence of so many of the herd (and, it seems, all clean of rads), should pique the characters' interest. If they join the recruits, they will be subjected to hours of exposition on the virtues of Mother Earth, and constant attempts to recruit them into the Brotherhood of Mother Earth. There is a 10% cumulative chance per day of travel that the recruits will meet a band of Masters or Examiners, who will probably be able to spot Kin immediately. This should lead to an interesting interlude of combat.

### **97 Exiles**

2d10 exiles. These poor humans are underfed, unwashed, and stark raving mad. They have been thrown out of every community they approach, and now view everyone as enemies. They are afflicted with Nerve Rot as well, and are just plain dangerous. There is a 17% chance of a Kin catching Nerve Rot from casual contact, and a 93% chance of catching the disease if a Kin Drains one of these unfortunates. Use the gang member description from NightLife, but double SP (crazy people can take a lot more damage than normal folks). They are armed with

butcher knives, and will attack relentlessly, with the animal ferocity of the truly insane.

### 98 Reconstructionists

A fully outfitted group of Target Alpha Reconstructionists have appeared. No one needs to tell you what they do to Kin they find.

### 99 Roachboys

Three immature Roachboys (only 2 attacks) have just entered the scene. Not known for witty repartee, these ugly monsters are about to attempt to make mincemeat out of the characters.

### 00 Stalkers

The Complex's best have come out to play today. CPs may set any number of Stalkers to make the fight challenging.

## EVEN MO' SLANG

**KinBane:** Also known as RadGold. Irradiated gold that causes Kin within 10 feet to suffer the effects of a radiation exposure.

**KinBin:** Settlement populated mostly by Kin.

**KinRise:** The time following the Spasm War when the rays of the sun are blocked by atmospheric dust, and the Kin may walk by day.

**Mama's Boys:** Derogatory term for the Followers of Mother Earth. Used by herd and Kin alike.

**Meat Locker:** Commune term for a Complex Keep.

**Nature Boys:** Derogatory term for the Sidhe. Most of them don't get the joke.

**Nuke York City:** New York City after its bombing.

**RadGold:** Also known as KinBane. Irradiated gold that causes Kin within 10 feet to suffer the effects of a radiation exposure.

**'Rise:** Short for KinRise.

**Roach Motel:** The lair of a Roachboy.

**Roachmeat:** Victim or soon to be victim of a Roachboy, or someone who has died and been left in the Badlands.

**Rock Pile:** Deserted city, but one that is not radioactive.

**Samantha:** A Witch living in a herd community. May apply to either male or female.

**Scavvy:** Scavenger gang or member of a scavenger gang.

**Sheep:** Complex term for herd they have captured and brought to a Keep. Considered more derogatory than the term "herd."

**Shell:** Term for a member of the Army of New America. Derived from the rounded full-face helmets worn by such people.

**Shill:** Person who enters a community to spy on its defenses, and usually stays to betray the community when an attack is made.

**Skivvy:** Derogatory term for a scavvy or scavvy gang. Derived from the fact that most scavvies are dressed in rags.

**Slagheap:** Bombed city.

**Slaughterhouse:** Saint Louis.

**Slugs:** Nuclear Larvae.

**Soyfood:** Product of hydroponically grown soybeans or algae. Also known as Soy meat or FakeFood.

**Squat:** Temporary encampment of herd.

**Squatter:** A herd who is not part of a permanent community, but is also not part of a scavvy gang. Tend to band together for protection.

**Sucking Rads:** Being exposed to radiation (when referring to a herd), or feeding on irradiated humans or animals.

**Sunblock:** Kin term for the layer of dust trapped high in the atmosphere that blocks the sun's rays.

**Watchdog:** Also known as Guard Dog. Complex term for a Kin who protects a herd community.

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# KINRISE

THE KIN DURING NUCLEAR WINTER • THE FALL OF A NEW NIGHT  
• WITCHES AND COVENS • CEREMONIAL MAGIC • NEW SPELLS •  
• THE SIDHE • SIDHE CULTURE AND MAGIC •  
• NEW ENEMIES • NEW GANGS • NEW RACES • NEW NPC'S •

LIVE FAST  
PLAY A VAMPYRE

LIVE FREE  
PLAY A WEREWOLF

LIVE FOREVER  
PLAY A SORCERER

*"WHO ARE WE!" Stringer screamed to be heard over the wind, his voice a roar.*

*"GUTEATERS!" A hundred voices replied, and a hundred pairs of hands slammed together. Bloodlust raged in the gangers' veins, their thirst for destruction a palpable force.*

*"AND WHAT DO WE WANT?"*

*"TO KILL TO LIVE!"*

*"DO IT!" As one, the gang exploded into action, following their leader down the steep hill toward their target. A small village huddled next to the banks of the swollen river awaited their charge. The herd there knew they had little chance. Even if they managed to repel this wave, the scabby's survivors would just go for reinforcements. In a few days it would start all over again. They braced themselves for the attack.*

*Unknown to the herd, they had help from other sources. Hidden in the upper floors of a dilapidated building, a group of Kin had come to view this little place as their own.*

*"How many, Opal?"*

*The Rakshasa turned away from the window and loaded her rifle as she spoke. "Probably more than a hundred. Guteaters, from the looks of their banners."*

*"Great, just great." The Sorcerer, Bone by name, began deciding which of his Spells would be most effective. In the corner a Daemon growled its irritation, and the Sorcerer sneered. "You'll get your chance to spill some blood, soon enough."*

*A pair of twin Wyghts grinned wickedly. Their garb was completely concealing; filtermask, goggles and tight-fitting leathers that covered them from throat to toes. They worked the actions on their Uzis and prepared to leave. "We're goin' down. Wanna be there when the action starts."*

*"Just stay out of sight. We don't need folks knowing we're here." That from Leech, the Vampyre. He changed into a bat and split, heading for the rear of the warband.*

*"Let's go, Bone, it's party time."*

0340

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Role Playing Games and Accessories