



AOP2003 \* \$19.95 \* AN ATOMIC OVERMIND BOOK

# THE DAY AFTER RAGNAROK



**A SAVAGE SETTING BY KENNETH HITE**

**K**now, O Prince, that between the years when the Serpent fell and the oceans drank America and the gleaming cities, and the rise of the Sons of Space, there was an Age undreamed of, when nations guttered low and flared brilliant across the poisoned world like dying stars—California and Texas each claiming the flag of the West, France torn asunder and facing the desert, harsh Mexico, slumbering Brazil, Argentina where the seeds of Thule lay waiting, ancient lands of Persia and Arabia and Iraq between two empires, the coldly clutching Soviet Union whispering behind its Wall of Serpent, Japan whose warriors wore steel and silk and khaki. But the proudest kingdom of the world was Australia, the last green and pleasant land, ringed around by its dominions and bulwarked by the sea...



**W**elcome to the world at the end of the world. The skies are shrouded with burning, oily smoke, the Earth groans under a poisoned corpse, and the only way out may be deeper into the belly of the beast. It's a world nearly killed by the death of wonder, although far from all the wonders are dead. Put the "grim" back in "grime" and see the world outside the smeared Perspex windscreen.

*See it smolder. See it burn. See if you can save it.*



**Dedicated to Jess Nevins,  
Two-Fisted Scholar.**

# THE DAY AFTER RAGNAROK

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**Special thanks to Andrew Linstrom's eagle eyes, and Clint Black's keen insight.**

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## The Eye of Jörmungandr

The baleful looking symbol at right is the Eye of Jörmungandr. This symbol indicates which monsters and NPCs presented in *The Day After Ragnarok* are Wild Cards. Some monsters have boss versions (such as the Dero Leader or the 80-foot Giant Snake) that are also Wild Cards, but don't have the Eye of Jörmungandr there to show the way.





# Serpentfall

*"The Nazi myth which is important ... [to] men like Hitler requires a Götterdämmerung..."*

— U.S. WAR DEPARTMENT COUNTERINTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT, FEB. 12, 1945

Patton's death in September didn't do it, although the wilder-eyed addicts in the Wewelsburg basement claimed that Skorzeny's "Operation Walküre" had changed things, that the American general was "the rope of the Norns," somehow tied to past and future in a way that others weren't. His breaking, they swore, signaled the new Twilight. But the Bulge ground to a halt in sight of the Moselle, and Montgomery slowly pushed the Wehrmacht back across the Ardennes. Not to worry, swore the Ahnenerbe men, sweating out the amphetamines and stinking of extinct herbs pulled from Finnish bogs. The Norns' rope was broken. Things would be different.

Montgomery swept into Lübeck, and Bradley's armor growled closer to Nuremberg, and Zhukov smashed across the Oder, and the sun of July rose over a prostrate Reich. Wagner's *Götterdämmerung* played on Berlin Radio night and day, and the smoke blotted out the stars. And then it happened; the whole world heard the howl of Garm, and the moon was eclipsed in blood. The head of Jörmungandr, the Midgard Serpent, 350 miles across, breached the surface of the Arabian Sea

and rose up into the troposphere. Its first lunge destroyed three troop convoys and their escort carriers, swallowed in one bite 100 miles south of the Azores. A coil of the Serpent now stretched across Africa from Mogadishu to Morocco.

When the head reared up again off Vigo Bay, it gulped down the U.S.S. Essex and TF 24, and paused to splinter a few hundred thousand tons of shipping. President Truman gave the go-ahead, and a lone B-29 took off from Iceland. Its original target had been Berlin, but Captain Joseph Westover had new orders. He, and the crew of the

## Das Ahnenerbe

Waischenfeld-Bayerath am 22. September 1944.

### Der Reichsmanager

*Leute leben glücklich im Gegenwart und in der Zukunft, solange sie ihren Vorgesetzten und den Göttern ihrer Vorfahren brav sind*

HIGHLY SECRET

TO: Heinrich Himmler  
Reichsführer-SS  
RE: FALL RAGNAROK

1. At last, Weisthor has spoken! Sturmabführer Skorzeny's success in UNTERNEHMEN WALKÜRE has, as promised, "severed the rope of the Norns." With the death of the American General Patton, Weisthor says, "a world-branch is broken, and our Midgard now swings loose, fruit falling through the World-Tree for us to catch." I report his exact words as you requested. The full transcript of his trance-prophecy is attached to this report.
2. FALL RAGNAROK can now go forward on a basis of potential success, as the prerequisites are complete:

- a. The tests at Dachau have produced the correct formulation of amphetamines for the Sleepless Rite.
- b. Reich botanists have successfully cultivated the necessary Pleistocene bog-herbs from the samples harvested in Finland.
- c. The deciphered texts from Gothland-Ukraine offer the correct poetic structure for the Seers to work within. All Ahnenerbe resources will now be dedicated to translating the Edda into this new structure.

Dosed with the correct herbal mixture, Sleepless Seers will continuously incant in parallel, each working from a separate translation to ensure redundancy of effect.

3. If the Reich can hold out until Midsommer 1945, I as Reichsmanager Ahnenerbe promise to you the awakening of Garm, Jörmungandr, and Fenrir, and consequently the unstoppable beginning of Ragnarök. The Jotunn will destroy the Bolsheviks from the North, and the Svartalfr will emerge from Nidhavelir to bedevil the Americans in the South. The Aryan race will rule the new-made world forever, as the restored Vanir.

Heil Hitler!

*W. Sievers*  
WOLFRAM SIEVERS  
Standartenführer-SS  
Reichsmanager Ahnenerbe



Forschungs- und Lehrgemeinschaft des Ahnenerbe e.V.



*Strange Cargo*, were to seek out and engage the Midgard Serpent with the Trinity Device. On July 21, 1945, spotter planes for "Operation John Henry" zeroed the *Strange Cargo* in on the Serpent, its head 20,000 feet above Oslo and moving southeast at 80 knots. Captain Westover was an ace pilot, capable of flying a plane through something much smaller than a snake's pupil 500 yards across. The Device detonated, tearing a piece of the Sun down from heaven and destroying the Serpent's brain in a torrent of atomic fire. Westover and his crew died instantly. Jörmungandr took a little bit longer than that.

## THE SERPENT DIES

The polar vortex drove strong high easterlies that day, and a plume of radioactive venom hit the upper atmosphere and headed west. It slowly fell out of the sky into clouds and storms, twisters and waterspouts, all headed west. Dark crimson rain fell from Dublin to Denver. Where it struck, the seas boiled and the earth drank poison. And things engendered, mutated horrors born of dragon's blood and broken strontium atoms. Some coiled down to the sea's depths; others clumped together and pulled apart ships. Some climbed or flopped or skittered or slunk from swamps and sewers and gutters and ponds and everywhere else rain ran in eastern North America. And some people and beasts drank from those pools and reservoirs before they knew, and some people's blood changed and they knew it not. Or at least not yet.

But it hardly mattered, not at first, because the fall of the Serpent's body back into the Atlantic sent up a wall of water a hundred miles high that smashed into the coast from Halifax to Havana. New York, Washington, Boston, Charleston, Philadelphia, Miami (and poor low-sunk New Orleans) all drowned. Montreal and Cleveland and Chicago, and Veracruz and Houston and Caracas, were merely battered. Salt water, flecked with venomous foam, lapped against the Appalachians.

The Serpent's head, its skull cored out by nuclear flame, kept moving toward Nuremberg where

WAR DEPARTMENT  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

20 July 1945

TO: General Carl Spaatz  
Commanding General  
United States Army Strategic Air Forces

RE: OPERATION JOHN HENRY

1. The 509 Composite Group, 20th Air Force will deliver its first special bomb as soon as reliable visual intelligence is available on its target: the so-called "Midgard Serpent." To carry military and civilian scientific personnel from the War Department to observe and record the effects of the explosion of the bomb, additional aircraft will accompany the airplane carrying the bomb. The observing planes will stay several miles distant from the point of delivery of the bomb.

2. Additional bombs will be held in readiness pending analysis of OPERATION JOHN HENRY as soon as made ready by the Project staff. Further instructions will be issued concerning targets other than the one listed above.

3. Discussion of any and all information concerning the use of the weapon is reserved to the Secretary of War and the President of the United States. No communiques on the subject or releases of information will be issued by Commanders in the field without specific prior authority. Any news stories will be sent to the War Department for specific clearance.

4. The foregoing directive is issued to you by direction and with the approval of the Secretary of War and of the Chief of Staff, US Army. It is desired that you personally deliver one copy of this directive to General Eisenhower and one copy to Admiral King for their information.

*Thos T. Handy*  
THOS. T. HANDY  
General, G.S.C.  
Acting Chief of Staff

cc: General Leslie Groves

it had been Called, but its dead muscles overshot their mark. The head finally crashed to earth in Egypt—or rather, *on* Egypt. Its body followed it down, thunderously settling across Europe in a 300-mile wide swath from Scotland to Sicily, and setting off earthquakes 100 miles on both sides of its fallen body. England, the Low Countries, western Germany and Austria, the boot of Italy, coastal Yugoslavia, southern Greece all vaporized beneath the monster's coil. Wales was not obliterated, a stretch of western France and Savoy could see the sun, Spain survived. (The other side of the tsunami battered Portugal.) Most of the armies of the Western Allies, and millions of those they had come to liberate, died, smashed beneath the scales. The coil across Africa had also come down hard, mostly in the Sahara, although Ethiopia had little chance to enjoy its hard-won independence. Reptilian flesh blocked the Mediterranean Sea and the Suez Canal. The earth trembled, cities around the world toppled and burned. Smoke filled the air. Snow fell in August.

## THE GIANTS REVIVE

---

The shock resounded around the world, but nowhere more than in the icy depths of the Caucasus Mountains. These peaks that Hitler tried to reach in 1942 (on what advice, learned from what unknown insects' mead?) held the bound giant who had betrayed the gods. Hitler would call him Loge or Loki, the Eton-and-Oxford lads would have known he was Prometheus, but to the Ossetians of the valleys he was Nasren, greatest of the Narts, the giants at the dawn of the world. The thunder of the Serpent's fall shook him loose from his icy chains and he slid down the mountains, walking north toward Moscow, where he knew another god-hater ruled.

East of the Serpent's fall, the Red Army was mostly intact, and Eastern Europe likewise, safe in the Red Army's embrace. Russia had lost little, and the few hundred thousand dead in Hungary were nothing next to the thirty million that Stalin had killed or left to die in the last two decades. Moreover, the deadly venom fallout never touched Mother Russia; her monsters would be solely of human making. And of the giants': Molotov and Suslov declared Nasren a bogatyr, a glorious Russian giant born of Soviet Man from the scientifically nurtured soil of Soviet Georgia. Stalin's scientists (and those who had been oh-so-recently Hitler's scientists, at distant camps in Poland) pulled venom from the fallen beast and injected it into "volunteers," or collected Nasren's wisdom about the dawn time. Mysterious fires burned all across Siberia. Frozen mammoths struggled back to their feet, and resumed chewing their buttercup breakfasts. Other giants clambered out of the permafrost, or sailed south on the ice: Soslan of the steel body, Batyrez the invincible swordsman, Satanya the beautiful. It is a shame, Stalin told each of them, looking at them with his wise brown eyes, it is a shame that your sons the Ossetians and the Ingush were killed to the last child by the fascists and the imperialists. It is a shame, they agreed, and their own icy eyes narrowed.

## THE EAGLE BROKEN

---

It is 1948, the third year without a summer since the Fall of the Serpent. America's Pacific fleets sailed home, to shore up the Western remnant of a shattered nation. The Evacuation of '46 ended in death and horror; only General MacArthur's troops kept order even on the West Coast. With Washington gone, a controversial election made California Governor Earl Warren the President of the United States, or of six of them, anyway. The war in the Pacific is over—holding on to Hawaii is challenging enough—and the Russians are welcome to the wreck of Europe. It took two years, but the last of the great monsters have been driven back down east of the Rocky Mountains. The Americans—and Texans—have their own continent to win back, from the things that wash up now with every Atlantic tide. But left alone across the Rockies for years of famine and fear, the survivors may be building their own future without waiting for permission from Los Angeles or Austin.

Chicago, Detroit, Toronto, Buffalo, Birmingham, Pittsburgh, Memphis: Such city-states survived the Serpentfall by being more willing, and more able, to push other folks to the wall. They had to feed their people when the grain was poisoned and the water was full of vileness.

They had to act fast, and cut up rough, when the crisis hit. And for these cities, the crisis isn't over yet. All across the Poisoned Lands, from Houston to Hudson Bay, life is still brutal, short, and all too interesting.

## THE LION WAITING

What's left of Wales and Cornwall still swear to King Henry IX in Sydney, as does Australia, and a third of India, and what's left of Canada, and South Africa in its own accent. The battered British Empire made an armistice with Japan through gritted teeth, and looks at independent "Congress India" with bitter regret. But the Empire survives.

It is British Petroleum who came up with drilling the Serpent for oil, and Royal Dutch-Shell who set up the great cracking plants in Wales and Kenya to refine it. The Russian advisers in Arabia and Persia don't like it, but there's nothing they can do, yet. It is the Royal Navy that dives deep to salvage things from the rift where Jörmungandr rose. It is the Royal Society who have cut into the Serpent at Hereford, and (at hellish cost) brought back living samples of the things, the cultures, swarming in its cavernous belly. It is Rhodes University men in South Africa who took those writhing creatures and strapped them down and drew out the sera and built the equipment that allowed Sir Edmund Hillary and his team to climb to the top of the Spine and look down at the curving world. It is Vickers who brought Jean-Jacques Barre from France (and salvaged Goddard's plans from the wreckage of Roswell) to build the rocket planes to get the Royal Rocketry Air Force (RRAF) there faster. It is Prime Minister Menzies and his government who alone seem worried about what Stalin means when he promises a "final titanic struggle." Spies, and rocketeers, and oilmen, and speleo-herpetologists gather in Sydney and Capetown and Plymouth and Nairobi, and wonder if the sun has set on the British Empire at last, or if somewhere in this smoke-stained, poisoned world there is still room for a green and pleasant land.

MOST SECRET

12 May 1948

TO: Sir Reginald V. Jones  
Senior Scientific Advisor  
Office of the Prime Minister

RE: PROJECT JAMBRES



Et Serpentis,  
Scientia

Sir Reginald:

Per your office's request to Project HQ, we can provide the following executive summary of the Project's ongoing research and analysis of the Serpent.

1. According to Project estimates, the Serpent is slightly over 6,000 miles long, and 250 miles in body diameter. The head is rather wider; at its highest point (an eyebrow ridge roughly on the former site of Cairo) it stretches 272 miles into the atmosphere. The Serpent masses approximately 1,500 trillion metric tonnes (1,500 quintillion US/Short Scale). It most closely resembles *Enhydryna schistosa*, a particularly venomous sea snake native to the Arabian Sea area.
2. Only a portion of this mass is currently present on the Earth's surface. For example, the Serpent is discontinuous between Morocco and the George Bligh Banks, disappearing in the western canyons of the Horseshoe Seamount and reappearing several hundred miles north on the Rockall Plateau beneath the North Atlantic. (If it were continuous, it would naturally breach the ocean's surface all along its length, the ocean being no more than four miles deep.) Also, roughly half of the Serpent's total length (its tail section) similarly disappears in the Indian Ocean southeast of Mogadishu. RN submarines have been unable to reach sufficient depth to survey the Serpent's points of emergence and disappearance. (See attached Reports for OPERATION ALISANDER.)
3. The American "Operation John Henry" atomic strike took place while the Serpent's current mass and geometry were still in flux. This would explain why the available records indicate that the *Strange Cargo* encountered and fatally engaged a Serpent "merely" 60,000 feet long. (See the attached Minority Report Summary for arguments that the USAAF bomber instead somehow expanded into "the God Realm" at the moment of coming to grips with the Serpent.) If the Norse sagas are correct, and the Serpent at one point encircled the world, then its final rest state is only a third of its potential mass. In short, the Americans killed the Serpent before it grew to full size.
4. It is the current consensus of the Project that the Serpent's "missing mass" is folded into a bubble or pocket of space-time perhaps tangent to our own, and that the act of summoning the Serpent somehow focuses and directs the zero-point energy of its space-time pocket into our own universe. The energy of the two universes being incompatible, gross physical and biological anomalies result throughout our local space-time as the Serpent's energy "grounds itself" in local matter. (This "grounding" may explain why the Serpent so closely resembles a sea-snake native to the ocean where it first manifested itself.) It is the current consensus of the Project that the time component of the two universes is also incompatible, which provides a hypothetical cause for the biological anomalies' greatly enhanced rates of growth and geographic spread.

Should you require a briefing on the directions in which these data have driven Project scientific and technical research, or a redacted copy of the current Ophiurgical Progress Report from the EOG, please see the Group's liaison in your office, Wing Commander Lethbridge-Stuart.

*Edward A. Challenger*

Edward A. Challenger

Project Co-ordinator  
Experimental Ophiurgy Group

# Heroes' Section

A black and white illustration of a soldier in a combat uniform, shouting and holding a submachine gun and a knife. He is surrounded by a large, coiled snake and several small aircraft in the sky.

*"Now death is the portion of doomed men,  
Red with blood the buildings of gods,  
The sun turns black in the summer after,  
Winds whine. Well, would you know more?"*

— VÖLUSPÁ, STANZA 41





# — Welcome to the End of the World —

What would you do if you knew the world would end yesterday? Light out for the territories with all the ammunition you can carry? Rage against the dying of the light? Sign up to do your duty for King and Country? Dive into moldy legends and try to find a counter-spell? In ***The Day After Ragnarok***, you can do any or all of those things. With a tommy-gun. And you're just the hero the world needs. Or if not, you can create him.

## — Character Concepts —

You've got a whole world to play with, even if a lot of it is smashed, drowned, or poisoned. Here are a few character concepts to help you narrow down the possibilities:

### • **ARCANE SCHOLAR** —

Yes, yes, it's a tragedy that the Nazis summoned a monster from Norse myth and crushed 400 million people under it. But think what it means for your studies! Magic is once more an open book, and there's nothing more important than reading as much of it as possible.

### • **BARBARIAN** —

So civilization is smashed. Small loss. It was doomed anyway. Now, it's time to find out how a free man lives when the rest of the sheep die, and measure your steel against fellow wolves... and against worse things than men.

### • **ENGINEER** —

Where there is wreckage, there is a need for rebuilding. You can throw bridges across rivers, or raise walls to protect those inside from the Serpent's monsters and Fimbulwinter's cold winds. First, dig trenches; then, make sure they don't become graves.

### • **HUNTER** —

A world full of monsters is a world that needs hunters. You kill 'em for the Lord, or because a demon got your dad in '46, or because smart towns pay a fat bounty for every giant snake head brought in.

### • **MERCENARY** —

You might be a pilot with a fast plane and a few machine guns, or a tanker who got out of Europe before the snake fell. Or you're just a bloke who spent the last five years of his life learning war, and you're hanged if you'll stop

just when you were getting good at it. Loads of targets around, whichever way you jump.

### • **OILMAN** —

Just because the world stopped, doesn't mean the wheels stop moving. Whether the customer wants to escape or rebuild or fight, he'll need oil to do it. Your job is to find that oil, and get it away from your competitors, and sell it for hard gold. And you'll do your job if you have to drill it out of the Serpent's flank yourself.

### • **OUTLAW** —

When the world falls apart, who can blame you for grabbing what you could get? Maybe someone died, or maybe they just really want their stuff back. Or maybe you didn't do it at all, and a military court didn't want to hear about your alibi. For whatever reason, you're on the run, and on the wrong side of the guys with badges. Clear your name, or clear out of Dodge.

### • **PROSPECTOR** —

There's a whole continent of stuff out there just waiting to be found! Cars that might still run, food that might still be edible, art that someone might still pay for. There's steel just lying around in building frames and railroad tracks, copper for the taking in all those wires nobody's calling, gems and gold as close as the ruined jeweler's. Sure, there's monsters and bandits out there. If it were easy, everyone would do it.

### • **REBEL** —

The world fell apart, but somehow the oppressors are still here. Your people deserve liberty—from the Russians, or the British, or the Japanese, or

the French, or the Americans, or someone. You aim to get it, by any means necessary.

### • SCIENTIST

The single most important event in the history of mankind just happened. And it happened where you can measure it. The Serpent redefines physics; what's inside it, and what came after it, turns biology on its head. Understanding the Serpentfall—shorn of superstitious nonsense—is the key to saving humanity. And humanity really needs saving, about now.

### • SECRET AGENT

What does Stalin hide behind the Serpent Curtain? What are the Japanese planning on

that strange island? Who's behind all these Serpent cults cropping up all over? And what are your oh-so-precious allies—and your bosses, come to think of it—really up to? You have to find out what's going on. After all, the last time someone surprised your side, a giant snake killed Europe.

### • SOLDIER

You, my friend, are the thin line between your loved home and utter chaos. Bandits, monsters, and the fricking Japanese are still out there somewhere, trying to kill you and your buddies and that nice lady who sells food to the base cheap. You'd better mount up, look sharp, and keep your powder dry.

## Character Roles

Keep in mind that an adventuring group might be all of the same background: a team of Rhodes University speleo-herpetologists exploring the innards of the Serpent, the crew of a Royal Navy submarine or RRAF rocket-plane on patrol, a crew of wildcat oilmen, a posse of Texas Rangers, a troop of Canadian Mounties or a U.S. Marine Raider team reclaiming the Poisoned Lands, and so forth. In that sort of campaign, it makes sense to distinguish your heroes not by their uniform or their job, but by their role in the story and their approach to problems.

### • BRUISER

You are the tank, the big gun, the hard man. “Move.” “Freeze.” You kill them, take what they dish out, and kill them again if they need it. You pull your weight, in iron.

**KEY SKILLS:** Guts, Fighting, Shooting.

**KEY ATTRIBUTES:** Strength and Vigor.

**KEY EDGES:** Brawny, Quick, Trademark Weapon.

### • MEDIC

You are the buffer, the healer, the keep-it-together guy. “Hang in there, pal.” “It's only a flesh wound.” You provide depth; thanks to you, the team can live to fight another day. You provide perspective; it's not all about bullet holes.

**KEY SKILLS:** Healing, Knowledge (Biology), Survival.

**KEY ATTRIBUTES:** Smarts and Spirit.

**KEY EDGES:** Common Bond, Fast Healer, Healer.

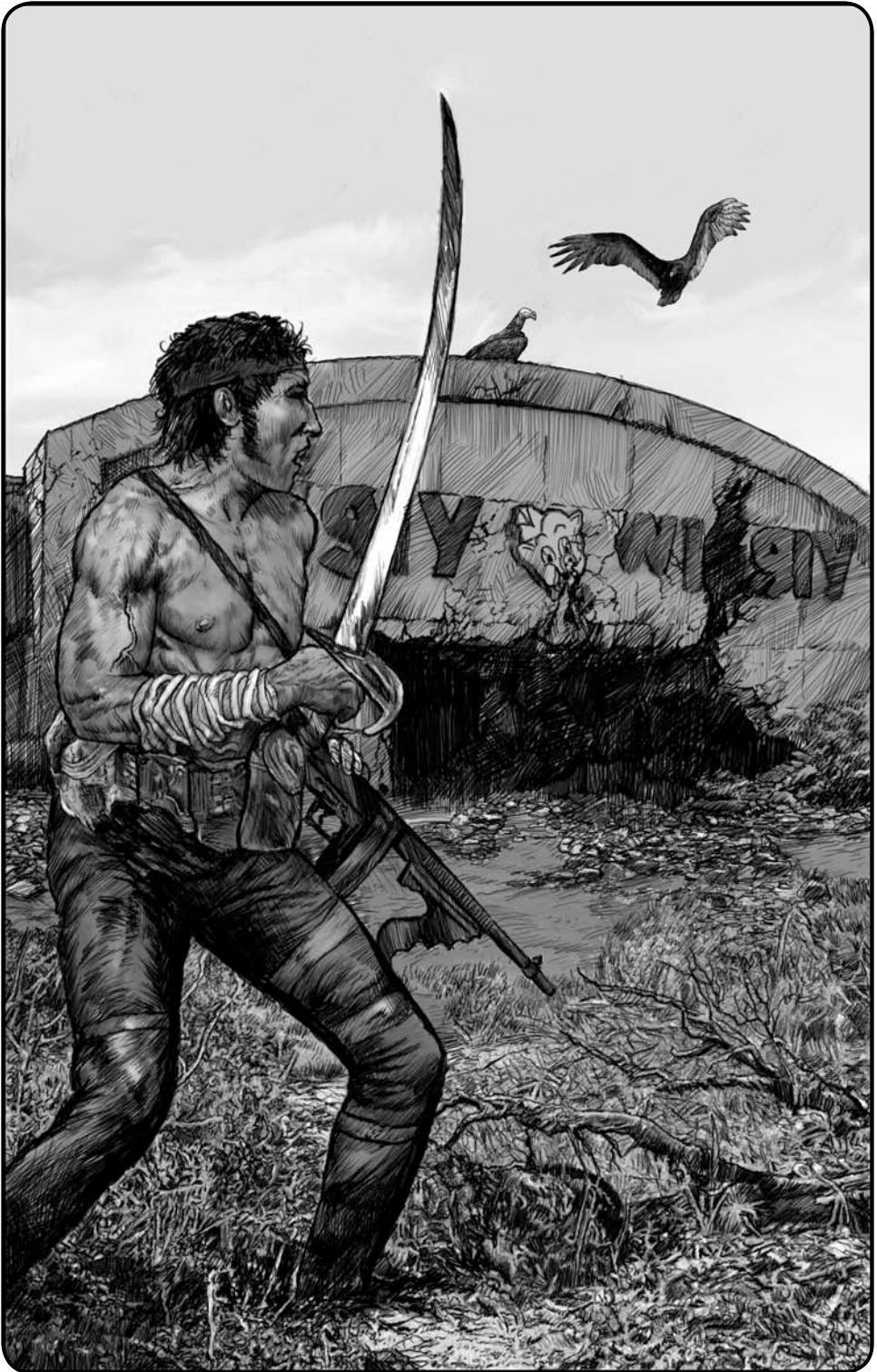
### • SPECIALIST

You are the wheelman, the tailgunner, the force multiplier. “Give me five minutes with it.” “Hang on!” You have the skills, and the gear, to make it happen. You keep it running, and keep your mates able to run. If they have to. Nobody's saying they have to.

**KEY SKILLS:** Boating, Driving, Lockpicking, Piloting, Repair, Shooting.

**KEY ATTRIBUTES:** Agility and Smarts.

**KEY EDGES:** Ace, McGyver, Mr. Fix-it.





## • TALKER •

You're the face man, the wordsmith, the oiler. "How can we work this out?" "How can we help you to help us?" You keep the bad guys distracted, or turn them into good (well, half-decent) guys. You get the skinny, and you ask around on the street.

**KEY SKILLS:** Gambling, Persuasion, Streetwise.

**KEY ATTRIBUTES:** Spirit and Smarts.

**KEY EDGES:** Attractive, Charismatic, Connections.

## • THINKER •

You're the brains of the outfit, the plotter, the boffin. "This reminds me of something I read..." "I think I see it now." You are the man with the plan, you know the geometry. You've got book learning to burn, and what you don't know, you know how to find out.

**KEY SKILLS:** Investigation, Knowledge (any), Notice.

**KEY ATTRIBUTE:** Smarts.

**KEY EDGES:** Danger Sense, Investigator, Scholar.

## Savage Professions

The Professional Edges of the **Savage Worlds** rulebook (pp. 28-30) imply, well, a professional career, past or present. Here's some examples of how those careers might play out in the world of **The Day After Ragnarok**.

### ACE

A former RAF pilot during the War, now flying bush in the Outback; an Amarillo stock-car racer who runs cargoes (and salvaged cars) out of the Poisoned Lands for the thrill of it; a Zambezi river pilot used to dodging crocodiles and shooting whitewater (and the occasional bandit).

### ACROBAT

An Indian temple dancer, on the run from an arranged marriage back home; a Mohawk "high steel" worker brought West in the Evacuation of '46; a "grease man" for a criminal ring in France, now seeking new opportunities where the cops don't speak French.

### CHAMPION

A Turkish dervish who battles godless Communism in the name of Allah; a Mormon Son of Dan who kills monsters to help decent folk survive on the frontiers of Utah; a Navajo medicine man who works for the U.S. government because his father was treated well in the Army.

### GADGETEER

A black-market scrounger on the docks in Capetown, tossed out of Rhodes University for...um...personal reasons; a garage inventor in

Dallas with a lifelong dream of going to Mars; a visionary technical genius who defected to Australia from Bulgaria just ahead of the Red Army.

### HOLY WARRIOR

A mambo of the Rada rite of Voodoo, fighting zombies in nearly-drowned Haiti; a Presbyterian missionary deep in the Chinese interior, working with the Nationalist resistance and banishing demons he's never heard of; a Jewish kabbalist rabbi who got out of Lisbon just ahead of Franco's troops with his notes on ghosts.

### INVESTIGATOR

A tough-as-nails P.I. on the mean streets of Los Angeles; an unorthodox archaeologist attached to Rhodes University; a former SIS agent with a lot of contacts in the Middle East.

### JACK-OF-ALL-TRADES

A professor's daughter from Bombay, spoiled with books and by scholars since infancy; an Australian autodidact with an eidetic memory; a fella in Oregon who touched a glowing meteorite and just "got smart."

### MCGYVER

A former SOE-trained Maquis saboteur, politically purged in Algeria and looking for a new outlet for her skills; a village mechanic

# Making Heroes

Once you've worked out your hero's basic concept, it's time to build his statistics. (Use the character sheet in the back.)

## Race

Humans are the only heroic race in the standard **Day After Ragnarok** setting. Heroes (and villains) still get a free starting Edge, as per the **Savage Worlds** rulebook, although normal folks don't.

## Nationality

American and Texan heroes have gone through three years of nearly constant battle against monsters, even in so-called "safe" civilian areas. They receive 1 additional skill point to spend on Fighting or Shooting.

Heroes from the British Commonwealth (Australia, Britain, Canada, non-Congress India, New Zealand, South Africa, and the colonies) have the advantage of the only functioning global capitalist economy. They begin with twice the starting wealth of Americans: £100 (\$500 equivalent) instead of \$250.

The GM can decide what to do about heroes from other countries if a player wants to play a hero of a different nationality. Since almost every other country has suffered from the Serpentfall and its effects, receiving 1 additional skill point to spend on Survival makes sense, for example.

## Attributes

Your hero begins with a d4 in each of his five attributes: Agility, Smarts, Spirit, Strength, and Vigor. You have 5 points to distribute among them as you choose. Raising an attribute by a die type costs 1 point, and you may not raise an attribute above d12.

## Savage Professions

from Zululand who's never had the right tools; an "improvisational engineer" who works as a railroad company trouble-shooter.

### MENTALIST

A defector from the Soviet psi program, working for SIS now under deep cover; a pilot and playboy trained in a remote Himalayan lamasery; a Hungarian émigré who worked at Los Alamos with strange radioactive elements.

### MR. FIX IT

A U.S. Navy carrier air mechanic during the War, now on the beach on half-pay; a born jury-rigger keeping things running (just barely) somewhere in Newfoundland; a Scots engineer on a Pacific tramp steamer.

### SCHOLAR

An émigré Dutch Rhodes University biochemist; a Caltech physicist interested in black magic; a civilian instructor at the Royal

Military College, Duntroon, who wants some real-world experience.

### THIEF

A gorgeous cat burglar in glamorous Rio de Janeiro; a "box man" recruited by the SOE during the War, given a pardon, and gone straight as a locksmith; a security expert (former ONI) in San Francisco.

### WIZARD

The Romany seventh son of a seventh son from all over, but mostly from Sydney; a taciturn Finnish sorceress who somehow walked out of the Gulag and into Alaska; a fakir from Calcutta with family enemies in the Congress Party.

### WOODSMAN

A Filipino scout and resistance fighter; a "lone wolf" Wyoming monster-hunter; a trained Masai askari.

## Skills

You also have 15 points to buy your skills. Raising a skill by a die type costs 1 point as long as it's no higher than the attribute it's linked to. It costs 2 points per die type to raise a skill above its linked attribute. Skills cannot be raised above d12. All standard skills in the **Savage Worlds** rulebook are available in **The Day After Ragnarok**.

Remember, all American (and Texan) heroes receive 1 additional skill point for Fighting or Shooting: living next to the Poisoned Lands means lots of monster attacks.

## Languages

Your hero knows a number of languages equal to half his Smarts die. The first language he knows is his native language, which in a game with Commonwealth or American heroes is likely English, although it might be Navajo, Inuit, isiZulu, Punjabi, or another such tongue. You need not establish the other languages you speak at the beginning of play, but can add them to the character sheet as the need for them comes up.

Any permanent increase in your Smarts die also gains you additional languages.

## Secondary Statistics

Derive secondary statistics for your hero as in the **Savage Worlds** rulebook (p. 10).

## Special Abilities

Remember, as a human hero, you get one free starting Edge. Next, decide whether you want to take any Hindrances to gain additional benefits. If you choose to take Hindrances, you can use the points from them to gain the benefits below. You may take one Major Hindrance (worth 2 points) and up to two Minor Hindrances (worth 1 point each). If you take more than two Minor Hindrances, you receive no points for them.

For 2 Hindrance points you can either raise an attribute 1 die type, or choose one Edge. For 1 Hindrance point, you can gain another skill point, or add an additional \$250 or £50 in starting cash.

## Gear

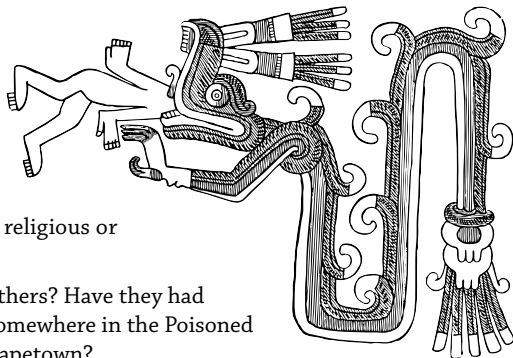
Every starting hero begins with the clothes he's wearing and \$250 (for American or Texan heroes) or £100 (for Commonwealth heroes). An American with the Rich Edge begins with \$750; a British subject with the Rich Edge begins with £300 (\$1,500 equivalent), and so forth.

You'll want to spend some of that starting cash on weapons, equipment, and ammunition. In the Poisoned Lands, ammunition *is* money—paper dollars are only good for lighting fires. See the "Gear" section on pp. 26-39, below.

## Background and Name

Finish up by naming your hero, and thinking some about his background. Is her hometown drowned in the Serpentfall? Overrun with monsters? Safe—for now? Does he believe in magic, or does he think of things mostly in religious or scientific terms?

And why is your hero teaming up with the others? Have they had adventures together before, crossed paths somewhere in the Poisoned Lands, or have they all just met in a bar in Capetown?



# New Hindrances

All of the standard **Savage Worlds** Hindrances are available in **The Day After Ragnarok**. In addition, this book introduces some new Hindrances:

## Blank Stare (Minor)

Something broke inside the hero, possibly long ago, but more likely during the Serpentfall. He goes through the motions, perhaps even tries to come out of his wounded state, but just can't seem to connect to people. Maybe he doesn't want to. He takes a -2 penalty to his Charisma.

## Callous (Minor)

With his world smashed, the hero doesn't much care what the survivors think of him. He is willing to commit murder to further his goals, although he isn't necessarily Bloodthirsty, and doesn't take glee in killing. All his Persuasion tests are at a -1 penalty.

## Holy Roller (Minor)

The hero responds to these apocalyptic events with renewed, fervent, loudly expressed religious faith. He attempts to fit all his experiences into the Bible, or the Koran, or the Book of Mormon, and to convert anyone he thinks might be open to his preaching and witness at any opportunity.

He suffers a -1 Charisma when dealing with others who don't have a similar Holy Roller Hindrance, even fellow members of his own faith or denomination. He adds +1 Charisma when dealing with Holy Rollers of his own sect.

## Luddite (Minor or Major)

After the Serpentfall, plenty of folks gave up on modern technology. In a lot of places, they didn't have a choice: the waves, the war, or the famine had knocked them back a few centuries.

The Minor Luddite Hindrance is the same as the All Thumbs Hindrance; the character is just out of practice with modern technology and thus prefers familiar, proven 19th century gear.

The Major Luddite Hindrance is a conscious decision to abandon the false hope of technological progress altogether. Heroes with Major Luddite will not use or repair any modern gear (after c. 1860), even automatic pistols or breech-loading rifles. They will not willingly travel by car, plane, or advanced watercraft. (They may accept modern medical treatment, though nothing with a Serpent origin.)

## Snakebit (Minor or Major)

With Serpent oil powering an increasing percentage of the Western world, and Serpent sera driving new research and development, more and more people have ingested or inhaled enough Serpent venom to get "Snakebit."

With a Minor Snakebit Hindrance, the hero suffers a -2 penalty to all Guts, Spirit, and Vigor checks caused or triggered by any spawn or aspect of the Midgard Serpent, including recovery from monstrous poison, or throwing off being Shaken while in combat with a Serpent-spawned monster or gang of Serpent cultists.

As a Major Hindrance, Snakebit has those effects plus increasing the hero's vulnerability to being completely subsumed or suborned by serpentine evil. Rolling snake-eyes during any confrontation or combat with the Serpent, evil Nordic priests, or anything else the GM decides is Serpent-aspected sets the venom coursing in the hero's blood. The hero immediately changes sides and works or fights for the Serpent until knocked unconscious, or until he goes to sleep. At that point, a miraculous *healing* will return the hero to normal. Without such *healing*, the hero will remain a servant of the Serpent. While serving the Serpent, however, the Minor Hindrance effects of being Snakebit do not affect the hero.



# New Edges

All of the standard **Savage Worlds** Edges are available in **The Day After Ragnarok**. (American and Texan heroes with the Noble Edge are judges, corporate executives, or ranchers: similarly rich and influential figures with great responsibilities.)

## BACKGROUND EDGES

The world of the arcane is dark, twisted, and dangerous in this world, poisoned by the Serpent and by the magics of Thule. The Arcane Background Edge costs double the normal cost for an Edge in **Savage Worlds**. A hero who wants to take an Arcane Background at the beginning of the game must either:

- Take a Major Hindrance *and* use his free beginning Edge, or
- Take a Major Hindrance *and* two Minor Hindrances, or
- Take two Minor Hindrances *and* use his free beginning Edge.

Furthermore, the Arcane Background (Super Powers) is not available in this setting. The Arcane Background (Weird Science) is renamed Arcane Background (Ophi-Tech), as is the associated skill. The specific powers available to a given Arcane Background are restricted, as indicated in the specific Edge descriptions.

### Arcane Background (Magic)

**REQUIREMENTS:** Novice, Knowledge (Occult) d8+, All Thumbs or Anemic

Magic is inherently tricky and dangerous, and it imposes a cost on its practitioners over and above any danger to their souls. Their body energies flare and flux and interfere with precision equipment and electrical gear, or simply dwindle and drain slowly into Niflheim. Although all the major nations deny any official magical efforts, there may well be secretive government programs ongoing at Mount Shasta or Ayers Rock, not to mention whatever Stalin has bubbling away behind the Wall of Serpents.

A magical hero might follow any sort of tradition, if the GM thinks it belongs in her game: an Aleister Crowley wannabe, a Pennsylvania hex magician, a Kenyan witch-smeller...whatever. The player and GM should work together to establish the proper “feel” for any given magical tradition, which will always involve some sort of ritual components or activities.

A hero with this Edge begins with 10 Power Points and may select up to three spells from the following list of powers: *barrier*, *bolt*, *burst*, *detect arcana*, *dispel*, *elemental manipulation*, *fear*, *obscure*, *puppet* (requires a voodoo doll with target’s hair or blood), *shape change* (one animal per rank), *speak language*, *zombie*.

### Arcane Background (Miracles)

**REQUIREMENTS:** Novice, Knowledge (Religion) d6+, Special

Triggering Ragnarok and awakening the Midgard Serpent definitely demonstrated that miraculous powers exist in the world. The GM may determine that harnessing the forces of the gods (Nordic or otherwise) requires lengthy ritual preparation, priestly investment and vows, hallucinogenic trance states, or other restrictions that leave it in NPC hands.

If player characters can use miracles, a hero with this Edge begins with 10 Power Points and may select up to two miracles from the following list of powers: *boost trait* (blessing, only works for Guts, Healing, Intimidation, Persuasion, Spirit, Strength, Survival, and Vigor), *detect arcana*, *dispel*, *greater healing*, *healing*, *light*, *smite*, and *speak language*.

Christian, Mormon, Jewish, and Muslim “faith healers” or “prayer workers” must take the Holy Roller Hindrance. Buddhist and Hindu miracle-workers must take Poverty or Pacifism (Minor). Miracle-working devotees of other faith traditions must take the Outsider Hindrance.

## Arcane Background (Ophi-Tech)

**REQUIREMENTS:** Novice, Knowledge (Science) d8+, must not have Luddite

Rhodes University engineers and scientists are at the forefront of biotechnology, energy, and advanced airframe research based on study of the Midgard Serpent. Although some Rhodes-developed devices have been around long enough for gray-market knock-offs to emerge, virtually all the cutting-edge experimental “ophi-tech” or “ophiurgy” is still in the hands of Rhodes researchers and/or His Majesty’s Government. Not that there’s much difference. Of course, there are also ophi-tech programs at Caltech, Los Alamos, and the Nouvelle-Sorbonne, to say nothing of the Pingfan Institute in Japanese Manchukuo or Science City 14 outside Tomsk. But Rhodes still does it most and best.

Weird-science heroes who don’t work for a government or Rhodes U. need to come up with a reason they have such ophiurgical access. That done, they begin with 10 Power Points and a gizmo replicating one of the following powers: *armor* (sinew-weave vest), *aquatic* (gill array), *bolt* (Marconi gun), *darkvision* (crotaline drops), *entangle* (fiber bomb), *environmental protection* (ablative-metabolic suit and hypox array), *fly* (jet pack), *quickness* (neural stimulator), and *speed* (ophiline, usable on vehicles only).

A hero who wants to add this Edge in play (for example, an RAF Airman who decides to buck for a transfer to the RRAF) may do so by spending *two* Advances.

More extensive information on Ophi-Tech can be found starting on p. 41.

## Arcane Background (Psionics)

**REQUIREMENTS:** Novice, Blank Stare, Minor Pacifist

Virtually all the psionics-users in the world are products of the Leningrad Brain Institute or the Makarenko Commune outside Kharkov in the Soviet Union, and thus probably not best suited to heroic characters. Indeed, the heroes will be more likely to battle psionic spies for Stalin than to welcome mind-benders into their own ranks. That said, there’s always a Himalayan lamasery or mysterious glowing meteorite available if players want their hero to harness the powers of the mind.

The death of a sentient being nearby unsettles a psi; hence the Minor Pacifist Hindrance. (The NKVD well and truly grinds this Hindrance out of NPC Soviet psis, of course.)

Psionic heroes begin with 10 Power Points and can choose up to three psi techniques from the following list of powers: *boost trait* (biofeedback, only works for Agility, Strength, and Vigor), *darkvision* (mental “radar”), *deflection*, *invisibility*, *puppet* (requires eye contact for 3 rounds before use), *stun*, and *telekinesis*.

## New Powers

There are two new powers available in the *Day After Ragnarok* setting.

### AQUATIC

**RANK:** Novice

**POWER POINTS:** 1

**RANGE:** Self

**DURATION:** 1 hour (1/1 hour)

**TRAPPINGS:** Gill array, rebreather mask, sealed system, hideous undersea mutant

This power makes the hero totally at ease in the water. He doesn’t need to make Swimming rolls to avoid drowning. He adds +2 to any Swimming rolls he does make. In the water, his Pace is equal to his Swimming skill. A success activates the power; on a raise, he adds +4 to his Swimming rolls and 2” to his water Pace, and the duration rises to his Vigor die in hours per point.

### DARKVISION

**RANK:** Novice

**POWER POINTS:** 1

**RANGE:** Self

**DURATION:** 10 minutes (1/minute)

**TRAPPINGS:** crotaline drops, glowing eyes, sonar, hideous underground mutant

This power allows the hero to see in the darkness. He ignores all darkness penalties. With a success, the hero can only see infrared sources or sinks: objects or areas hotter or colder than the background. On a raise, his visual discrimination is fine enough that he can see everything, and the power lasts his Smarts die in minutes per point.

## Bump For Languages

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**REQUIREMENTS:** Novice, Smarts d6+

Your hero has a knack for languages, and an ear for accents and dialects. He starts with an additional two known languages and can make a standard Smarts roll (-2) to understand and speak (brokenly) any language he has heard spoken for 1d6 days.

## COMBAT EDGES

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### Fencing

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**REQUIREMENT:** Novice, Fighting d6+

You know the great thing about swords? You never have to reload them. Now that the sword isn't quite so ceremonial in the new world, you've taken quite a shine to the weapon. You have a +1 to Fighting and Parry when using a sword.

### Martial Arts Training

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**REQUIREMENT:** Novice, Fighting d8+

You're a trained boxer, or perhaps you learned commando methods in the War, or you served in China or the Philippines long enough to pick up something from the locals. Or, of course, you might be one of those locals! Even when your hero fights unarmed, he is considered armed. In addition, opponents in melee combat never benefit from the "gang-up" bonus against your hero.

### Improved Martial Arts Training

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**REQUIREMENT:** Seasoned, Martial Arts Training

When doing unarmed damage, you roll both your Strength and your Agility dice and combine them.

### Sykes-Fairbairn

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**REQUIREMENT:** Seasoned, Fighting d6+

During the War, William Fairbairn and Anthony Sykes taught knife combat techniques to American and Commonwealth commandos. You listened, or you listened to someone who listened. You have a +1 to Fighting when using a knife as your primary or only weapon. Also, you also add your Smarts die to hand-to-hand knife damage if you have surprise.

### Improved Sykes-Fairbairn

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**REQUIREMENT:** Veteran, Fighting d8+, Throwing d8+

As Sykes-Fairbairn, but you have a +2 to Fighting *or* Throwing when using a knife as your primary or only weapon, and can also add your Smarts die to *thrown* knife damage, even if you don't have surprise.

## PROFESSIONAL EDGES

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### Airman

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**REQUIREMENTS:** Varies

A hero with this Edge may start as an Aircraftman, NCO, or officer when he takes this Edge. It works the same as the Soldier Edge, except on an air base. Airmen aren't generally issued personal firearms except pistols for officers, but a Royal Air Force NCO might get issued an Owen SMG. RAF ranks are given in the **Rank Table** (p. 25), USAAF ranks are the same as U.S. Army ranks.

Heroes who want to be in the Royal Rocketry Air Force (RRAF) must also take the Arcane Background (Ophi-Tech) Edge, and select *bolt* as their power, to reflect the standard-issue Marconi gun they receive.

**AIRCRAFTMAN REQUIREMENTS:** Novice, Piloting d6+, Shooting d4+

**AIR NCO REQUIREMENTS:** Seasoned, Piloting d8+, Intimidation d6+, Shooting d6+

**AIR OFFICER REQUIREMENTS:** Novice, Smarts d6+, Piloting d4+, Knowledge (Battle) d6+

## Bush Pilot

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**REQUIREMENTS:** Novice, Piloting d8+, Repair d8+

The American military let a lot of pilots go after the Serpentfall: there wasn't another air force to fight, and there was a lot less fuel and spare parts to fight with. At the same time, in plenty of places around the world, the roads just don't exist any more. So lots of pilots set out to beg, borrow, mortgage, or steal planes in any kind of condition to fly cargo, refugees, or anything else, really, anywhere someone will pay to fly it.

Regardless of your starting wealth, you have a Piper J-3 Cub or equivalent (see p. 34) and you know an airfield that won't charge you too much rent to hangar it.

## Mountie

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**REQUIREMENTS:** Seasoned, Vigor d8+, Guts d6+, Knowledge (Law) d6+, Riding d8+, Survival d6+, Tracking d4+

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) serves as the national police and counter-intelligence service in Canada, and the exploration and reclamation force in the Canadian Poisoned Lands. That means everything from uncovering Soviet spies on the waterfront in Vancouver to fighting plesiosaurs in the Great Slave Lake.

Mounties advance in rank using the **Promotion Table** (see p. 24), but always start as constables. Mountie constables are given a badge (giving them +2 Charisma to those who respect its authority), jurisdiction over civilians in Canadian territory, and enough Arctic training to get a +1 on any Fighting or Shooting test in the snow against a foe without Arctic experience. Mounties also gain +2 to all Fatigue rolls made against cold.

## Rhodes Scholar

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**REQUIREMENTS:** Novice, Smarts d8+, Knowledge (Any Two) d6+

With Cambridge and Oxford smashed under a trillion tons of Serpent, the surviving scientific and scholarly minds of the British Empire needed somewhere to pool their urgent research. Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South Africa, stepped up and offered substantial signing bonuses "to any exemplary English-speaking scholar regardless of speciality." Rhodes University experts work with the Royal Society speleo-herpetologists, with the Vickers-Barre rocketeers, with Royal Dutch-Shell geologists, and every other group in the Empire studying the Serpentfall and its implications—very much including His Majesty's Government. Rhodes engineers and technicians design ophi-tech devices for those groups, and keep improving new prototypes.

A hero with the Rhodes Scholar edge is associated with the University in some fashion: formal faculty, paid researcher, or academic "stringer" charged with finding exploitable (or just plain interesting) anomalies and bringing them back to Grahamstown for study. He receives a £20 monthly stipend to support his work.

If a Rhodes Scholar can contact the University (telegram is most reliable), he can either receive advice (+2 to any Smarts-based roll) or arrange to pick up needed equipment (at no cost) once per adventure. The equipment pickup must be made somewhere Rhodes either has a bank account (any city in the English-speaking world; any major city in the French- or Spanish-speaking world) or at the site of an ongoing Rhodes research project or expedition. If a hero has both the Rhodes Scholar

and Arcane Background (Ophi-Tech) Edges, he can trade in one piece of ophi-tech for another instead of making a normal pickup of equipment.

Heroes with the Rhodes Scholar Edge, however, are expected to help out Rhodes expeditions or research whenever they can, and to turn over any interesting artifacts or other discoveries to Rhodes at the end of the adventure (for a suitable bonus, in most cases), along with any borrowed equipment. Failure to do so endangers their stipend...at the very least.

Sailor

REQUIREMENTS: Varies

A hero with this Edge may start as a Junior Seaman, NCO, or officer when he takes this Edge. It works the same as the Soldier Edge, except on a ship, patrol boat, or submarine. Sailors aren't generally issued personal firearms except pistols for officers, but a Royal Navy NCO might get issued an Owen SMG.

- **JUNIOR SEAMAN REQUIREMENTS:** Novice, Boating d6+, Swimming d4+
- **NAVAL NCO REQUIREMENTS:** Seasoned, Boating d8+, Intimidation d6+, Shooting d6+, Swimming d4+
- **NAVAL OFFICER REQUIREMENTS:** Novice, Smarts d6+, Boating d4+, Knowledge (Battle) d6+

Soldier

REQUIREMENTS: Varies

A hero with this Edge may start as a private, NCO, or officer when he takes this Edge. Each step comes with its own opportunities and headaches—it's not necessarily better or more heroic to be one or the other. Just ask Sergeant Rock. That said, NCOs gain +1 Charisma due to their rank when dealing with their subordinates; officers gain +2 Charisma in like circumstances.

- **PRIVATE REQUIREMENTS:** Novice, Fighting d4+, Shooting d6+, Throwing d4+
- **NCO REQUIREMENTS:** Seasoned, Fighting d6+, Intimidation d6+, Shooting d6+, Throwing d4+
- **OFFICER REQUIREMENTS:** Novice, Smarts d6+, Knowledge (Battle) d4+

Promotion Table

At the completion of a hero's mission, roll 1d20 and add the modifiers below. On a 20 or greater, the hero is promoted.

D20	RESULT
-2	Easy Mission
+0	Average Mission
+2	Difficult Mission
+4	Risky Mission
+6	Suicidal Mission
-2	Hero holds lowest rank in organization
-2	Hero is a Captain (army) or equivalent (Navy Lt.; RAF Flight Lt.; Mountie Supt.; Ranger Lt.) or higher
+2	Hero was injured on mission
+2	Hero committed an act of conspicuous bravery or heroism witnessed by others on mission.

Military characters advance in rank along the track given in the **Military Pay** sidebar (see p. 25) by rolling on the **Promotion Table** (see at left). They may also lose rank by dereliction of duty, poor performance, cowardice, sheer dumb luck, or the whim of the GM. Military personnel are on duty at all times; player heroes will likely be part of a special unit “on detached assignment” to reduce the annoyances inherent in soldiering. Such heroes may be members of one or another special unit, such as the USMC Raiders or the British Special Air Service (SAS).

Speleo-Herpetologist

REQUIREMENTS: Seasoned, Vigor d6+, Climbing d6+, Guts d6+, Knowledge (Biology) d4+

It is the British Royal Society who have cut into the body of the Serpent at Hereford, and (at hellish cost) brought back living samples of the things, the cultures, swarming in its cavernous belly. The writhing creatures that dwell deep

## Military Pay

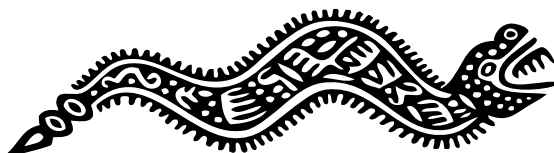
In most games, if heroes are all part of a military unit, they won't be spending a lot of money on gear. Their guns and ammo are provided, as are uniforms and other equipment, room and board (or tents and C-rations), and the other necessities of life. If the intelligence officer needs to flash a few bills around the squatter camp to get answers, he can just be assumed to have them. Even in police units like the RCMP and the Texas Rangers, without room and board allowances, the focus of their adventures isn't the pay, it's the job.

But some game groups like tracking their finances, so with that in mind, here are the **Day After Ragnarok** monthly pay scales for American and Commonwealth militaries.

### Military Pay by Rank

ARMY RANK (US)	NAVY RANK (RN)	AIR RANK (RAF)	US PAY	COMMONWEALTH PAY
Private	Jnr Seaman	Aircraftman	\$50	£8
PFC	Able Seaman	Leading Aircraftman	\$54	£9
NCOs				
Corporal	Ordinary Seaman	Corporal	\$66	£10
Sergeant	Leading Seaman	Sergeant	\$78	£16
Staff Sergeant	Petty Officer 2nd Class	Chief Technician	\$96	£20
Technical Sergeant	Petty Officer 1st Class	Flight Sergeant	\$114	£23
Master Sergeant	Chief Petty Officer	Master Aircrew	\$138	£28
OFFICERS				
2nd Lt	Midshipman	Pilot Officer	\$80	£20
1st Lt	Sub-Lt.	Flying Officer	\$95	£40
Captain	Lieutenant	Flight Lt.	\$150	£50
Major	Lt. Cmdr.	Sqdn. Leader	\$250	£65
Lt. Colonel	Commander	Wing Commander	\$300	£75
Colonel	Captain	Flight Cpt.	\$330	£100

MOUNTIE RANK	PAY	TEXAS RANGER RANK	PAY
Constable	£10	Ranger	\$70
Corporal	£12	Sergeant	\$90
Sergeant	£20	Lieutenant	\$100
Staff Sergeant	£22	Captain	\$200
Staff Sgt.-Major	£24		
Sergeant-Major	£28		
Inspector	£30		
Superintendent	£35		
Chief Superintendent	£40		





inside the Serpent hold biological—and perhaps magical—secrets on which depend the survival of the free world. It is the speleo-herpetologists, or “snake-cavers,” who go in to get those secrets.

A hero with this Edge has seen it all, and come back alive. He is at +2 to all Guts checks caused by any aspect of the Serpent or its spawn. (And yes, this does cancel out Snakebit for a net -0.) And he knows some tricks of the trade: add +1 to all damage he does against any Serpent-spawn or like being.

### **Texas Ranger**

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**REQUIREMENTS:** Seasoned, Vigor d8+, Fighting d6+, Riding d6+, Shooting d6+, Survival d6+, Tracking d6+

After the Serpentfall, the Texas National Guard needed to rebuild the Gulf Coast, and then to keep an eye across the Rio Grande on the Sinarquistas in Mexico. Short of manpower, the government in Austin turned the rest over to the Texas Rangers. They became a combination mobile cavalry unit and law-enforcement division covering the rest of Texas—and as far outside Texas as they need to ride. The Rangers protect oil rigs, fight monsters, and break up bandit gangs from Los Alamos to Lawrence, Kansas. Although Rangers ride in troops, Rangers of all ranks are expected to work independently and solve problems themselves: “One riot, one Ranger,” after all.

Rangers advance in rank using the **Promotion Table** (see p. 24), but always start as privates (a rank usually called “Ranger,” as it is in the **Military Pay** sidebar on p. 25). Rangers are given a badge (giving them +2 Charisma to those who respect its authority), a gun, and jurisdiction over civilians in Texas-patrolled territory. Rangers stay on top of things: they gain a +1 to any Common Knowledge roll about criminals or monsters in the Poisoned Lands.

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## Gear

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Unless the government, or maybe Rhodes University, is picking up your tab, you’re going to have to shift for yourself doing odd jobs—some of them very odd indeed—or hoping to stumble across something someone wants to pay for. Of course, those are usually the kinds of things other people want to get without paying you.

So with your starting cash, you may want to buy something to discourage those sorts of people with.

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## MONEY

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The Texas dollar and the U.S. dollar (\$) are at rough parity, since both of them have to stay pegged to the price of silver dollars—plenty of folks don’t take paper money at home, and nobody does in the Poisoned Lands. Indeed, in the Poisoned Lands, a rifle bullet is worth a dollar, and is often used as currency in the drifter camps, prospector warrens, and less appetizing places out there. Sharp-eyed heroes will note that a rifle bullet only costs 30 cents back in civilization—there’s your first opportunity! But then, greenhorns riding into the Poisoned Lands with boxes of ammunition they’d rather sell than shoot are, well, not always the best insurance risks.

A British pound sterling (£) is worth about \$5 American. (Each pound is divided into 20 shillings; a shilling is worth 12 pence.) Other currencies hardly matter; the GM can make something up.

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## GEAR NOTES

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### **Amphetamines**

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Very common, especially in the RAF and RRAF. Taking amphetamines immediately reduces Fatigue by one level. Roll Vigor; Fatigue returns after a number of hours equal to the amount over the Target Number that the Vigor roll was made by. (minimum one) at one level higher. If

## Armor

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT	NOTES
Flight Suit	\$35	15	+3 to Vigor rolls to resist Fatigue from cold
Gas Mask	\$15	3	-2 to Notice and Fighting rolls
Helmet	\$7	5	+4 Armor against 50% of head shots

## Clothing

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT	NOTES
Belt	\$1	—	
Boots	\$10+	1	
Business Suit	\$15+	—	
Coat	\$5+	—	
Coveralls	\$8	—	
Dungarees	\$5	—	
Fedora	\$8	—	
Field Jacket	\$15	—	
Formal Wear	\$25+	—	
Gloves	\$5	—	
Goggles	\$5	—	
Hat, Stetson	\$5	—	or bush hat; +1 to Notice rolls in bright sunlight
Leather Jacket	\$15	—	+1 Armor against blunt weapons, fists
Shirt	\$1+	—	
Shoes	\$8+	—	
Trenchcoat	\$25	—	
Uniform	\$12	—	

## Communications and Special Gear

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT	NOTES
Camera, 35mm	\$50	3	32 shots of film for \$1
Camera, Movie	\$50	2	8mm reel, 8 mins for \$5
Developer Kit	\$30	40	requires dark room
Metal Detector	\$150	17	+4 to Notice metal objects within 1"
Radio, Pack	\$30	25	5-mile range
Radio, Field	\$100	90	30-mile range; see note
Telegraph Key	\$5	3	
Telegram, per word	\$0.05	—	International, \$0.25

## Explosives

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT	NOTES
Detonator	\$20	10	Plunger, 500' of wire, 50 caps
Dynamite Stick	\$5	1	2d6 damage; Medium Burst Template
Primacord (1000')	\$50	23	See note
Satchel Charge	\$60	24	4d6 damage; Large Burst Template
Thermite	\$8	3	See note

**Field Equipment**

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT	NOTES
Aqualung	\$200	30	
Backpack	\$10	2	Holds 100 lbs.
Battery, Car	\$25	50	
Bedroll	\$20	4	
Binoculars, 8x	\$100	4	+3 to Notice distant objects
Binoculars, 12x	\$200	6	+4 to Notice distant objects
Candles, Wax	\$3	1	Set of 8; burn 12 hrs.
Canteen	\$1	1	Holds 1 qt. (2 lbs.) of liquid
Climbing Gear	\$3	9	Rock hammer and 10 pitons
Compass	\$5	—	
Cot	\$5	25	
Entrenching Tool	\$2	3	Str+d4 damage in combat; -1 to Parry
Fishing Tackle	\$20	10	Rod, reel, line, hooks, creel
Flashlight	\$2	3	5" beam
Flare, Road	\$1	1	Burns for 30 minutes
Grapnel	\$5	2	
Handcuffs	\$10	2	8 or better on Strength roll to break
Lantern	\$12	3	4" radius; burns kerosene
Lockpicks	\$50	1	Without them, Lockpicking rolls are at -2
Parachute	\$100	30	
Rappelling Harness	\$10	4	+2 to Climbing rolls with rope
Rope, Hemp (200')	\$5	30	See note
Rope, Nylon (200')	\$15	4	See note
Shelter Half	\$10	5	Two shelter halves make a two-man tent
Skis	\$16	8	Includes poles and bindings.
Snorkeling Gear	\$3	6	Mask, fins, snorkel; add 1" to Pace while swimming
Snowshoes	\$5	5	
Stove, Camp	\$5	1	
Trap, Bear	\$7	35	See note
Wristwatch	\$5	—	Luminous dial, wind-up, watertight
Zippo Lighter	\$1	—	

**Cheap Gear**

Adventurers on a budget, which is to say most of them, might want to go for cheaper stuff than listed on the price guide: jerry-rigged, scavenged, rebuilt, or very used. Anything you might use with an attribute roll—guns, vehicles, equipment, tools, other weapons—you can find for half the normal price in a big town, or even in a big squatter camp in some places like the outskirts of drowned cities. But it malfunctions when the player rolls a 1 on the skill die, as if the user had the All Thumbs Hindrance. This even applies to gear normally excepted from All Thumbs, if there's any possible way it could break, corrode, or generally let you down.

Cheap clothing and other gear not related to skill rolls just looks, well, either cheap or dangerous. Either way, your hero's Charisma takes a -1 hit from his worthless looks.

## Firearm Accessories

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT	NOTES
Cartridge Belt	\$2	—	Holds 25 rounds
Gun Cleaning Kit	\$5	3	Dirty guns misfire on Shooting roll of 1
Holster	\$5	1	
Rifle Scope, 4x	\$25	2	+1 to Shooting; see note
Rifle Scope, 10x	\$75	3	+2 to Shooting; see note
Silencer, Pistol	\$25	1	
Suppressor, Rifle/SMG	\$75	3	
Web Gear	\$3	5	

## Food & Drink

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT	NOTES
Beer, can	\$0.05+	—	
Candy	\$0.40	—	
C-Ration	\$3	2	Per meal
Cigarettes, pack	\$0.30	—	
Coca-Cola, bottle	\$0.40	—	
Iron Rations	\$1	0.5	Oats and sausage bar; per meal
Meal, average	\$3+	—	
Meal, excellent	\$10+	—	
Spam	\$0.50	—	
Whiskey, bottle	\$3+	—	

## Services

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT	NOTES
Apartment, per month:		—	
Flophouse	\$12	—	
Studio	\$25	—	
Decent	\$40	—	
Swanky	\$100+	—	
Hangar Rental, per month	\$20	—	
Hospital Stay, per day	\$15+	—	+1 to Healing roll for every \$15 above base, max +3
Hotel, per night:		—	
Fleabag	\$1	—	
Average	\$5	—	
Luxury	\$20	—	
Office Rent, per month:		—	
Seedy	\$10	—	
Respectable	\$30	—	



Medical

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT	NOTES
Amphetamines	\$5	—	See note
First-Aid Kit	\$3	2	Without it or better, Healing rolls are at -2
Medic's Kit	\$10	10	+1 to Healing rolls
Stretcher	\$8	12	
Surgical Kit	\$30	15	+2 to Healing rolls

Tools

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT	NOTES
Axe	\$2	2	Str+d6 damage in combat
Chain, 20'	\$15	60	Pulls 6.5 tons
Crowbar	\$2	4	Str+d4 damage in combat
Cutting Torch	\$50	30	spare gas bottles \$5, 15 lbs.
Fire Extinguisher	\$30	20	
Pick	\$1	12	
Saw	\$2	2	
Shovel	\$1	5	
Spotlight	\$50	10	2 hr battery; 80" beam
Swiss Army Knife	\$5	—	Repair rolls at -1 if only tool
Tool Kit	\$60	20	Without it, Repair rolls are at -2
Welder	\$200	350	100 spare rods are \$5, weigh 20 lbs.
Wheelbarrow	\$2	15	Loads up to 350 lbs.
Wire Cutters	\$2	3	

Transportation

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT	NOTES
Air Travel, per mile	\$0.30	—	Travel time 90-150 mph
Bit and Bridle	\$5	3	included in Saddle and Tack
Cab fare, per mile	\$0.10	—	
Gasoline, per gallon	\$0.25	8	Herpetrol/O-gas priced competitively.
Horse	\$600	1200	See note
Horseshoes	\$25	4	Set of four; +1 to equine Vigor rolls to resist Fatigue
Mule	\$200	1000	See note
Ocean Liner fare, 1st class	\$50+		Per day; 600 miles per day, depending on weather
Ocean Liner fare, 2nd class	\$25		
Ocean Liner fare, 3d class	\$10		
Pullman Car Travel, per mile	\$0.20		Average 40 mph or 900 miles per day, depending on stops
Saddle and Tack	\$75+	30	-2 to Riding rolls without
Saddlebags	\$10	3	Holds 20 lbs.
Train Travel, per mile	\$0.05		Day trips; average 35 mph, depending on stops
Tramp Steamer fare, per day	\$2-\$10		

that level would be “Dead,” the user takes a wound. For each additional dose in 24 hours, reduce the Vigor roll by -1. Wounds caused by amphetamine usage heal after a good night’s sleep. Amphetamines cannot be taken to prevent drowning.

## Bear Trap

---

Spring-powered jaws snap shut on unwary strollers, who must make a Notice roll at -1 (or Tracking roll at +1) to see a trap before walking into it. It does 1d8+2 damage to the leg; escaping the trap is either a Lockpicking roll (requiring 1d6 minutes) or an opposed roll of the victim’s Strength or Agility against the trap’s Strength of d8. Failing the opposed roll causes another damage roll (ignoring armor) to the leg.

## Gun Cleaning Kit

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A misfire requires a Repair roll (or a Shooting roll at -2) and 1d6 actions to clear.

## Horses and Mules

---

The initial Load Limit for a horse or mule is not ten, but *twenty times* his Strength die type. (For a horse, it’s usually d12, for 240 lbs.; for a mule, it’s usually d8, for 160 lbs.) For each *normal* Load Limit above that, he takes -1 to Strength, Agility, etc. rolls per the **Savage Worlds** rulebook (p. 10). His rider also takes -1 to her Riding rolls for each Load Limit above that. So a d12 Strength horse laden with 241-360 lbs. rolls at -1; laden with 361-480 lbs. at -2, etc.

## Primacord

---

Fast-burning explosive used to trigger other explosives. It looks like clothesline, and explodes for 2d6 (Small Burst Template) if detonated all at once. If strung out, explodes for 1d4 in each 1” of tabletop. Primacord Ccn also be used to burn through locks, blow off hinges, etc. with successful Repair roll.

## Radio

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To use a field radio at longer (short-wave) ranges requires a Knowledge (Radio) roll and clear weather.

## Rifle Scope

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Provides an additional +1 or +2 Shooting bonus to rifle shots at longer than Short range in any round that the firer Aims.

## Rope

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Both types of rope safely support 300 lbs. of weight. For every 50 lbs. of weight over that total, roll 1d6 every minute, or at moments of sudden stress on the rope. On a 1, hemp rope snaps. Nylon rope only snaps after two 1s are rolled.

## Thermite

---

An aluminum-based pyrotechnic that, once activated, burns incredibly hot (over 5000 degrees) for a very brief period. If left around as an incendiary, it will set anything within a Medium Burst Template on fire once it goes off. Applied to a target (a giant snake, a jailhouse door, a T-34, etc.) it does 2d6 damage per round for 7 rounds before being consumed, increasing 1 AP per round as well: by the fifth round, for example, it does 5 AP. It counts as an HW attack against vehicles, robots, or anything else vulnerable to 5000 degrees Fahrenheit. The weight listed includes the “acid-pencil” timer-detonator, and a metal case to carry it in. A smaller cigarette-pack sized thermite device costs \$3 and weighs 1 lb; it ignites fires in a Small Burst Radius, or burns a target for 2d6 per round for 3 rounds. Applying thermite to a target is a Knowledge (Chemistry) or Locksmithing roll (either one at -2 in combat); just tossing it—into the mouth of a giant snake, say—and hoping for the best is a Throwing roll (range 5/10/20).

# VEHICLES

If a hero's going to get anywhere, he'll need wheels. (Or wings, or a boat. Or all three.) But vehicles don't only help the heroes, they're a GMing godsend. Suddenly, the next adventure is just a couple of days away, not a couple of weeks, or months. And if the story needs the heroes to stop somewhere, or stay somewhere for awhile? Vehicles need fuel, and tires, and antifreeze—and engines can conk out in the most *interesting* places ...

## GROUND VEHICLES

### *Humber Armored Car*

Primary armored car of the British Commonwealth forces; civilian versions are available to Rhodes Scholars and other loyal servants of the Crown.

**ACC/TOP SPEED:** 5/20

**TOUGHNESS:** 14/9/8 (4/3/2)

**CREW:** 4 **COST:** \$2,600 or Military Only

**NOTES:** The military version of this armored car includes three machine guns as noted in Weapons.

#### **WEAPONS:**

- 15mm HMG (600 rounds)  
(Range 50/100/200; Damage 2d10; ROF 3; AP 3)
- 2 x 7.92mm Coax MG (1500 rounds each)



**Humber  
Armored Car**

### *Jeep*

With 600,000 built by Willys-Overland alone during the War, Jeeps can be found on every continent in all states of repair and customization.

**ACC/TOP SPEED:** 10/30

**TOUGHNESS:** 12 (3) **CREW:** 1+3 **COST:** \$365

**NOTES:** Four Wheel Drive



**Jeep**

### *Motorcycle*

Increasingly common as gasoline, rubber, and other commodities become decreasingly common.

**ACC/TOP SPEED:** 20/32

**TOUGHNESS:** 8 (2) **CREW:** 1 **COST:** \$80

### *2-1/2 ton Truck*

Built by Kaiser Motors from old GMC specifications, or one of the hundreds of thousands built during the War. Most of them have a canvas cab top and canvas truck bed cover, for 8 Toughness and 0 armor.

**ACC/TOP SPEED:** 5/18 **TOUGHNESS:** 13 (2)

**CREW:** 1+20 **COST:** \$1,650



**2-1/2 Ton Truck**





**Beechcraft  
Model 18**



**Bell 47**



**DC-3 Dakota**



**Noorduyn  
Norseman**

## **AIRCRAFT**

### **Beechcraft Model 18**

The most common utility aircraft in North America; as the C-45 Expeditor it saw service with all the Allied militaries including China. It can carry a payload of 1200 lbs. (six passengers, or half a ton of gear) up to 1200 miles without refueling. (The Australian DeHavilland Dragon II biplane has a range about half that, but the other stats are the same.)

These stats can apply to any small twin-engine, propeller-driven transport; for a somewhat larger plane, use the DC-3 stats.

**ACC/TOP SPEED:** 20/100 **CLIMB:** 20  
**TOUGHNESS:** 11 (2) **CREW:** 2+6 **COST:** \$50,000

### **Bell 47**

The first, and so far only, helicopter in the world produced for the civilian market, the Bell 47 is manufactured in Fort Worth, Texas. Notwithstanding, the Texas Rangers buy plenty of them. It can carry a pilot and 1000 lbs. of gear 245 miles without refueling.

**ACC/TOP SPEED:** 10/21 **CLIMB:** 15  
**TOUGHNESS:** 10 (2) **CREW:** 1+1 **COST:** \$18,000

### **DC-3 Dakota**

The legendary "Gooney Bird" transport plane was repurposed as the C-47 Skytrain during the War. DC-3s can be found almost anywhere in the world; even the Soviets produced their own version. It can carry a payload of 3 tons up to 1000 miles without refueling.

**ACC/TOP SPEED:** 20/90 **CLIMB:** 20  
**TOUGHNESS:** 11 (2) **CREW:** 2+28 **COST:** \$83,000

### **Noorduyn Norseman**

A single-wing STOL bush plane built in Canada; it can be fitted with floats, wheels, or skis. It is of wood and steel construction. It can fly 900 miles without refueling. Similar single-engine bush planes are built in Australia, California, and Texas; DeHavilland Canada (reconstructed in Vancouver) is working on a superior all-metal bush plane, the Beaver.

**ACC/TOP SPEED:** 20/52 **CLIMB:** 15  
**TOUGHNESS:** 10 (2) **CREW:** 1+9  
**COST:** \$20,000, or Bush Pilot Edge and \$5,000.

**NOTES:** If you buy this plane with a Bush Pilot Edge, it comes in lieu of the Piper Cub normally associated with that Edge.

## Lockheed Constellation

The C-69 high-speed, long-distance (range: 4,500 miles) transport became the Constellation airliner after the War. These stats can apply to any four-engine, propeller-driven transport.

**ACC/TOP SPEED:** 10/150 **CLIMB:** 10

**TOUGHNESS:** 14 (2)

**CREW:** 5+70 **COST:** \$200,000

## PBY Catalina Flying Boat

This seaplane can land on water or land, and take off from water with a suitable headwind. It can carry a payload of 2 tons, and stay aloft for 24 hours, traveling 2,520 miles without refueling or maintenance. Military models mount up to five guns.

**ACC/TOP SPEED:** 20/70 **CLIMB:** 10

**TOUGHNESS:** 12 (2) **CREW:** 2+7 **COST:** \$85,000

## P-80 Shooting Star

This is the top of the line jet fighter in the USAAF. Similar statistics apply to the RAF Gloster Meteor, the Red Air Force MiG-9, or the IJAF Nakajima Ki-201.

**ACC/TOP SPEED:** 30/240 **CLIMB:** 25

**TOUGHNESS:** 14 (3) **CREW:** 1 **COST:** Military only

**NOTES:** Infrared Night Vision

### **WEAPONS:**

- 6 x 12.7mm MG (300 rounds each) (Range 50/100/200; Damage 2d10; ROF 3; AP 3)
- 8 x 5-inch rockets (Range 100/200/440; Damage 4d6+1; ROF 1; Medium Burst Template; AP 6, Heavy Weapon)
- 2 x 1,000 lb. bombs

## Piper J-3 Cub

A single-engine light plane produced in prodigious numbers (20,000 units) during the War as a trainer, now most common as an airmail plane. It can fly 220 miles without refueling. Taylorcraft in Texas produces a similar plane, the L-2. The British equivalent is the Auster V; the Australians produce a biplane with similar stats, the DeHaviland Tiger Moth.

**ACC/TOP SPEED:** 15/35 **CLIMB:** 10

**TOUGHNESS:** 12 (2) **CREW:** 1+1 **COST:** \$2,000

**NOTES:** Available with Bush Pilot Edge: Piper J-3 Cub, Taylorcraft L-2, Auster V, or DeHaviland Tiger Moth.



**Lockheed  
Constellation**



**PBY Catalina  
Flying Boat**



**P-80  
Shooting Star**



**Piper J-3 Cub**

## WATERCRAFT

### Fairmile Motor Launch



Fairmile  
Motor Launch

The somewhat larger Royal Navy version of the USN PT Boat (**Savage Worlds** rulebook, p. 53). Similar patrol boats operate off the coasts of Japanese-occupied China, the Mediterranean coasts of France, and Argentina.

The cost is given for a similar civilian craft, without weapons.

**ACC/TOP SPEED:** 5/10 **TOUGHNESS:** 14 (3)

**CREW:** 4+16 **COST:** \$12,000 or Military only

**NOTES:** Infrared Night Vision

#### WEAPONS:

- 2 x 7.62mm Coax MG (5000 rounds each)
- 40mm Vickers Quick-Fire Tank Gun (120 rounds)
- 12 depth charges

### Speedboat

Wooden hull, outboard motor. It can be fitted with a wooden top.

**ACC/TOP SPEED:** 5/12 **TOUGHNESS:** 10 (2)

**CREW:** 1+3 **COST:** \$400

### Triton Class Submarine



Triton Class  
Submarine

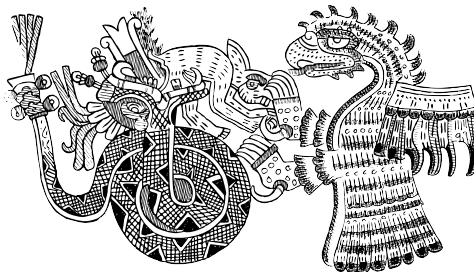
The main attack submarine of the Royal Navy. It has a crush depth of 600 feet.

**ACC/TOP SPEED:** 1/8 **TOUGHNESS:** 14 (2)

**CREW:** 56+6 **COST:** Military only

#### WEAPONS:

- 102mm HE (300 rounds) (Range 70/90/315; Damage 4d8; ROF 1 action to reload; Medium Burst Template; AP 25, Heavy Weapon)
- 3 x 7.62mm Coax MG (2350 rounds each)
- 10 torpedo tubes (26 total torpedoes)



Melee Weapons

TYPE	DAMAGE	WEIGHT	COST	NOTES
Bayonet	Str+d4	1	\$4	Can be fixed to a rifle (below)
Bayonet, Fixed	Str+d6	—		Parry +1, Reach 1, 2H
Bowie Knife	Str+d4+1	2	\$10	AP 1
Bullwhip	Str+d4	2	\$6	Parry -1, Reach 2, see note
Katana	Str+d10	6	\$65	Japanese Only
K-Bar	Str+d4	1	\$5	Parry +1
Kukri	Str+d6	2	\$7	Commonwealth Only
Machete	Str+d6	2	\$5	No additional damage on a raise
Saber	Str+d8	4	\$50	
Switchblade	Str+1	—	\$3	Parry -2

Ranged Weapons

TYPE	RANGE	DAMAGE	ROF	COST	WEIGHT	SHOTS	MIN. STR	NOTES
UNPOWERED								
Thrown Knife	3/6/12	Varies	1	Varies	Varies	—	—	Throwable knives include Bowie, K-Bar, and Kukri
Crossbow	15/30/60	2d6	1	\$15	10	—	d6	AP 2, requires 1 action to reload
Longbow	15/30/60	2d6	1	\$35	5	—	d8	
Shortbow	12/24/48	2d6	1	\$10	3	—	d6	
PISTOLS								
Colt M1911 (.45)	15/24/48	2d6+1	1	\$30	4	7	—	AP 1, Semi-Auto
Flare Pistol	10/20/30	Fire	1	\$30	2	1	—	See note
Nambu 14 Shiki (8mm)	12/24/48	2d6	1	\$15	2	8	—	Semi-Auto, See note
S&W Magnum (.357)	12/24/48	2d6+1	1	\$60	4	6	—	AP 1, Revolver
Tokarev TT33 (7.62mm)	12/24/48	2d6	1	\$25	3	8	—	Semi-Auto
Webley Mk IV (.38)	12/24/48	2d6	1	\$20	2	6	—	Revolver
SUBMACHINE GUNS								
Kokura 100 Shiki (8mm)	12/24/48	2d6	3	Military	10	30	—	AP 1, Auto
M3 “Grease Gun” (.45)	12/24/48	2d6+1	3	\$45	10	30	—	AP 1, Auto
Owen Mk I (9mm)	12/24/48	2d6	3	\$40	11	33	—	AP 1, Auto
Thompson M1A1 (.45)	12/24/48	2d6+1	3	\$75	13	30	—	AP 1, Auto
SHOTGUNS								
Browning Automatic (12g)	2/5/10	1-3d6	1	\$50	9	5	—	Semi-Auto, See note
Winchester 1897 Pump (12g)	2/5/10	1-3d6	1	\$45	8	5	d6	Pump-Action, See note
ASSAULT RIFLES								
AK-47 (7.62mm)	24/48/96	2d8+1	3	Military	10	30	d6	AP 2, Auto
M2 Carbine (.30)	20/40/64	2d8	3	\$70	6	30	—	AP 2, Auto

## Ranged Weapons

TYPE	RANGE	DAMAGE	ROF	COST	WEIGHT	SHOTS	MIN. STR	NOTES
RIFLES								
Arisaka 99 Shiki (7.7mm)	24/48/96	2d8	1	\$45	9	5	—	AP 1, Bolt-Action
Lee-Enfield No. 4 Mk I (.303)	24/48/96	2d8	1	\$30	10	10	d6	AP 2, Bolt-Action
M1 Garand (.30-06)	24/64/120	2d8	1-2	\$100	10	8	d6	AP 2, Semi-Auto, See note
Springfield M1903 (.30-06)	24/48/120	2d8	1	\$35	9	5	d6	AP 2, Bolt-Action
MACHINE GUNS								
Bren Mk II (.303)	24/48/96	2d8	3	\$120	26	30	—	AP 2, May not move
M-1918A2 BAR (.30-06)	24/48/96	2d8	3	\$50	32	250	—	AP 2, May not move
M-2HB (.50)	50/100/200	2d10	3	\$1,000	84	200	—	AP 4, May not move, HW
Nambu Type 99 (7.7mm)	20/40/72	2d8	3	Military	20	30	—	AP 2, May not move, See note
SG-43 (7.62mm)	30/60/120	2d8	3	Military	50	250	—	AP 2, May not move
FLAMETHROWERS								
Flamethrower	Cone Template	2d10	1	\$180	70	10	d6	Ignores Armor
ROCKET LAUNCHERS								
M-1 Bazooka	24/48/96	4d8	1	Military	17	1	—	Medium Burst Template, AP 9, Snapfire, HW
RPG-2	24/48/60	4d8	1	Military	10	1	—	Medium Burst Template, AP 11, Snapfire, HW, 2 rounds to reload
GRENADES								
Mills Bomb	5/10/20	3d6	—	\$10	2	—	—	Medium Burst Template, See note
MkII "Pineapple"	5/10/20	3d6	—	\$10	1	—	—	Medium Burst Template, See note
Molotov Cocktail	5/8/15	1d10	—	\$0.20	1	—	—	Small Burst Template, See note

## Ammunition

TYPE	WEIGHT	COST	NOTES
Arrow	1/5	\$1/2	
Bullets, small	3/50	\$3/50	.22, .32 pistol rounds
Bullets, medium	5/50	\$8/50	.357M, 9mm, .45 pistol rounds, .22 rifle rounds
Bullets, large	8/50	\$16/50	.50 and rifle rounds larger than .22
Flares	1/3	\$5/3	
Quarrel	1/5	\$2	AP 2
Rocket, Bazooka or RPG-2	7/2	Military	
Shells, shotgun	5/50	\$14/50	
Slugs, shotgun	2/10	\$9/10	

# WEAPONS

Remember that melee weapon damage does not include a Wild Die, and bennies may not be spent on damage rolls. Characters with a Strength die lower than the weapon's damage die must use their Strength die rather than the weapon die for damage rolls. Moreover, if you are too weak to get the full damage die, you also get no Parry or Reach bonuses from the weapon (if any).

## WEAPON NOTES

### **AK-47**

Invented in 1944 by the Soviet designer Mikhail Kalashnikov, Stalin has ordered these assault rifles issued to the Red Army. They are available only where the tide of Red subversion has washed.

### **Arisaka 99 Shiki**

The standard rifle of the Japanese Army. Although these specific rifles will not be commonly available in North America or Africa, use these stats for civilian hunting rifles.

### **Arrows**

Outdoors, arrows and quarrels are recovered on a d6 roll of 4-6. Underground or indoors, the chance is reduced to 5-6.

### **Bullwhip**

If the wielder scores a raise on her attack roll, the attack does not inflict an additional +1d6 damage. Rather, the victim suffers a -2 to his Parry until his next action.

### **Colt M1911**

The Colt is a real mankiller at close range, and its range is farther than most pistols, so its Short range has been increased to 15.

### **Flare Pistol**

Flare pistols fire illumination rounds, pyrotechnics, etc. Flare rounds come in red, green, white, or amber star-shell visible for 7 seconds; red or green parachute flares that hang in the air for 20-30 secs.; red or green smoke rounds (also in parachute form) that emit smoke for 20-30 secs. A flare fired into the air rises to 600 feet; table range is the practical distance to start a fire with a flare pistol. Americans are likely to use the M-8; British subjects use the Very pistol.

### **Grenades**

All grenade ranges are throwing distances for thrown grenades.

### **Lee-Enfield No. 4 Mk I**

The primary Commonwealth rifle, available throughout the British Commonwealth, Congress India, the Middle East, and even Siam.

### **M1 Garand**

The first semi-automatic rifle ever issued as a standard infantry combat weapon, the American-made Garand dominated the battlefields of the War with its high rate of fire. A firer who does not move can fire the Garand with a RoF of 2.

### **M2 Carbine**

Some U.S. forces are equipped with this selective-fire version of the M1 Carbine developed in 1945 just before the Serpentfall. Its carbine round suffers trajectory drop at longer ranges, so its range has been lowered comparative to the AK-47.

### **Mills Bomb**

The standard British grenade has either a 4- or 7-second fuse, depending on which one the thrower inserts.

### **Molotov Cocktail**

A bottle full of gasoline; less aerodynamic than a real grenade, but less pricey, too. Make sure to check the Fire rules in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook (p. 95).

### **Nambu 14 Shiki**

A cheap imitation of the Luger, this is the primary Japanese sidearm. It always jams or misfires on a Shooting roll of 1, requiring a

## Weapons of the Post-Serpentfall World



AK-47



Colt  
M1911



Nambu  
14 Shiki



SG-43



Owen  
Mk I



Thompson  
M1A1



Lee-Enfield No. 4 Mk I



Arisaka 99 Shiki



Nambu Type 99



RPG-2

Repair roll (or Shooting at -2) and 1d6 actions to fix. The GM can use these stats and this rule for any cheap “Saturday Night Special” or ill-maintained gun.

### Nambu Type 99

The Japanese light machine gun. It fires Japanese rifle ammunition, but breaks down on a Shooting roll of 1, as above. It is not available outside the Japanese Empire, China, or the Philippines.

### Owen Mk I

The first submachine gun invented and manufactured in Australia, this rugged SMG has become standard issue for Commonwealth forces.

### RPG-2

A Soviet modification of the German Panzerfaust, the RPG-2 fires HE anti-tank rockets that must be assembled before loading.

### SG-43

The primary Soviet medium machine gun uses a thick barrel rather than a water jacket (which

could freeze). Its mount is not a tripod but a two-wheeled cart. It is not available outside the Soviet sphere.

### Shotguns

As noted in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook (p. 45), shotguns provide a +2 to the firer’s Shooting. They do 1d6 damage at Long range, 2d6 at Medium, and 3d6 at Short range. Ranges given here for shotguns are considerably shorter than in the *Savage Worlds* rulebook because effective ranges for shotguns are considerably shorter than for pistols firing solid shot. Shotguns are “close in” weapons, for clearing trenches and rooms and unsavory burrows. Embrace it.

Shotguns can fire slugs instead of shot; slugs do not provide +2 to Shooting, but do 2d10 at all ranges (12/24/48).

### Thompson M1A1

The “Tommy gun” is far more often encountered with the military-issue 30-round box clip than with the 50-round or 100-round drum.





## Ophi-Tech

The Serpentfall not only reshaped the geopolitics, and even the geography, of the Earth; it also reshaped the sciences. Quite simply, the Serpent should be impossible: Nothing that large should exist, or be able to move. And it certainly shouldn't breed monsters when it's dead, or while alive have responded to magical rituals cast by deranged Nazis in amphetamine fugue states. Understanding the "how" of the Serpent is the goal of ophiurgists from Grahamstown to Gorkiy—but they're not even sure about the "what" yet.

But the tiny pinpricks of knowledge the ophiurgists have drained from the Serpent's corpse have created an increasing flow of "ophi-tech," which some people (and governments) are willing to use without knowing anything else.

### ACQUIRING OPHI-TECH

As mentioned under the Arcane Background (Ophi-Tech) Edge, almost everyone with reliable access to ophi-tech works for Rhodes University, a government, or another high-powered research institution. The GM is perfectly within her rights to insist that any hero with ophi-tech has to accept such apron strings as a condition of the Edge.

However, the GM might also decree that independent heroes can begin with "gray-market" knockoff versions, post-military issue equipment, or (hopefully) untraceable black-market stolen ophi-tech. It might even be available later in the game, to people who know just who to ask. (Streetwise at -4, even in a suitable location.) She should set the price considerably higher than the heroes can pay, at least not without doing something horribly risky and adventurous to earn it...

In such a version of the setting, the GM might also decide that such street versions of ophi-tech are less reliable than the officially issued gear: Where Rhodes University ophi-tech only malfunctions on snake-eyes, the unlicensed sort malfunctions on a 1.

In no version of the setting should heroes be able to invent new ophi-tech devices, unless they have access to a major research laboratory like Bell Labs or the Woomera Proving Grounds. Ophi-tech research is like atomic research: even the unclassified stuff takes million-dollar pieces of equipment and a team of Ph.D.s. Getting the New Power Edge should be justified by story developments: taking a jet pack off the fallen body of a villainous Argentine fascist, or getting a Marconi gun as a reward for services rendered to His Majesty's Government.

### OPHI-TECH GEAR

#### *Ablative-Metabolic Suit*

Resembling a flight suit made of snakeskin and stuffed with particularly lively eels, the ablative-metabolic suit protects the wearer from any extreme of temperature or pressure known on the Earth's surface (though not magma) or in near space. It is a full body suit including gloves, boots, cowl, and visor; the wearer looks out through polarized obsidian goggles. It weighs

### Sometimes The Serpent Bites Back

As an optional rule, the GM can decide that any hero who suffers from a certain number of ophi-tech malfunctions—3, or 6, or his Vigor die, or 13, or whatever—gains the Minor Hindrance Snakebit, as whatever safeguards exist on the biochemistry of these horrid things are obviously not working any better than the rest of the design. A hero who's already Snakebit and suffers such repeated malfunctions has the Hindrance "upgraded" to Major.

30 lbs. while carried; while worn, it supports its own weight and has a negligible impact on Encumbrance. Given its bizarre appearance, it is usually carried in a pack until needed. Once unfolded and stepped into, it crawls over the wearer's body rapidly; donning the suit takes 1 minute.

The ablative-metabolic suit is a quasi-living pouch or sandwich of harvested Serpent-skin on the outside and germ plasm made of Serpent stem cells (mined on the Spine) inside. The stem cells endlessly multiply, dying in response to whatever environmental condition exists, breeding themselves to withstand the new stimulus and keep the Serpent-skin (and thus the wearer inside it) alive. This process is not instantaneous: the skin cannot survive a sudden major breach or drastic changes in stimuli, so it does not protect against flamethrowers, lightning, or other similar hazards. It is not bulletproof. To function in vacuum, unbreathable gas, or thin atmosphere (or underwater), the suit's wearer must also use the hypox apparatus (below).

Activating the Ablative-Metabolic Suit requires a successful Ophi-Tech roll. Heroes who purchase the *environmental protection* power via the Arcane Background (Ophi-Tech) Edge are assumed to have acquired both an ablative-metabolic suit and a hypox apparatus. Ophi-tech stumbled over in the course of the campaign might not be so neatly collated.

**MALFUNCTION:** On a malfunction, the suit's internal metabolic system goes haywire, over-reacting to the stimuli and breeding metastatic cells that attack each other. The suit begins to flail and jerk around, with the wearer still inside it, and begins compensating for nonexistent environmental problems: increasing the air pressure in a desert, or heating up underwater. It requires an Agility test to escape before it begins doing 2d6 damage to the wearer each round. It must be repaired in a biological laboratory before it can be worn again; restoring the suit's metabolic equilibrium requires a successful Ophi-Tech roll (or Knowledge (Biology) at -4) and 2d6 hours.

## Crotaline Drops

Many of the beings living inside the Serpent can see in the dark. A serum derived from their aqueous humor and from the nerve fibers of the pit viper (family *Crotalinae*) can stimulate thermoreception through the human optic nerve. Mixed with ethyl alcohol, this serum is administered as eye drops that give the user infrared vision (the *darkvision* power). Rhodes University herpetologists have engineered photosynthetic glands to secrete this serum; crotaline drops come in a glass bottle with a gland in a compartment, or well, at the bottom. If the bottle is out of drops (if the user has expended his Power Points), the gland can manufacture more with sugar or sunlight and time (1 point per hour). The user still needs to refill the alcohol, or the drops badly burn the eyes for 1d4 damage and -4 on all Notice rolls for the hour.

Activating crotaline drops requires only 1 round of undistracted time to put drops in the user's eyes, and a Guts roll to put something that icky in your eye. The bottle has negligible weight and no effect on Encumbrance.

**MALFUNCTION:** On a malfunction, the drops overfunction, and the user is blinded by a wave of unfamiliar sensations as his brain ceases processing information from the optic nerve. Restoring the user's sight requires completely cleaning the eyes, 3d6 minutes, and a Healing roll. Restoring the drops' balance requires 2d6 hours in a chemical or biochemical laboratory and a successful Ophi-Tech roll (or Knowledge (Biology) at -4).

## Fiber Bomb

Among other things, the Serpent has been a cornucopia of bizarre long-chain organic molecules. One polymer found mostly in its parasite species is such an enormous molecule that it is actually visible (barely) to the naked eye, nicknamed "pythine" by the researchers who isolated it. It shows a marked tendency to attract other organic matter. Loading a compressed-air capsule with pythine and mineral oil creates a "fiber bomb"; when the capsule breaks, the air propels the

pythine out in a blast to cling to whatever organic material (skin, clothing, leather, hydrocarbons, rubber, wood, plastic, etc.) it touches. In the field, agents travel with a “starter” of pythine and decant it (very carefully) into capsules; the mineral oil makes sure it doesn’t start clamping onto them. Small capsules just affect a single man-sized target; larger ones affect a Medium Burst Template’s worth. Even a man in full plate armor will soon discover just how much of plate mail consists of tiny crevices with leather straps behind them; at the GM’s discretion, all-metal targets like robots or totally sealed bathyspheres shed pythine without effect. Eventually, pythine breaks down in the air, but cleaning it off even then is slow going.

Activating a fiber bomb is as simple as a Throwing roll; spending 2 Power Points means you threw a small capsule, spending 4 means you threw a large one. The throwing range of a fiber bomb is Agility, not Smarts (unlike the normal *entangle* in the **Savage Worlds** rulebook). Loading more fiber bombs from the starter (“recharging” the power) is what requires the Ophi-Tech roll (or Lockpicking at -4).

**MALFUNCTION:** On a malfunction, the fiber bomb has either gone off without effect (the pythine became inert for some reason) or goes off prematurely and affects the thrower; GM’s choice.

## Gill Array

This is actually a modified version of the hypox apparatus immediately below, although it resembles a bizarre cross between a tank-less SCUBA rebreather and a pair of snorkels (actually exhausts for waste hydrogen). A small ophiline-fueled compressor electrolyses the water as the wearer inhales it through a Serpent-lung membrane, creating a flow of oxygen laced with neurotransmitters to speed reaction time and control oxygen narcosis. The result is the same speed and mobility underwater as above it, or even better. The gill array does not protect the wearer from icy cold or high pressure below the thermocline; for that, he should have an ablative-metabolic suit or other protection.

Activating the gill array requires an Ophi-Tech roll, or a Swimming roll at -2. Once activated, the hero can use the *aquatic* power (see p. 21) as noted. It weighs 6 lbs, including the face mask.

**MALFUNCTION:** On a malfunction, the wearer begins to drown. Repairing a malfunctioning gill array usually requires nothing but 2d6 hours, a decent workshop, a spare part or two, and a Repair roll.

## Hypox Apparatus

The Hyper-Oxygenation Apparatus, to use its formal name, resembles nothing so much as a large mechanical spider clinging to the wearer’s face over the mouth and nose, its “legs” reaching across the jaws and throat. The “legs” are actually a metal framework to keep the wearer’s throat and jaws from collapsing (or exploding) in variable breathing pressures; the “body of the spider” is a biomechanical compressor built around a slice of Serpent lung (an alveolus, actually) that draws in all available oxygen in the environment—mountaintop, underwater, poison cloud—compresses it, and respirates into the wearer’s trachea through the mouth. If there is no oxygen whatsoever in the environment—a hard vacuum—it draws on stored oxygen in the alveolus.

Activating the hypox apparatus requires an Ophi-Tech roll. Heroes who purchase the *environmental protection* power via the Arcane Background (Ophi-Tech) Edge are assumed to have acquired both an ablative-metabolic suit and a hypox apparatus. Ophi-tech stumbled over in the course of the campaign might not be so neatly collated. The hypox apparatus allows the wearer to breathe underwater, but does not grant any bonuses to Swimming or to swimming Pace. It weighs 6 lbs. carried, but when worn does not add to Encumbrance.

**MALFUNCTION:** On a malfunction, the hypox apparatus ceases to feed oxygen to the wearer. If the wearer happens to be in a breathable atmosphere, nothing too terrible happens; in other atmospheres, suffocation likely ensues (use the rules for Smoke Inhalation on p. 95 of the **Savage Worlds** rulebook). Repairing a malfunctioning hypox apparatus requires either the same process

as repairing a gill array, or the same process as repairing an ablative-metabolic suit (see the previous pages for both), depending on whether the GM rules that the compressor failed, or the alveolus “caught cold.”

## Jet Pack

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This is just what it sounds like: a jet pack! Powered by an ophiline engine, it is controlled with a joystick handle like a helicopter yoke; a shark-like fin on the back provides stabilization and looks cool.

Activating a jet pack requires either a Ophi-Tech roll or Piloting at -2, but all other maneuvers use Piloting. Fighting while flying uses the lower of the user’s Fighting or Piloting skills, at a -4 penalty. Shooting while flying likewise uses the lower of Shooting or Piloting, but at a -2 penalty; it’s easier to correct aim for a gun than a sword swing while zooming around. The Steady Hands Edge mitigates or negates this penalty. The jet pack weighs 40 lbs. The wearer can carry one other person (or the equivalent weight) at half normal speed and a further -1 to all Piloting rolls.

**ACC/TOP SPEED:** 15/35 **CLIMB:** 35 **TOUGHNESS:** 8 (2) **CREW:** 1+1

**MALFUNCTION:** On a malfunction, roll whichever die rolled the “1” again. (If it was snake-eyes, the player chooses the die.) On another 1, the jet pack explodes, causing 3d10 damage to everyone in a Medium Burst Template. On any other result, it merely “flames out,” which is bad enough if the user is in midair at the time. If any pieces can be recovered from the crash, repairing it requires 2d6 hours and a really good workshop, plus a Repair roll.

## Marconi Gun

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This pistol-grip weapon, the size of a large submachine pistol, is the most commonly available piece of ophi-tech in the world, with the exception of ophiline itself (see the next page). The South African Police (South Africa’s internal security agents) carry them as sidearms, as do the RRAF and some specialist units of various Commonwealth militaries. Possession of an unlicensed Marconi gun is a hanging offense in South Africa, and a very serious charge elsewhere in the Commonwealth. Despite this, they are eagerly sought after on the black market. Manufactured by Marconi SAF in Pretoria, the Marconi gun transforms power generated by a microbial fuel cell (utilizing fever microbes found within the Serpent’s intestine) into excited microwave radiation ionized by passage through a tuned chromium barrel. In short, it fires a bright-colored burst of deadly microwaves that boil and explode flesh, disrupt electronics, and create brief explosive arcs of electrical discharge in metal.

Firing a Marconi gun is a Shooting test.

**RANGE:** 12/24/48

**DAMAGE:** 2d6 (for 1 Power Point), although the firer can set the gun to a hi-power (3d6) setting (for 2 Power Points). Alternately, the firer (for 1 Power Point) can set the gun to “Pain,” which heats flesh to 130 degrees Fahrenheit, triggering the target’s pain receptors but not causing actual burning damage. The target must make a Vigor roll or be Shaken. On a raise on the firer’s Shooting roll, the target’s Vigor roll is at -2. A “Pain” burst has no effect on electronics or metal. All Marconi gun shots ignore armor; they boil the victim from the inside.

**ROF:** 1, although the firer can set the gun to a three-round burst (by tripling the Power Point cost).

**COST:** If the heroes can even find a black-market Marconi gun (Streetwise at -4 plus a suitably clever plan in the course of a scenario), it will cost at least \$1,000. Replacement fuel cells cost \$240; replacement barrels cost \$100.

**WEIGHT:** 8 lbs. Replacement fuel cells weigh 3 lbs.; replacement barrels weigh 1 lb.

**SHOTS:** 10 Power Points; more if the hero has the Power Points Edge. Like “normal” weird science powers, a Marconi gun recharges 1 Power Point per hour as the microbial power cell metabolizes the organosulfate broth in its battery.

**MALFUNCTION:** The Marconi gun is proven technology, or as proven as ophi-tech gets. On a malfunction, roll whichever die rolled the “1” again and check the table at right. (If it was snake-eyes, the player chooses the die.)

## Neural Stimulator

A fairly complex nerve agent distilled from the Serpent’s venom. The Japanese bio-weapons laboratory in Manchukuo has a vast variety of venom varieties, conveying various powers to Kempeitai and other elite Japanese agents. The neural stimulator is the only such serum known (publicly, at any rate) to come out of Rhodes University’s labs. It must be injected into a vein. Continued use increases the effect. Carrying a syringe and an ampoule of neural stimulator has negligible impact on Encumbrance.

Injecting is a 1-round action, and requires an Ophi-Tech roll to stay focused in the extraordinarily weird rush. At the Novice level, with a success, the user has two actions every other round instead of the usual one. (On the round after he injects it, he has one action. The round after that, he has two actions. The round after that, one again. Etc.) With a raise, the user can also discard and redraw any initiative cards lower than 6 each round. At Seasoned level or better, the serum has the standard effects of *quickness* (*Savage Worlds* rulebook, p. 84). The serum lasts for 6 rounds.

Once the user is out of Power Points, his nervous system requires at least 4 hours of rest before he can inject again: by coincidence, just enough time for 4 Power Points (the cost of the power) to recharge.

**MALFUNCTION:** On a malfunction, the user is immediately Incapacitated, though not otherwise damaged unless the GM feels like adding a heart attack, a congenital twitch, etc. (GMs may add such things with repeated malfunctions.) Recovering from neural shock requires a Healing roll (which leaves the hero Shaken) and then a day of bed rest.

## Ophiline

Ophiline is refined Serpent oil, pumped from the Serpent’s body by slant-drilling derricks in East Africa and England. Royal Dutch-Shell has developed a “stepped-down” version suitable for standard internal combustion engines (herpetrol, called “O-gas” in America), but the pure stuff is available for research purposes...and for other purposes as well. Wildcat drillers have made ophiline potentially available almost anywhere motor vehicles might get fueled, although it costs nearly \$3 a gallon! For full effect, it requires a specially built alloy engine, such as those in the jet pack (see the previous page) or RRAF rocket-planes, but even in conventional vehicles it has a remarkable effect on performance.

Just pouring ophiline into a normal vehicle’s gas tank almost always merely melts down the engine. It takes both customized additives to the fuel and adjustments to the engine—which is to say, an Ophi-Tech roll and 2d6 hours, as well as access to a decent garage and a chemistry laboratory—to strengthen any given conventional engine enough to run on ophiline. On a success, the vehicle’s Acc/Top Speed is doubled, as is its cruising speed. With a raise, the vehicle’s mileage is also doubled. (Thus the range of an airplane, for example, is quadrupled.) An ophiurgist can only work with ophiline for so long before becoming woozy and in danger of Snakebite; in game terms, modifying a vehicle requires 10 Power Points.

## Marconi Gun Malfunction

DIE ROLL	EFFECT
1	The gun overheats and shorts out, doing 1d6 damage to the firer. It can be repaired with a Repair roll, 2d6 hours, and a good workshop.
2-4	The fuel cell is dead (literally) and needs to be replaced. This requires a Repair roll, a replacement fuel cell, and 1d6 minutes.
5-6	The chromium barrel is detuned or too badly ionized to focus the beam, and needs to be replaced. This requires a Shooting roll, a replacement barrel, and 1d6 rounds.
7+	No Malfunction

**MALFUNCTION:** A 1 on the Ophi-Tech roll to modify a vehicle blows up the vehicle, doing 3d10 damage to everyone and everything in a Large Blast Template. A 1 to the Driving or Piloting roll of an “ophilized” vehicle merely burns out the motor and starts a fire in the engine compartment.

## Sinew-Weave Vest

Woven from collagen fascicles from the Serpent’s tendons, the sinew-weave vest is still too heavy, bulky, and expensive for general issue even to Commonwealth forces. It is available on the open market for \$350; it weighs 13 lbs. and protects the torso. It provides 2 points of Armor against most attacks including fire and electricity, and negates 2 points of AP from bullets. An even heavier version sells for \$700; it weighs 20 lbs., provides 4 points of Armor, and negates 4 points of AP from bullets.

A hero with the Arcane Background (Ophi-Tech) Edge who selects the *armor* power has a stash of sinew-weave fascicles available to him. He can spend 2d6 hours, and make an Ophi-Tech roll, to impregnate them into a normal garment. *He makes this roll retroactively when the wearer is hit by a bullet or other attack.* On a success, the fascicles coagulate at the point of impact, stiffening the garment and providing either 2 points (with a normal success) or 4 points (with a raise) of Armor, and negating a similar amount of AP from bullets. Once activated, they remain active for 3 rounds, during which no Ophi-Tech roll is needed if the wearer is hit; they then have to relax for at least one round. After 1 round of relaxation, another shot or attack re-activates the fascicles, requiring another Ophi-Tech roll by the preparer. After a given sinew-weave garment has been activated 5 times, an ophiurgist needs to re-stitch it and re-treat it with chemical nutrients for 10 hours; it’s then good for another 5 potential activations.

**MALFUNCTION:** A roll of 1 on the Ophi-Tech roll means the attack hits the wearer for normal damage. The fascicles must have degraded: the garment must be re-stitched and re-treated with new ones to provide any protection in the future.

## OTHER OPHI-TECH GEAR

The GM can invent similar items, either as potential hero equipment or as gizmos used by Soviet science-villains, deros, walk-on Rhodes researchers, or other NPCs. Here’s one such item.

### Avro Blackhawk

The RRAF deploys this delta-winged rocket-plane for missions onto the Spine, as well as the occasional Most Secret “over-the-Wall” shot into Soviet territory. It has a ramjet for high-atmospheric flight, a rocket for launch flight, and two maneuvering jets; as much as possible of its flight time is ballistic. Needless to say, it is fueled by ophiline. The Blackhawk is too rare to use for mere conventional globe-hopping, although successor craft may well take on that role for missions or cargoes requiring stealth and speed. The Soviets are rumored to have a similar craft, the Keldysh N-1.

The listed Top Speed is for normal flight; the Blackhawk reaches Speed 800 (nearly Mach 3) in rocket mode, during takeoff. Climb, likewise, is for normal flight. The Blackhawk can reach the Spine from Zanzibar Field in 2 hours, or anywhere on Earth in 12 hours. It cannot reach stable low Earth orbit.

**ACC/TOP SPEED:** 50/520; **CLIMB:** 25; **TOUGHNESS:** 14 (3); **CREW:** 2+7; **COST:** Military only

**NOTES:** Infrared Night Vision

#### WEAPONS:

- 6 x 12.7mm MG (300 rounds each) (Range 50/100/200; Damage 2d10; ROF 3; AP 3)
- 8 x 5-inch rockets (Range 100/200/440; Damage 4d6+1; ROF 1; Medium Burst Template; AP 6, Heavy Weapon)



# game master's section



*"The will that wanted to shape an entire world according to its wish can finally attain nothing more satisfactory than... annihilation."*

— RICHARD WAGNER,  
PROGRAM NOTE TO *Götterdämmerung*



# The World After Ragnarok

Adventures can happen anywhere and everywhere on **The Day After Ragnarok**. This guide gives you the lowdown on the world situation, with enough information to get you started running savage scenarios in any corner of the globe. Don't worry about history: It went off the rails in a big way a few years back.

Inventions might get made early or not at all, plenty of folks died in this world that didn't in others, and the geopolitics can go any which way in the wake of the Serpentfall.

*"Brothers shall fight and fell each other,  
And sisters' sons shall kinship stain;  
Harsh times on Earth, a wanton age;  
An Axe Age, a Sword Age, when shields are sundered,  
A Wind Age, a Wolf Age, before the world falls;  
No man to another shall show mercy."*

— VÖLUSPÁ, STANZA 45

## THE BRITISH EMPIRE

The falling Serpent smashed the British Isles, but the Empire was bigger than that. The Duke of Gloucester, Prince Henry, serving as Australia's Governor-General in 1945, transferred the Imperial capital to Sydney and took the throne as King Henry IX. He and Prime Minister Menzies have taken controversial steps since then: negotiating an armistice with the Japanese, holding on to as much of India as they could, pushing ahead with ophiurgic research, and drawing a "thin red line" across the path of Soviet expansion. However, most Australians see no better plan on offer, and the rest of the Empire is if anything even more monarchist and supportive. So far, Henry has managed to govern an Empire of four parliaments (Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and South Africa) with one (mostly Australian) Cabinet; constitutional reform is one more question that opponents accuse Menzies and the King of ducking. They, on the other hand, see other problems as bigger and more immediate: the Soviets, the Serpent, and the need to hold onto Empire by the skin of their teeth or see barbarism roll over the world unresisted. His Majesty's Government has decided who and what its enemies are, and what it needs to do and build to fight them in this new world.

### Australia

With a population of 10 million, Australia is the country on Earth least affected by the Serpentfall physically. Even the "years without a summer" were milder in Australia, on the other side of the world from the Serpentfall's plume of dirt and mist. But it is one of the most affected politically: it has suddenly become the heart and fulcrum of the British Empire.

Australia has no bandits worth mentioning, although some Aboriginal tribes in the interior worship the Serpent. The desolate Outback allows the government to isolate major experimental facilities such as the Woomera Proving Grounds for ophiurgical and rocketry research.

### South Africa

The Union of South Africa is the other major pole of the British Empire. Its white population of less than 3 million maintains near-total control over the economy and political structure of the country, although it is split between the monarchist South African Party and the National Party of mostly Boer stock. The National Party believes first in controlling the 10 million Xhosa, Zulu, and other blacks in South Africa, and secondarily in pursuing South African independence. (There are also about 3 million Indians, mostly laborers and small businessmen, in British Africa.) King Henry and his government must walk a fine line in South Africa. Trying to bring it completely into the Imperial mainstream will offend the Boers and possibly splinter the Empire; leaving the Boers to their own devices will encourage white nationalism and stir up native unrest

throughout Africa. The presence in South Africa of Rhodes University, the Empire's premier (and indispensable) research facility, only complicates matters. Rhodes U. is itself split: institutionally, Rhodes very much favors a "strong hand" in Africa, but many of its scholars are socialists, internationalists, liberals, and otherwise suspicious of Boer policy. South Africa also produces strategic minerals necessary for British industrial and weapons development.

With the British Isles destroyed, there is an urgent shortage of colonial administrators for King Henry's Empire. South African and Rhodesian whites increasingly flow into African colonial posts, including Tanganyika, the "protectorates" of formerly Portuguese Angola and Mozambique, and the former Belgian Congo. (British East Africa has its own native British aristocracy.) Hence, South Africa and Australia find themselves competing for influence in Africa under the common British Imperial crown.

With its vital strategic location, mineral deposits, colonial presence, and Rhodes University, South Africa has a good deal of scope for independent action. For example, the South African Police (SAP) maintains their own network of spies and mercenaries to keep rebel groups and "subversives" down. The SAP does not accept MI5 control or oversight, although it cooperates with British Intelligence on a case-by-case basis.

## British India

After the Serpentfall, the British government altered its policy of treating India as an indivisible dominion on a single track to independence. The elections of 1947 included an option to remain under British control: the Muslim and Sikh sections of India, along with a number of the "princely states," voted to remain British rather than join the rest of India in independence under the Congress Party of Nehru and Gandhi. "Congress India" denounced the results, claiming that the British and their native client rulers had manipulated their subjects to once more "divide and conquer" India. This was almost certainly the case, although neither side's hands were clean in that election. British India and Congress India both remain tense, with political rioting and the occasional massacre common events in both jurisdictions. In both Indias, angry majorities pressure or coerce people who voted "wrong" to emigrate to the other side of the border.

The main areas of India remaining under British control include: Baluchistan, Sind, Bengal, Rajasthan, the Punjab, Nepal, Kashmir, Hyderabad, and Mysore, along with the "associated colonies" of Ceylon and Burma. A Viceroy administers British India from Calcutta.

## Fimbulwinter

According to the sagas, the "Great Winter" comes before Ragnarok: three years without a summer before Garm howls. And indeed, 1941-1944 were exceptionally cold and wet, another doom for Operation Barbarossa. But in 1945, the Serpentfall truly brought on the great cold.

The Serpent's coil fell into the sea, splashing not just the mega-tsunami across the Atlantic but a plume of water up into the atmosphere. There, it froze out and fell again as snow in August. And September. And for nine months after that. Burning cities tossed their share of soot and smoke into the darkening skies, as people starved and rioted all across the Northern Hemisphere. (Except in Russia, where the Narts' "Red Spring" held winter at bay, and the NKVD liquidated any rioters.) The icy atmosphere reflected more of the sun's light back into space. The Gulf Stream, blocked by the Serpent's corpse, slackened. The globe began to cool.

In Africa, rain fell in the Sahara, as the wet air hit the miles-high wall of the Serpent's coil. Even more rain fell in Algeria and Libya, on Spain and France, as the wet air from the Atlantic poured between the Serpent's coils in a storm channel from Ireland to Aden. None of that moisture crosses the Serpent's European coil—without the Narts, the Soviet empire would be in the first stages of a millennia-long drought.

While running games, make sure to mention the terrible weather: snow, rain, sleet, freezing rain, hail, blizzard, ice storm, drizzle, fog. The skies are gray, and cloudy, and overcast, and threatening, and roiling, and murky, and thunderous. Roads are slick, and treacherous; passes are snow-choked and impassable. Good weather should feel like a reward; like a dramatic sunbeam at the end of the movie. Or it should be a contrast: Australia is still sunny, while the rest of the world grays out.

## Sir Maxwell Knight



During the War, Sir Maxwell (b. 1900) ran the counter-extremist section of MI5, recruiting and turning agents in the British fascist underground. He worked with Aleister Crowley and Ian Fleming, among others. His occult training and intense anti-Communism qualified him for the post of Director General of MI5 after the Serpentfall. So, too, did the fact that he was almost the only high-ranking MI5 officer to survive the catastrophe. Sir

Maxwell does not discuss how he managed that particular feat.

He has piercing eyes and magnetic charm. He keeps a private menagerie, including a baboon and two peacocks. In conversation, he rasps out a few incisive orders or sits silently listening. His enemies in the Service and in the Cabinet have accused him of having had lovers in the Daughters of Dionin.



**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**SKILLS:** Fighting d6, Gambling d10, Guts d10, Intimidation d12, Investigation d8, Knowledge (Botany) d8, Knowledge (Occult) d8, Knowledge (Tradecraft) d10, Notice d10, Persuasion d8, Shooting d8, Streetwise d8

**CHARISMA:** +2 **PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 5 **TOUGHNESS:** 6

**EDGES:** Beast Master, Charismatic, Connections

**HINDRANCES:** Curious

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **AGENTS:** As head of MI5, Sir Maxwell has free access to any number of agents within the British Empire. (Use Secret Agent stats, p. 81-82) Outside the Empire, he must make a Streetwise test, as per the Connections edge.
- **ARCANE BACKGROUND (MAGIC):** If you decide that Sir Maxwell is an actual occult practitioner, rather than merely a student of the Art, add this Edge, Anemic, and Spellcasting d8, along with suitable divination, scrying, and astral travel spells.

## Professor Bernard Childermass



Professor Childermass (b. 1896) is the head of the Experimental Royal Rocketry Group, based in Woomera, Australia and Nairobi, Kenya. Born in Kenya, Professor Childermass originally wanted to be an African explorer, but after meeting Wernher von Braun during a trip to Germany in 1936 he turned his attention to rockets and space research. After the Serpentfall, he convinced Vickers to recruit Jean-Jacques Barre and his team from France to serve as the core of a British rocket group. He also led an RRAF team that salvaged Robert Goddard's Roswell laboratory—and a number of odd artifacts found in the desert nearby—in 1947. He often goes on such field missions when some scientific puzzle attracts his attention.



Lean, acerbic, and completely dedicated to scientific knowledge (especially knowledge of outer space) at all costs, Childermass runs the ERRG through sheer strength of will. He has an estranged daughter, Paula, but otherwise has little interest in mere human contact. Despite such apparent misanthropy, he has a powerfully humanist moral code.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d6, Smarts d12, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d10

**SKILLS:** Driving d6, Guts d10, Intimidation d8, Investigation d10, Knowledge (Astronomy) d12, Knowledge (Ophiurgy) d8, Knowledge (Rocketry) d12+2, Notice d10, Piloting d8, Repair d10

**CHARISMA:** 0 **PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 2 **TOUGHNESS:** 7

**EDGES:** Expert (Knowledge (Rocketry)), Nerves of Steel, Professional (Knowledge (Rocketry)), Scholar (Astronomy and Rocketry)

**HINDRANCES:** Arrogant, Overconfident, Stubborn

## The SIS

The Secret Intelligence Service (SIS, also called MI6) is the foreign espionage arm of the British Empire. The SIS director, currently Major-General Sir Richard Hannay (though always known as “C”), reports to the Foreign Minister. His agents are coolly competent, well equipped with ophi-tech and other gadgets, and almost always deeply familiar with the cultures and countries in which they work. However, no spy service is flawless. Two organizations, especially, seek to infiltrate and subvert the SIS. Just how far either has gotten is up to you.

### DAUGHTERS OF DIONIN

This secret society of Serpent-worshippers goes back at least to Victorian times, if not earlier. (The Daughters claim a lineage going back to before the Roman invasion of Britain; “Dionin” was a Serpent-god worshipped in Derbyshire.) As the name implies, priestesses of the Serpent, almost all of aristocratic lineage, run the cult. Their connections in British society provide access to the highest ranks of the military, government, and the SIS; magic or other techniques then complete the subversion. Most of the Daughters died in the Serpentfall; a few scattered covens (run by less-favored priestesses) in the colonies are recreating their network.

### NKVD

The Soviet intelligence service had penetrated SIS deeply during the War, but most of its key double agents (Kim Philby and his associates) died in the Serpentfall. The Russians have been attempting to rebuild their network within SIS, opposed by the suspicious Sir Maxwell Knight, head of MI5, the British counter-intelligence Special Service. The other main Soviet targets are the ophiurgical and rocketry research facilities in Australia and Africa; on this front, many top scientists’ Communist sympathies smooth the road for the NKVD.

## Canada

Thanks to the Japan Current, Pacific Canada remains habitable even in these “years without summer.” Vancouver is an increasingly important manufacturing and shipbuilding center. The Mounties explore and patrol the Canadian area of the Poisoned Lands, although the primary government priority is restoring civilization in, links to, and oil production from Alberta on the other side of the Rockies.

## British Isles

Most of Great Britain was crushed under the Serpent, and Ireland drowned in the mega-tsunami. (It also absorbed a vast quantity of Serpent blood; Ireland is, for all intents and purposes, a Poisoned Land of bogs and fens now.) Although Bristol and Portsmouth both (barely) lie to the west of the Serpent’s coil, earthquakes smashed both cities to flinders.

At present, Plymouth is the largest city remaining in the British Isles. Although it, too, was hit hard by quakes and flooding, it has survived and serves as the center of the island’s military government; Britain remains under Royal Navy jurisdiction. A program of subsidies and incentives slowly depopulates the islands, resettling the surviving Britons in Australia or New Zealand and removing what remains of British culture, art, and science to the new Imperial center.

But England has one new attraction: the Hereford Cut, a hole cut into the belly of the dead Serpent by the Royal Society (and the Royal Engineers). A major ophiurgical research institution flourishes at Cardiff, the base of the Imperial Speleo-Herpetological Corps. To a lesser degree, the Royal Dutch-Shell ophiline-cracking refineries in Wales also engage in ophi-tech research.

## The Caribbean

Cuba shielded Jamaica, the British “crown jewel of the Caribbean,” from the worst effects of the Serpentfall. The tropical warmth, and the opportunities to loot the drowned American coast



## Commander Ivan Sanderson



A British Naval Intelligence officer stationed in Belize, British Honduras, Sanderson (b. 1911) has a sensitive, intelligent face fringed with sleek brown hair and beard. During his global travels before the War, Sanderson became fascinated by rumors of sea-serpents, living dinosaurs, and other cryptozoological oddities. Since the Serpentfall, he has had plenty of chances to study them close up.



Despite this specialized knowledge, Sanderson is not in good odor with his Naval superiors at the moment. Too many of his reports deal with the supposed threat from “an intelligent, and hostile, underwater race” who Sanderson holds responsible for ship disappearances from Belize to Bermuda, and beyond. Only the desperate shortage of personnel, and the nagging feeling of some in the Admiralty that he just *might* be right, keeps Sanderson in his posting. With little official cooperation, Sanderson is eager to recruit passing adventurers for monster hunts or expeditions to scout out the “invisible residents” underwater.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d8

**SKILLS:** Boating d8, Climbing d8, Fighting d6, Guts d6, Investigation d6, Knowledge (Botany) d8, Knowledge (Geology) d6, Knowledge (Tradecraft) d6, Knowledge (Zoology) d10, Notice d6, Persuasion d6, Piloting d6, Shooting d6, Survival d8, Swimming d8, Tracking d8

**CHARISMA:** +0 **PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 5 **TOUGHNESS:** 6

**EDGES:** Investigator, Level Headed

**HINDRANCES:** Curious, Doubting Thomas, Snakebit

**NOTES:** It's up to you whether Sanderson is Delusional on the topic of undersea aliens.

## William Samson, Jr.



The “Wolf of Kabul” (b. 1902) has been working for the Intelligence Department of the Indian Army for 25 years. He has contacts throughout Central Asia, from Tehran to Tibet, and knows every native language and custom. He keeps abreast of anything strange or inimical to British interests on the northwestern frontier, paying special attention to Soviet machinations in the region. He often wears native garb, with only his glinting blue eyes to give him away.



**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d10

**SKILLS:** Climbing d8, Fighting d10, Guts d10, Healing d6, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Central Asia) d12, Notice d10, Persuasion d8, Riding d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d10, Streetwise d10, Survival d12, Taunt d8, Throwing d8, Tracking d10

**CHARISMA:** +0 **PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 7 **TOUGHNESS:** 7

**EDGES:** Alertness, Ambidextrous, Bump For Languages, Connections, Danger Sense, Florentine, Improved Sykes-Fairbairn, Improved Trademark Weapon (Fangs of the Wolf), Woodsman

**HINDRANCES:** Code of Honor, Loyal

**GEAR:** The “Fangs of the Wolf,” two kukri knives (Str+d6); .303 Lee-Enfield No. 4 Mk I (24/48/96; 2d8 damage; RoF 1; Shots 10; AP 2); climbing gear; disguise kit.

(or to loot the looters thereof) make the loosely-held islands of the Caribbean once more a destination for pirates and soldiers of fortune. Although keeping the Panama Canal operational, and the sea lanes to and from it clear, remains a major British priority, the Naval assets actually on hand are inadequate in the extreme. Sinarquist Mexico threatens British Honduras, and Venezuela likewise eyes British Guiana (expanded to include Dutch Surinam after Holland died under the Serpent).

## THE UNITED STATES

East of the Rockies, the United States essentially ceased to exist following the Serpentfall.

The mega-tsunami killed tens of millions of Americans and drowned the entire East Coast from Galveston to Maine; the rain of venom rapidly poisoned lakes and rivers, and awakened monsters, as far west as Albuquerque and Denver.

With the federal government drowned, and virtually the entire U.S. Army in Europe crushed under the fallen Serpent, it was every state for itself. Almost the entire remaining industrial and political might of the country went into the Evacuation of '46, an attempt to keep people from starving once it became apparent that most of the crops east of the Rockies were Serpent-tainted. Of course, the Evacuation was a colossal failure: blizzards closed the passes, giant snakes attacked the trains, and chaos swept over the land.

West of the Rockies, although there was plenty of rioting and chaos, things stayed functional. Edible food could be harvested in California despite the summerless cold. California oil, hydroelectric dams, and Washington coal kept the lights on, many places. Hollywood made propaganda pictures and morale boosters: Ronald Reagan fought giant snakes and evil magicians in a movie version of Robert E. Howard's *Conan of Cimmeria*. The U.S. forces in the Pacific returned (mostly) intact, and drove off the monsters that slithered over the Rockies or swarmed up from underground. The West Coast survived under General Douglas MacArthur and martial law, and then under a Coordinating Committee of six state governors: California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Nevada, and Arizona. In August of 1946, California Governor Earl Warren won a controversial special election to become the President of the United States, with the strong support of MacArthur. As 1948 continues, controversy swirls around new elections: Should Warren have to win a "normal" quadrennial election in November 1948 to continue as President? Is MacArthur planning to run himself? Make himself dictator?

The United States "recognizes" the British-Japanese armistice, and has mostly redirected its efforts to reclaiming the East. But not everybody wants to be reclaimed.

### Alaska

Lt. General Delos C. Emmons, USAAF, runs Alaska under martial law. He gives lip service to President Warren, but keeps his own options open; he feels that Warren is weak and cannot be trusted. Warren, for his part, depends too much on Army support to risk a showdown. Alaska has been badly battered by the cooling weather, and reports of yet more snow monsters worry Alaskans clinging to survival.

### Hawaii

Hawaii has been under martial law since the War, and is currently commanded by U.S. Army Lt. General Robert Richardson. The Army and the Navy pursue a slow-motion institutional tug-of-war over control of Hawaii: Nobody in the Navy wants to actually run it, but the Army cannot supply the islands without Naval convoys from California. Those Naval convoys prove distressingly intermittent, and not just because of Naval political brinksmanship. Freelance Japanese submarine pirates kill increasing numbers of ships, as do (as on other oceans) krakens, sea serpents, and monsters rising up from the deeps.

### Utah

Under Governor Herbert Maw (and, perhaps as importantly, Mormon Church President George Albert Smith), Utah declined to participate in the 1946 elections, citing "graver concerns."

*"Thor shall put to death the Midgard Serpent, and shall stride away nine paces from that spot; then shall he fall dead to the earth, because of the venom which the Snake has blown at him."*

— SNORRI STURLUSSON, PROSE EDDA



Utah, with its Mormon emphasis on community and preparation against disaster, weathered the initial shock of the Serpentfall better than any other Rocky Mountain state. The Sons of Dan, a volunteer vigilante organization, has essentially coopted the Utah National Guard while aiding it in battling monsters throughout the Great Basin. The upcoming gubernatorial elections pit Governor Maw against J. Bracken Lee, who has called for continuing “fraternal separation” from the federal government to preserve Utah’s “freedom of action.” Governor Maw has responded to the pressure by imposing tolls on all roads in and out of the state: since almost all passable roads from California to the East go through Utah (along the old Atchison Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad lines), President Warren has denounced the tolls as “strangulation.” Newspapers in California, meanwhile, print wild accusations of secret polygamist revolutionaries seeking to “destroy America,” and “land pirates looting vital reconstruction materials.” This, of course, only stokes the fires of Utah separatism.

## Texas

In the wake of the Serpentfall, Texas was one of the few states east of the Rockies to remain essentially intact. The mega-tsunami destroyed Galveston, but merely battered Houston. The Red, Pecos, and Brazos rivers were less poisoned than others, and Texas’ long tradition of self-sufficiency (and its immense oil supplies) helped keep order intact. The Texas Rangers rapidly grew to enforce and expand that order throughout the state, and every so often as far away as Kansas. The Texas National Guard eventually wiped out the giant toad colony near Houston, but perforce redeployed along the Rio Grande to control floods of Mexican refugees from the new Sinarquista government south of the border, and then to keep an eye on the Sinarquist forces themselves.

Battered but unbowed, Texas stood on its own two feet. Texas Governor Coke Stevenson refused to accept the 1946 election as legitimate, and does not cooperate with U.S. forces from California, but has not *quite* declared Texas an independent republic. His ambitious Lieutenant-Governor,

## Howard Hughes



Film mogul, aircraft designer, engineer, industrialist, and eccentric, Howard Hughes (b. 1905) may be the richest man in what’s left of the world. Hughes Aircraft and Hughes Tool Co. lead the aircraft and oilfield equipment sectors, both among the few bright spots on the economic horizon. Hughes owns the movie studio RKO and the airline TWA; his Howard Hughes Herpetetic Institute is the largest private-sector ophi-tech research company in the world. Hughes mostly lives in Los Angeles, but often flies one of his private planes to his offices in Houston; his political connections in Texas are almost as good as the ones he has in L.A.



**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d8

**SKILLS:** Boating d8, Driving d8, Guts d6, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Engineering) d8, Knowledge (Finance) d8, Persuasion d6, Piloting d10, Repair d8

**CHARISMA:** +2 **PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 2 **TOUGHNESS:** 6

**EDGES:** Ace, Connections, Filthy Rich, Noble

**HINDRANCES:** Hard of Hearing, Overconfident, Quirks

**GEAR:** Anything he wants. He’s Howard Hughes.

**NOTES:** It’s up to you to determine exactly which Howard Hughes is on display here: The visionary inventor and potential patron for ophi-tech wielding heroes? (Add Gadgeteer.) The vindictive zillionaire, crushing his enemies with a private army? (Add Vengeful, and lots of Followers.) The heroic anti-Communist crusader, willing to fund any plan that will hurt the Reds, no matter how wild? (Add Vow.) The corrupt political fixer, trying to build a megacorporation on government funding? (Add Greedy.) The raving drug-addled lunatic, fixated on germs and Freemasons? (Add Delusional, Major Habit, and Major Phobia.) Howard Hughes can make a terrific patron, ally, enemy, rival, guest star, or victim, depending on the campaign flavor.





Lyndon Johnson, may well do so if elected Governor in 1948. The third force in Texas politics is former Vice-President “Catcus Jack” Garner, who supports federalism in principle but despises Earl Warren in person.

## THE POISONED LANDS

Wherever the Serpent’s radioactive venom fell, monsters bred and growing things twisted, accelerated, changed. Beings boiled out of the groundwater, or lurked in the bloodstreams and brain stems of the unlucky. Grain died, or grew fat with secret venom. Animals bloated, altered, became vicious and vile. The people mostly died,

in famine and freezing cold and fights against monsters and then against each other for food and coal. Canada east of the Rockies, the American Great Plains east of the Rockies and north of Oklahoma, the entire Mississippi Valley and everything to the east of it—these are the Poisoned Lands.

For adventuring ideas in the Poisoned Lands, see the **Poisoned Lands Encounter Tables**, in the **Appendix** on pp. 117-122!

*“Men wade there through rivers wild,  
Murderous men, and men forsworn  
And artful seducers of other men’s wives;  
There the Worm sucks the blood of the slain  
And the wolf tears them.”*

— VÖLUSPÁ, STANZA 39

## The High Plains

Kansas, Nebraska, and the Dakotas all froze in the first year without a summer, and froze harder in 1947. Denver fell to the monsters in the blizzard summer of 1946; the Rockies’ eastern watershed became a hunting ground for untold numbers of things. For two years, these things tried to smash south into New Mexico (where the Texas Rangers barely held them off) and west over the passes (where the blizzards did as much as the Army to keep them back). When they failed, they devoured the small cities and large towns that had kept the lights burning behind them.

Now, the High Plains is once more the Great American Desert, a windswept taiga of giant beasts and desperate drifters. A tenuous link stretches across the north, from Lewiston, Idaho to Minneapolis, the Empire Builder’s Road. Towns hunker down and hold out, a thin line of fire and life. The old Northern Pacific Railroad is broken in a hundred places, but during the high summer, caravans can get through over the railbeds. A few caravans, anyway. If they’re well defended.

## The Iowa Soviet

Most places, they pray over the crops and hope for the best. Some places, they plant the fields with moly and mistletoe and laurel and all the plants the hex-book or the “herbal almanac” advises. A few places, they have enough food and men and time to cull the obviously tainted plants, tear them out and burn them. In Iowa, they have strains of grain that grow true and taste sweet, brought back from Inner Asia in the 1930s by the mystical painter-guru Nicholas Roerich, and given to then-Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace, who believed in mysticism, and Inner Asia, and scientific agronomy. Henry Wallace became Vice-President in 1940. Perhaps another world almost seeded and flowered.

## Fuel

In the Poisoned Lands, virtually all motor vehicles have been modified to run on ethanol alcohol. Gasoline is virtually impossible to obtain outside guarded mayoral reserves, and Pennsylvania’s petroleum production goes entirely for lubricants. Alcohol engines have the same game statistics as regular ones; they get about 2/3 the mileage, but driving distances in the Poisoned Lands are usually short. Another advantage to ethanol is that inedible Serpent-tainted grain can be distilled into alcohol; some refineries in Kentucky are attempting to produce an ophiline equivalent, “ophethanol,” from extremely tainted grain. So far, those refineries have produced only grim death and monsters.

## Red Iowa

A few final Savage Seeds on the subject of the Iowa Soviet:

- Did Roerich's mystical teaching, or perhaps some telepathic wave from Leningrad, give Wallace his insights?
- Are the people of the Iowa Soviet brainwashed? Devoted Communists? Desperately going along to survive? Part of a psionic hive mind spread by the grain?
- Can Roerich's Serpent-immune wheat strains work anywhere? Do they have other side effects? How much would the government of Texas pay for the chance to find out?
- In addition to intriguing agriculture research, Iowa State A&M is also the home of the Atanasoff-Berry Computer, the world's first electronic digital brain. Did the Serpentfall, or some putative Grain Field, wake it up as well? If it's awake, what does it want?
- Iowa State A&M also processed high-purity uranium for the Manhattan Project—nearly 2 million pounds of it. It takes a little over 140 lbs. of uranium-235 to make an atomic bomb. Just mentioning, is all.
- Henry Wallace is insane, Communist, mind-controlled, mystically awakened, or all of the above. He is also the highest-ranking surviving Cabinet member, and so according to the Presidential Succession Act of 1886, he is actually the Acting President of the United States of America. What is he worth, dead or alive, to "President" Earl Warren? To LBJ? To their enemies?

But by 1945, Wallace was on his way out. A sincere socialist and a definite fellow traveler, he got dropped from the ticket in 1944, and sent to the make-work job of Secretary of Commerce. Disgusted and ignored, he wasn't even in Washington when the Serpentfall happened. But something happened to him then: mystical awakening or "Serpent shock" or simply madness. He turned up in Ames, Iowa with his seeds and strains, and with his soft pink sympathies turned to fiery Red. If you wanted his grain, you joined him in the "Iowa Soviet." If not, you starved like the counter-revolutionary kulaks in the Ukraine did a decade before. The people who ate Wallace's grain agreed with him, on more and more, and they didn't die or turn into monsters—at least, not where anyone could see. Now, in the Iowa Soviet, if you're a stranger, a "capitalist," or a "reactionary," you eat the "People's Bread" or you feed the people's crops.

The Iowa Soviet centers on the Iowa State College A&M campus at Ames, and extends over seven or ten counties. The ruins of Des Moines mark its southern border; the Kiwanis, Elks, and Lions hold out with stiff guerrilla resistance. You can tell when you've entered the Soviet: although the skies are still gray, the grain is golden and straight and thick. The people are stoic, even blank-faced—until they decide you're an enemy of the Revolution. Then the fun begins.

## The Drowned Coast

On July 22-23, 1945, a 200-foot tall tidal wave smashed into every coastal city and town in North America from Hopedale, Labrador, to Galveston, Texas, and washed inland past Jackson, Mississippi and Manchester, New Hampshire. Whales choked in the new lake where the Potomac once flowed; fishing boats grounded in the Appalachian foothills. Florida's coastline disappeared; the Mississippi removed itself from the drowned bowl of New Orleans and flowed through another bayou inland. All along the coast, inlets became bays, bogs became lakes, meadows became marshes, and everything became mosquitoes and swamp and muck and snakes.

Most towns in the mega-tsunami's path simply disappeared, buried under stinking, salty mud. Buildings in some cities survived, like teeth sticking out of diseased mouths. Some places, the cities sat on cliffs, or pieces of the town could again support life after a fashion: squatters crawled back into Charleston and Providence and Mobile and Paterson, New Jersey. But most places, nothing was left but the wreckage and the corpses and the things that came in with the sea.

Currently, the Drowned Coast draws treasure-hunters, salvageurs, adventurers, and people looking for new lives. Their old lives have to be fairly unpleasant to make a life on the Drowned Coast look good by comparison, but in the wreck of America, that describes a lot of people. The

Drowned Coast also breeds monsters of the sea and the land and in between: giant alligators and toads, fish that walk and people that flop, everything that creeps and crawls in slime and muck, and snakes. Ghouls feed and breed in the corpse-cities; swamp devils float through the steaming morasses that once were Pensacola and Wilmington and Bangor. After nearly three years of constant combat, the Texas National Guard has almost cleared Houston of monstrous taint. Just four thousand more miles left to go.

The Mayoralties

Between the Drowned Coast and the High Plains, some of the lights stayed on. The United States was gone; even the individual states couldn't hold things together. But some of the cities survived. They didn't have a lot of food—after the first week or so, they didn't have *any* food—but they had a lot of people, and National Guard Armories, and they had mayors used to breaking heads to get law and order. Not every city starved to death like Akron or burned down like Omaha. Some

Urban Demographics

For any given city in the Mayoralties, its current population is only between 5% and 30% of its pre-Serpentfall population. Larger cities, like Chicago (1940 pop.: 3.4 million) and Detroit (1940 pop.: 1.6 million) more likely fall toward the low end of that ratio. Smaller cities, like Little Rock (1940 pop.: 88,000) and Utica, N.Y. (1940 pop.: 100,000) more likely cluster at the higher end. Even in the successful Mayoralties, in other words, city populations have fallen to levels reminiscent of 14th-century Italian city-states. In those few cities or towns that survived in the Drowned Coast and the High Plains, the ratios lie in the 1% to 4% of pre-Serpentfall population range. In all cases, a good chunk of the current population is new, people who retreated to the safety of the city walls from destroyed suburbs and too-isolated small towns.

The average city in the Mayoralties maintains order with a police force of about 3 men per 1,000 population. This may be supplemented (or supplanted) by a paramilitary "Mayoral Guard" in cities with repressive governments, and by factional forces in oligarchies. A city in the Mayoralties usually controls a rural population (almost all farmers) between five and nine times its urban population. For example, Chicago, the largest city in the Mayoralties, has a population of just over 200,000, and controls a rural population (including several smaller towns like Gary, Indiana and Aurora, Illinois) of almost 1.8 million. The Chicago Police Force is 600 men, bolstered (or hampered) by 150 Mayoral Guardsmen and several different aldermanic guards ("Ward Police") of 50-100 men each.

The cities' other forces vary widely in size. Some cities still join in multi-city leagues protected by a single "State Guard," while others have fielded "County Guards" or "Civic Defense Forces" that function, to all intents and purposes, as city armies. As a rule of thumb, a prosperous city in the Mayoralties can field a standing army of 0.5% of its combined (urban and rural) population. A particularly rich, aggressive city like the Grand Kounty of Birmingham can get as much as 2% of its population into a standing army, though not without some economic strain. Chicago's army is 12,000 strong; like most ambitious cities, it usually adds as many mercenary units as it can afford on campaigns. City militias are only levied in emergency; they theoretically include every able man between 16 and 45, or about 15% of the total population. In case of invasion by a coalition of Milwaukee, Springfield, Indianapolis, and Detroit, Chicago could raise a militia of 300,000 (not very effective) troops. It couldn't arm or feed them for any length of time, of course.

For the number of businesses of varying types to be found in a given city, use the nearby table as a baseline. Some cities are different: a university city like Athens, Ohio will have a larger number of scientific laboratories than normal, for example.

ESTABLISHMENT	NO. PER 50,000 POP.
Churches	140
Taverns	125
Distillers	60
Gunsmiths	50
Vehicle repair shops	30
Doctors	30
Hotels	25
Engineers	25
Cemeteries	10
Pilots	3
Laboratories	2
Newspapers	1



survived those first months, and went looking for food. Monsters had overrun the isolated farms; the land lay open. Even small towns didn't have the weight of men and metal to fight for their lives, not against the horrors that bloomed from the Serpent's blood—and not against the cities that had to eat or die in flames. The towns that wanted to live joined the burgeoning city-states around them, what travelers call “the Mayoralties.”

The crazy-quilt of city-states runs as far west as Minneapolis (fighting a low-level war against St. Paul), east to Concord, New Hampshire (trying to knit together a League of Towns against the horrors infesting coastal Massachusetts), and south to Montgomery, Alabama (a cringing vassal state of the industrial Grand Kounty of Birmingham). Every city has its own problems and its own politics, over and above the problems of food and fuel and fighting monsters. Food comes from local farms, bought with trade goods or “taxed” at bayonet-point. Fuel comes from coal mines, dug by convicts or prisoners of war (from Germany, or from other cities) or nosy strangers. Fighting monsters comes second, sometimes, to fighting amongst themselves for food and fuel. Distrust and deception wrecks trade, which increases the pinch on the cities, which leads to more distrust and deception. This drives up prices for trade goods, encouraging dangerous types to take up trade, or banditry, or both. Cities hire mercenaries to guard trade routes to rivers and coal mines. Roving bands of mercenaries turn bandit, or vice versa.

Independent warlords are hatching; three lean years and fifty million unburied dead unravel the fabric of the nation. Free Colored Armies battle the Night Riders of the “New Konfederacy”—the KKK has made another comeback in the wake of the Serpent. The telephone and telegraph lines have been torn down for the copper; the rails are being torn up for the steel. Wild-eyed preachers and shifty demagogues—and decent men pushed beyond their limits—call for witch-burning, or Serpent-worship, or Communism, or all three.

Things fall apart. The center cannot hold. Mere anarchy is loosed upon the Midwest.

## “Colonel” Zeke DaCova



Sergeant Zeke DaCova (b. 1918) got a foot blown off at the Bulge, after fighting into Africa and up Italy and across France. He came home to Dayton, Ohio in February, and didn't die with the rest of the U.S. Army in July. After the Fall, he guarded a food warehouse. Then he ran it. Then he guarded a convoy. Then he fought off bandits. Then he fought off Cincinnati. Then Cincinnati offered him more money. Now, “DaCova's Eagles” are the premier mercenary outfit in southern Ohio. And Zeke is looking across the river at Kentucky. Tobacco prices keep going up, and those fields could pay someone really well.

“Colonel” DaCova is a wiry brunet with a small frame and keen gray eyes. He favors an MP40, the closest thing to the “Schmeisser” he brought back from the War. (He lost his trophy during a disastrous raid on Muncie.) He's used to his artificial foot, and doesn't limp much any more, even in cold weather. His men (three over-strength companies and a heavy-weapons battery) are truck- and Jeep-mounted; DaCova served under George Patton and reads about Nathan Bedford Forrest.



**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**SKILLS:** Climbing d6, Driving d8, Fighting d8, Guts d10, Healing d6, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Local Area) d10, Knowledge (Battle) d10, Notice d6, Riding d6, Shooting d8, Survival d6

**CHARISMA:** +0 **PACE:** 4 **PARRY:** 6 **TOUGHNESS:** 7

**EDGES:** Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Command, Improved Level Headed, Inspire, Natural Leader, Rock and Roll!, Tough as Nails

**HINDRANCES:** Code of Honor, Lame, Loyal (to his men)

**GEAR:** MP40 submachine gun (12/24/48; 2d6 damage; RoF 3; Shots 32; AP 1, Auto)

Random Poisoned Lands City Generation

Even after the Serpentfall and the famines and the fires and the monster attacks, there are still quite a few cities in the eastern two-thirds of the United States. Way more than we can describe in this sourcebook, anyhow. So if the heroes are heading for Rolla, Missouri, or Spartanburg, South Carolina, or Allentown, Pennsylvania, or Grand Rapids, Michigan, or any other place we haven't described yet, here's a quick way to figure out what's happening in those storied cities of legend and fable. You're free, of course, to ignore, twist, or judiciously select from the results of these tables.

GOVERNMENT

Roll 2d6 to determine the political organization of a city in the Poisoned Lands. Modify the roll on the **Government Table** by +2 for the Mayoralties.

- DEMOCRATIC:** The city has more than a semblance of democracy. Elections since the Serpentfall have been fair and open. Dissent can be freely voiced.
- DESPOTISM:** The city's mayor rules by force and fear. He may have rivals, but they have only the power he allows; he may have the genuine support of his people, but they cannot dissent even if they wished to.
- MACHINE:** An alliance of political factions controls the city. The mayor may be its head, or the figurehead of a boss or group of bosses. Elections have been open, perhaps, but not fairly administered or counted. Dissent is marginalized, but usually not overtly persecuted.
- RUIN:** The city is in ruins and has no government or population. Human population, that is: roll 1d6; on a 1 or 2, the city is infested with ghouls (2d6 ghouls per warren).
- SQUATTERS:** The city has no effective unified rule, being little more than a hobo jungle or collection of prospectors' tents. This might also apply to a boomtown like Burningtown, North Carolina, where a major sapphire find in 1947 attracts thousands of desperate characters.
- STRONGMAN:** The city's mayor holds power undemocratically, or after a single election, but does not have completely free rein. Either other local notables, other institutions (the churches, factory owners, etc.), or the will of the people constrain him.

Government Table

2D6	GOVERNMENT
2-6	Ruin (on a roll of 1 or 2 infested with ghouls, 2d6 per warren)
7	Squatters
8-9	Strongman
10	Despotism
11	Machine
12+	Democratic

PROBLEM

Roll 2d6 to determine the main problem facing the city or its leaders. Cities may have many problems, of course—in the Poisoned Lands, it's downright likely. But this is the one that seems the biggest, soonest. Quite often, this is the problem the civic leaders will be willing to pay wandering heroes to resolve...

- FACTIONS:** The city has several powerful factions interested in seizing more power for themselves. These factions may paralyze city government, cause rumbles in the streets, agitate for strikes, or incite outright rioting.
- FUEL OR FOOD SHORTAGE:** A perennial problem, even in coal belt cities (which can still get hit with spot famines). This usually sparks higher prices at the very least.
- GANGS:** Criminal elements, whether Outfit or bandits, are interested in suborning the city's power structure or even in destroying it. The gangs may be unified in a single mob, or rivals locked in a gang war. If the mayor is mobbed up, it may be the mayor's rivals who ask the heroes for help...

Problem Table

2D6	PROBLEM
2-3	Fuel or Food Shortage
4-5	Unrest
6	Gangs
7-8	Factions
9	Hostile City
10	Serpent Cult
11-12	Monsters



## Random Poisoned Lands City Generation

- **HOSTILE CITY:** Another city is attacking, or plotting an attack, or paying off enemies, or hoarding coal or food, or raiding the city's supply lines.
- **MONSTERS:** A monster or batch of monsters is specifically threatening something the city values. Few cities in the Mayoralties might actually be destroyed by a single monster, although some settlements in the Drowned Coast are vulnerable to sudden waves of kraken or other activity.
- **SERPENT CULT:** Accusing enemies of secret Serpent Cultism often pays off. Sometimes, it's even true.
- **UNREST:** The city's population (or some large fraction thereof) is restive and riotous. In many cities, this is likely to involve a racial component.

Combine any or all of these results: Fearful of an attack, Macon, Georgia might secretly be funding a bootlegger gang in Birmingham run by a Serpent cultist who plans to summon monsters to attack the city's ghetto and spark black unrest. And why isn't the High Kleagle's police chief (and Klan rival) trying harder to find the bootleggers?

### HEROIC OPPORTUNITY

Roll 1d10 to find out what opportunity the city might offer to wandering heroes, either officially or unofficially.

- **ARCANA:** According to rumor, the city has a mad scientist's laboratory, a crashed RRAF ophi-tech rocketplane, a miraculous pilgrimage site, or a haunted magical library.
- **BOUNTY:** Someone in the city wants something (or someone) killed or captured, and they're willing to offer good money (or really good favors) for it.
- **LEGENDARY TREASURE:** Something in this city is very worth stealing, so much so that word has gotten out to other cities. Is it the Hope Diamond, looted from the Smithsonian just before the waves hit? Is it the Fort Knox gold stash, missing since 1946? Is it the bat that Mel Ott hit home run number 500 with?
- **MERCENARY WORK:** A city is always looking for a few good men to go kill a few good men from elsewhere for it. This might be for a specific campaign, or more in the nature of a retainer. There's always bandits to hang, after all.
- **PERSONAL:** Someone from one of the heroes' past is in this city: friend or foe, family or lover. They need a favor, or they need a thrashing.
- **TECHNOLOGY:** The city has the facilities to repair the heroes' treasured Duesenberg, or it's the nearest place to buy a specific technical device the heroes need for some other adventure.
- **TRADE GOODS:** The city produces something the heroes can escort to its destination for a handsome reward, or sell themselves for an even handsomer reward. Or, perhaps, it's where the heroes can sell something they got in the last city.

Heroic Opportunity	
D10	OPPORTUNITY
1	Arcana
2	Bounty
3	Legendary Treasure
4-5	Mercenary Work
6-7	Personal
8	Technology
9-10	Trade Goods

### CITY ASPECT

Finally, roll 1d6 to get a sense of the city's character. What's it like? How would a pulp writer describe it? What buildings pop out of the coal-smoke, and who's on top? On this table more than any other, feel free to mix and match. (Corrupt and religious, like Renaissance Naples? Dying and free-wheeling, like 1980s Atlantic City?) Also, feel free to come up with more aspects, and lengthen the list at your whim. These are just intended as a few examples.

City Aspect	
D6	ASPECT
1	Corrupt
2	Dying
3	Free-wheeling
4	Mercantile
5	Militaristic
6	Religious

## FRANCE

The Serpentfall did not crush Paris, but the earthquakes and Seine floods destroyed it nonetheless. The Serpentfall did kill General de Gaulle, along with much of the Free French Army. The French government now meets in Marseilles, where it remains deadlocked between three factions: the "Gaullists," the pro-fascist Action Francaise, and the Communist Party. President Giraud is a Gaullist, but has little support even within his own party. Generally speaking, the remains of European France are Communist-dominated, French North Africa (Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya) is AF territory, and French West and Equatorial Africa (the belt of French territory south of the Serpent's African coil, governed from Dakar and Brazzaville) are mostly Gaullist. But individual provincial governors, bureau directors, and mayors in all three regions have their own allegiances, often working against their nominal superiors for others' ends or their own power, or both. Every French general and admiral remembers the examples of Petain, Darlan, and de Gaulle...and of Napoleon.

Such powerful men provide secret patronage for the bands of air pirates in the Sahara. From oasis bases concealed in the Serpent's shadow, the pirates' planes intercept trucks, planes, and boats traveling across West Africa and Algeria. The pirates (some holding "*lettres députée*" purporting to grant them law-enforcement or quasi-military authority) swoop down, loot or hijack the shipments, and sell the spoils in Leopoldville, Oran, Abidjan, or other cities controlled by their allies.

## SPAIN

Franco's fascist Spain survived the Serpentfall in remarkably good order. The mega-tsunamis barely scratched Bilbao and Seville (compared to other cities), and with no forces at war, Spain lost no military power in the aftermath. Instead, Franco was able to force wave-battered Portugal into

## The Phantom Ace



The most feared air pirate of all, *l'As Fantôme* is not a cold-blooded murderer. No, "the Phantom Ace" *delights* in murder, and pursues it with artistry and style. No one knows what he looks like, or even his true identity: speculation ranges from the son of an exiled Russian archduke to an English crime boss. He is a master of disguise, with agents throughout France; those who attempt to arrest or thwart him meet grisly death in impossible circumstances. His daughter, Hélène, is the only person he trusts.



**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d8, Smarts d12, Spirit d10, Strength d8, Vigor d12

**SKILLS:** Climbing d10, Driving d10, Fighting d10, Guts d10, Intimidation d12, Knowledge (Crime) d12, Lockpicking d12, Notice d10, Piloting d12, Repair d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d12+2, Streetwise d12, Taunt d10, Throwing d10

**CHARISMA:** +2 **PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 7 **TOUGHNESS:** 8

**EDGES:** Ace, Attractive, Command, Danger Sense, Expert (Stealth), Filthy Rich, Followers, Great Luck, Harder to Kill, Improved Level-Headed, Master (Stealth), Professional (Stealth), Quick Draw, Steady Hands, Strong Willed, Thief

**HINDRANCES:** Arrogant, Overconfident, Vengeful (Major), Wanted

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **AGENTS:** The Phantom Ace has free access to any number of agents within French territory. (Use Thug stats, p. 83; add Piloting d6 for air-pirates.)
- **MASTER OF DISGUISE:** The Phantom Ace can replace anyone (except a hero) with a Stealth roll. Seeing through his disguise requires an opposed roll of the spotter's Notice against the Phantom Ace's Stealth.

“close association” and absorb the remainder of French Morocco into his African mini-empire. As a bonus, he captured the new Holy See, which had relocated to Lisbon in the wake of the destruction of Rome. Franco has since forged a close alliance with Pope Pius XIII, the former Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer. A siege of Gibraltar ended in 1947 with the British enclave still holding out; Franco has attempted to make common anti-Communist cause with the British since.

## THE SOVIET UNION

Under the absolute rule of Joseph Stalin, the Soviet Union recovers from the War, digests its conquests, and plots global dominion. Between famines, purges, and the War, the Soviet population (even including the new annexed territories) is only 170 million, many of whom are members of “suspect minorities” such as Jews, Germans, Chechens, Tatars, Poles, Finns, etc. In his most recent atrocity, Stalin exterminated all the Ossetians and Ingushetians. Many of them died in the special Science Cities the dictator ordered built to experiment with ophi-tech and venomous sera, to catch up to the British lead in ophiurgy. All of them died to avoid any counterclaim to Stalin’s command of the Narts—Stalin is himself part Ossetian, on his mother’s side.

## Savage Shortlist: Top Five Places To Get Mercenary Work

Now as always, the premier employer of mercenaries is the French Foreign Legion, currently occupied with garrison and anti-piracy duty in North and West Africa. But you can’t leave the Legion for a better contract, and you have to eat a lot more sand than you want. Here are five better places to get mercenary work.

### BURMA

The British are hiring mercenaries to put down Japanese-sponsored rebel insurrections in Burma, and to support anti-Japanese rebels in Malaya, Siam, and Indochina. Most of the mercenaries hired here are from British India and the dregs of Europe.

### CHINA

A good mercenary can pick and choose his boss in China, fighting for the Nationalists, for individual warlords, or for the British or the Americans (at a discreet remove). The Japanese don’t often hire mercenaries, but they do bribe them to switch sides, which keeps things interesting. Most mercenary commanders touch base in Macao, where they can get Western arms (at a markup) and replacement mercenaries (at less of a markup).

### LEOPOLDVILLE, CONGO PROTECTORATE

This city serves as a hiring hall for dirty wars all across Africa. Belgian officials (surly and recalcitrant under the Union Jack) hire soldiers for Congolese counter-insurgency, various French factions seek potential praetorians for potential coups d’etat and punishing raids into Ras al-Thuban, the South Africans are looking for a lot of good white men to staff their internal security forces and hunt rebels in Rhodesia and fascists in Angola.

### THE MAYORALTIES

Like the Italian city-states they increasingly resemble, the Mayoralty cities would rather pay experts to fight their mini-wars than risk their own populations’ hides (and loyalties). Even cities with strong armies like to stiffen them with better fighters, or hire cadre to train their own troops. Currently, Pittsburgh is a good place to get hired, as it offers “open city” hospitality to mercenaries merely on the pledge of civic defense cooperation. It’s also very convenient to war zones in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Kentucky.

### MEXICO

If you don’t mind working for the Sinarquists, they pay pretty well to hunt rebels in Oaxaca and Yucatan. If you don’t mind rotten pay from the rebels, shooting Sinarquists just feels so right. Cuba is another good place to hire on with one of the rival gangs warring for the country, as is Colombia, ditto. Colombia has the bonus of emerald mines, but the added danger of deros.

The Narts, gigantic primordial figures of Ossetian myth, emerged from the Caucasus glacier and the Arctic ice pack during Ragnarok. It is their ancient lore that allows the *Krasnaya Vesna*, the “Red Spring,” to protect Russia from the cooling effects of the Serpentfall. They have revealed other arts to Stalin and his circle, revelations less publicized in the pages of *Pravda*, but still potent. Some Narts walk alongside Soviet forces in occupied Europe or the Middle East, seeking their own revelations and keeping their own counsel. But if they do plan for another time, for now they seem more than willing to aid Soviet plans.

*“A third I see, that no sunlight reaches,  
On Dead Man’s Shore: the doors face northward,  
Through its smoke vent venom drips,  
Serpent skins enskein that hall.”*

— VÖLUSPÁ, STANZA 38

Having essentially conquered, plundered, and neutralized everything east of the Serpent in Europe, Stalin finds his options for expansion less than ideal. Even if his Communist agents can turn France into a People’s Republic (and the French Communists, on the other side of the Serpent, don’t always toe the Moscow line), virtually all the useful heavy industry in Europe is either smashed or evacuated to Algeria or Australia. The Middle East holds oil, but British command of the sea keeps the sheiks’ and shah’s options open. (The Soviets are also nervous about inciting unrest in their own Moslem population with too much aggressive action toward the Holy Places.) Crushing and occupying Japan is possible, but without the Americans and British to help, it would cost millions of men and (more importantly) vast quantities of irreplaceable materiel. For now, Stalin merely spreads Communist subversion across the globe, encouraging rebels in both Empires and Reds in Latin America and France. He waits for Nart sorcery, Soviet ophiurgy or psionics, or the further crumbling of the West to give him an open road to victory in a final titanic struggle.

## Col. Maxim Maximovich Isayev



A top NKVD agent, Maxim Isayev (b. 1900) spent the War under deep cover as an SS officer. Now assigned to SMERSH, his ongoing mission is to find enemy agents and provocateurs, infiltrate their operations, and neutralize them once he has obtained enough information. He operates out of Bombay, but his remit is global; before the War he worked out of Paris and Shanghai, and knows both well. NKVD chief Lavrenti Beria trusts him, knowing that despite his bourgeois tastes for cognac and Silk Cut cigarettes, Isayev’s loyalty is absolute. Isayev is calm, stoic, and always plausible. He is handsome in an intellectual way, in excellent shape for his age, but not particularly youthful.



Isayev might infiltrate the heroes’ operations as a potential ally, or hire them (using another identity) to snarl up some British or Japanese agent’s plans. He might, if they seem to be devoted anti-Communists, try recruiting the heroes under a false flag, posing as “Oscar Stirling” of the SIS. (His Oxbridge accent is perfect, and the late unlamented Kim Philby provided him with a bulletproof SIS cover.) In the final extremity, he might have to kill them, but he’d rather not: he prefers to out-think and out-maneuver his opponents, leaving them happy and ignorant while Soviet aims silently advance.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d8, Smarts d12, Spirit d10, Strength d6, Vigor d12

**SKILLS:** Driving d10, Fighting d8, Gambling d12, Guts d12, Intimidation d10, Investigation d8, Knowledge (Tradecraft) d12+2, Lockpicking d8, Notice d10, Persuasion d12+2, Piloting d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Streetwise d12

**CHARISMA:** +0 **PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 6 **TOUGHNESS:** 8

**EDGES:** Alertness, Bump for Languages, Connections, Danger Sense, Expert (Persuasion, Tradecraft), Harder to Kill, Improved Arcane Resistance, Improved Level-Headed, Investigator, Professional (Persuasion, Tradecraft), Strong Willed

**HINDRANCES:** Wanted (by the SIS)

## The Soviet Sphere

Following the Serpentfall, Soviet forces easily smashed into Berlin and mopped up the few surviving Axis units in Europe. Stalin swallowed Finland and the Baltic States outright, and annexed a swathe of territory from East Prussia to Azerbaijan.

Soviet forces installed “People’s Governments” in Poland, Norway, Denmark, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, and the surviving portions of Greece, Austria, and Germany, as well as formerly Vichy Syria and formerly British Palestine. All these nations have substantial Red Army and Air Force garrisons and NKVD supervision of the internal police. Local Communist governments in Sweden and Yugoslavia joined the Soviet alliance on slightly more equal terms. Mongolia and East Turkestan already had Soviet-backed governments; both received substantial Red Army and Air Force reinforcements to keep the Japanese from trying anything.

Teams of Soviet experts comb through former Axis bases and arsenals, looking for prototypes and plans to ship East to Soviet labs. (There they can join captured Nazi rocket and atomic scientists.) Soviet “recovery specialists” who uncover magical tomes or items have tougher decisions to make: official Soviet dogma dismisses all magic as “reactionary superstition,” but enough high-level officials believe otherwise that careers can be made or lost with a single grimoire or pentacle.

## Savage Shortlist: Top Five Secret Bases

Rather than list five locations, here are five types of secret bases and some examples of each.

### COVERT OUTPOST

The Samiran RAF radar-monitoring station in the Elburz Mountains in Persia tracks Soviet air traffic; icebreakers supply “Camp Bering,” the Red Army Spetsnaz base in northern Alaska; the Yamashita underground tunnel complex holds a “hidden division” of Japanese soldiers in eastern New Guinea for operations against Australia.

### GUERRILLA TRAINING CAMP

The Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) prepares to ambush Soviet troop and supply trains from compounds in the Carpathians and the Priwet Marshes; Kikuyu guerrillas (the “Mau Mau Society”) build camouflaged arboreal hideouts in the Aberdare Forest in Kenya as bases for defoliation missions against white planters; Vietminh cadres plan urban insurrection against the Japanese from warrens disguised as temple complexes in Hanoi and Haiphong.

### IMMENSE ENGINE OF DESTRUCTION

In an isolated German mountain, the Soviets (using slave labor including captured German scientists) are building a “supergun,” based on scaled-up Nazi V-3 plans, that can fire an artillery shell (or a man-carrying capsule) over the Serpent; with the aid of kidnapped and reanimated human geniuses, the dero have constructed a death-ray cannon on the Iguaje Mesa deep in the Colombian jungle; the Japanese atomic bomb program “F-go” is well underway at Konan, Korea.

### ISOLATED AIRSTRIP

“Point Pushkin” in the Nubian desert allows Soviet aircraft access to northeastern Africa, as OGPU (Soviet military intelligence) has paid off the Bedouin tribe along the Wadi ‘Amur; “Omaha Field” is a USAAF forward operating base deep in the Poisoned Lands under near-constant siege from monsters and bandits; “La Cicatrice” is a primordial scar miles deep in the flank of the Serpent, somewhere above Africa where a bold air-pirate—perhaps the Phantom Ace himself—maintains an impregnable hideout.

### SUBMARINE PEN

Norse and Finnish partisans keep the Laksefjord open for Royal Navy submarines mounting covert operations into the Soviet sphere; mutated amphibian-people in Galway Bay do the same for Soviet Navy subs on Atlantic patrol; the remaining Nazi U-Boat fleet musters in a warm-water cavern beneath Neuschwabenland in Antarctica, the Final Refuge of the Reich.

## THE JAPANESE EMPIRE

The Serpentfall saved Japan. The Americans left Okinawa and Iwo Jima, pulling back to Saipan and the Philippines; the British pulled out of Borneo and stopped at the Burma border. For a wonder, the Imperial Council and Army High Command recognized this opportunity to survive the War with much of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere intact. The Japanese concentrated on rebuilding their bombed-out industries along more modern lines (including as much ophiurgical research as they can manage), looting Southeast Asia more effectively, and redoubling their efforts to conquer China.

As the armistice has continued, however, the military has once more grown overconfident and cocky. American and British aid to Chinese Nationalists and to other forces fighting Japan in Indochina, Malaya, and the Indies provokes Japanese anger. Generals and admirals on the far front lines turn blind eyes to attacks on Allied ships and planes, and retaliate when the British or Yanks target their own. So far, no Japanese commander has yet taken it upon himself to push the Americans off of Tarawa, or cut the Burma Road, but repeated clashes and incidents have a way of building tension that nobody is much interested in peacefully resolving.

## CHINA

Japan invaded China in 1937, and has been fighting to stay on the tiger's back ever since. With American and British aid cut by the Serpentfall, the Nationalist Chinese have had to fall back into the west and southwest of the country. The Communists hold Shansi Province bordering Mongolia, where they can get a trickle of Soviet supplies, and put most of their effort

### Lung Choi San



The "Dragon Queen of the Pirates" (b. 1916) has been fighting the Japanese since their invasion, and anyone else who impeded her since childhood. Ruthless, but with an occasional sentimental streak, the Dragon Queen will seduce an enemy, challenge him to a duel, or simply have him killed by her men, depending on whim.

She is a crack shot and expert fighter. She may wear traditional Chinese garb (male or female), Western dress (likewise), or a military uniform of her own devising. As "Madame Roulette," she runs an exclusive casino in Macao that doubles as a listening post and fence for her stolen loot. Her ships moor in the hundreds of inlets and islands along the southern coast of China; her agents are everywhere in the East.



**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**SKILLS:** Boating d8, Climbing d8, Fighting d10, Guts d8, Intimidation d10, Knowledge (China) d10, Knowledge (Naval Tactics) d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d10, Shooting d10, Taunt d8

**CHARISMA:** +4 **PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 7 **TOUGHNESS:** 6

**EDGES:** Combat Reflexes, Command, Connections, Dodge, Fencing, First Strike, Improved Block, Martial Arts Training, Rich, Steady Hands, Sweep, Very Attractive

**HINDRANCES:** Wanted (by the Japanese)

**GEAR:** Pian dao (Chinese cutlass, Str+d6), 9mm Luger (12/24/48; 2d6 damage; RoF 1; Shots 8; AP 1)

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **PIRATES:** Her ship has a crew of 90 pirates, with 4 pirate chiefs; her flotilla has hundreds of pirates devoted to her whims or fearful of her rage or both. Even if separated from her ship, Lung Choi San has ready access to *at least* 2d12 pirates (and two pirate chiefs) anywhere in the China Seas, or 2d8 thugs (and one thug boss) on the streets of Macao.



into building underground revolutionary movements in both Japanese- and Nationalist-held territories. The Japanese control almost the entire coast, the main cities, and Manchuria, but cannot hold the Chinese countryside without massive occupation forces.

Fukien province (on the southern coast) and Hunan province (west of Fukien) are no-man's land. No side can control either territory for long without local warlords switching sides for gold or pique. Outside Manchuria, all of China roils with bandits, guerrillas, rebels, cult leaders, and wandering kung-fu bravos. An ancient empire's wealth is open to anyone with a map, a lot of guns, and more than his share of luck.

## THE PHILIPPINES

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Although the Allies abandoned the aggressive war against Japan after the Serpentfall, the just-liberated Philippines stayed free, after a fashion. Influential planters jockey for power, Hukbalahap Communist guerrillas control the waist of the country, and the Japanese run "stay-behind" networks throughout the islands. The American military is divided: some want to return to America and leave the Philippines to disintegrate, and others believe that building the Philippines up can only help America in the long run (and themselves in the short run). Until things settle out, the Philippines remain a stew of intrigue and borderline chaos, useful mainly as a base from which the British and Yanks "unofficially" supply arms and advisers to anti-Japanese resistance forces in the Indies, Indochina, and China.

## Savage Shortlist: Top Five Places To Be Attacked By Pirates

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In addition to the five places listed here, ships on the high seas increasingly suffer from submarine piracy: "ronin" Japanese sub captains and "wolshead" German U-Boat skippers bribe port officials for sailing manifests and course plots, then hijack cargoes in the empty Pacific or Atlantic. Some steal small valuables, others whole ships: they sell the loot in Peru or Argentina.

### THE ARABIAN SEA

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To shore up local support, their British governors give fractious warlords based in Somaliland or Aden free rein to harass Russian (or Russian-friendly) shipping; Russia (and increasingly Congress India) have begun to fight back by arming and supporting Gujarati and Tamil pirates.

### FRENCH AFRICA

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Air pirates fly out of camps in the increasing "rain shadow" of the Serpent's coil across the Sahara, attacking cargoes traveling on the few roads and rivers in French Africa. Rumor has it that at least one pirate mastermind ("Le Robur") has run an elevator cable over the Serpent in a remote location.

### THE GREAT LAKES

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From Duluth to Toronto, every lake city sponsors armed vessels to protect its trade; these privateers become pirates in times of peace, or whenever they see a good opportunity come along.

### THE GULF COAST

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Raiders based in the Bahamas and other islands swoop down on salvage operations, trading posts, and anything else that looks profitable or interesting from New Orleans to North Carolina. They can always sell their takings in Mexico, Nicaragua, or Venezuela, or to another salvage operation.

### THE SOUTH CHINA SEA

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Chinese and Filipino families run large-scale shipping operations that easily turn into pirate enterprises, or back again, depending on local conditions. "Freedom fighters" from Celebes to Haiphong to Hong Kong prey on (mostly) Japanese ships to pay the costs of resistance, often with a handsome profit to themselves. American authorities in the Philippines turn a blind eye to stolen Japanese goods; Japanese governors in China, likewise for other loot.

## CONGRESS INDIA

With most of the populated and industrialized part of the country (except Bengal) under its control, the Congress Party should be moving the independent Republic of India from strength to strength. Unfortunately, Gandhi's assassination (by either a Serpent cultist or a fanatical Moslem, depending on which story you believe) has left the Party confused and leaderless. Nehru does not have Gandhi's influence or vision; the sole policy his Congress Party can agree on is opposition to the British. The Indian Communist Party agitates for open war with Britain and total alliance with the Soviets; the other parties wrangle for spoils. Meanwhile, Tamil, Gujarati, Gondi, Tulu, and other separatists threaten to declare independence if their own provinces are not granted more power.

## THE MIDDLE EAST

### Turkey

After the Serpentfall, the Soviets turned European Turkey over to Communist Greece, and annexed the Turkish portion of Armenia outright. The rump Turkish state was left intact under a forced "treaty of friendship" that legalized the Turkish Communist Party and stripped Turkey of its air force and navy.

The Turks, of course, responded by becoming even more ferociously anti-Communist. Mirroring interwar developments in Weimar Germany, the Turkish Army pursues a covert remilitarization project with as much support as the British can provide. Agents of the Turkish National Security Service (MAH) operate throughout the Turkic-speaking parts of the Soviet empire, spreading dissension and Islamic "anti-atheist" militancy.

## Savage Shortlist: Top Five Cities For Spies

In another timeline, this list might include Berlin or Tangier. In the world of *The Day After Ragnarok*, here (in alphabetical order) are the top five cities in which spies congregate.

### BOMBAY, CONGRESS INDIA

Russian and Japanese spies use Congress India to keep tabs on Royal Navy deployments in the Indian Ocean. All three powers (Japan, the USSR, and the British Empire) attempt to subvert and sway Congress India into alliance both here and at the Congressional capital city, New Delhi.

### LEOPOLDVILLE, CONGO PROTECTORATE

Many banned French political parties base themselves in Leopoldville, a Francophone city just over the border from French Africa. It's also a major entry point into the African interior, with easily bribed or suborned Belgian officials.

### MACAO, CHINA

Where the Kempeitai, the SIS, the NKVD, and the OSS compete for leverage in Asia. The only neutral port in Asia, Macao is nominally under Portuguese control. Macao police authority is mostly European fascists hired by Spain, although the Japanese Navy maintains a battle cruiser here. Spies of all kinds run agents and guerrilla wars from Malaya to Manila to Manchuria from here.

### MAZATLAN, MEXICO

A major Pacific port and listening station for agents spying on the U.S. Pacific Fleet. Sinarquist Mexico is drifting toward a Japanese alliance; American agents here attempt to bribe local officials to prevent it.

### SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

As the new center of the British Empire, Sydney is the new center for all intelligence agencies trying to influence, discover, or subvert British policy. Sydney also holds embassies from every nation on Earth; all of them, of course, have their own spies here on staff.



## The Levant

British authority in Syria and Palestine disintegrated with the Serpentfall. The Serpent's head smashed into Egypt, obliterating Cairo, demolishing the local British command structure, and triggering massive earthquakes all up and down the coast. Damascus, Jerusalem, Beirut, and other major cities lay in ruins. Local Communist parties were among the first to organize, and loudly requested Soviet aid. By the time anyone could react in Sydney, the Red Air Force had airlifted millions of Jews liberated from Nazi camps (and Soviet gulags) into Palestine as cadre for a Jewish People's Republic. Syria (including Lebanon) became its own Arab People's Republic, which Stalin intends to be the core of a Communist Arab state from Algeria to Afghanistan.

## The Oil States

The Red Army lines their northern frontier. The Royal Navy prowls their southern seacoast. Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Persia are all monarchies sitting between two empires, and atop a sea of oil. Persia (with a strong local Communist Party) is probably the most pro-Soviet, Saudi Arabia (established by British diplomacy and guarded by British Aden) the most pro-British. But the

## Savage Shortlist: Top Five Places To Find A Remote Castle Ruled By A Madman

Whether it's a black tower in the wasteland, or a near-ruin piled over the dungeon burrow of a crawling Thing, remote castles are where adventure lives. And, as might be expected, such structures draw (or create) a certain kind of personality as their lord. Here's where to find those castles, and such madmen:

### ABYSSINIA

This isolated mountain kingdom (also called Ethiopia) suffered a devastating Italian invasion in 1935, reducing it to brigandage and misery. The Serpent's first coil smashed the southwestern third of the country, completing Abyssinia's collapse into chaos. The castles range from primeval Aksumite ruins to medieval forts to Portuguese watch-towers to Italian bunker complexes. (Second prize, in the "war-torn medieval backwater" category, is Afghanistan.)

### THE ANDES MOUNTAINS

Colombia, at the mountains' northern extremity, is collapsing into civil war; both Argentina and Chile at the southern end have long been refuges for European criminals and dictators. Coastal Peru falls under Japanese sway, leaving the interior to revived Inca worship, the deros, and who knows what else? The castles are likely Inca or Spanish conquistador, but you can't rule out eccentric copper barons.

### THE MEDITERRANEAN

Sicily, Sardinia, and the various surrounding islets were swamped by the Serpentfall into the Med, but plenty of fine castles survived. In the Balearic Islands or the Pyrenees Mountains, the castle's mad ruler might also be a high-ranking Spanish fascist, for double points.

### THE POISONED LANDS

Did you know there are more than 70 castles in New England, and that many again in New York alone? That there are 30 castles in each of Pennsylvania and Ohio, and 25 in Illinois? Eccentric millionaires, reactionary prison architects, and occasionally genuine European aristocrats built castles throughout the United States down to the 1930s. Without any nearby artillery—or government—their potential truly blossoms.

### THE PRINCELY STATES OF INDIA

Part of the devil's bargain the British made with the Indian princes was freedom from local control in exchange for allegiance to King Henry. King Henry is far away, and knows not what every rajah and rani gets up to on some crag in the Himalayan foothills or the remote Deccan.

## Djehuti-Yamun



None can say when Djehuti-Yamun was born. British police records indicate he was active in the Egyptian fascist military underground during the War. Aleister Crowley's diaries mention him as a "visionary scholar" in Cairo in 1904. An Ottoman internal report describes a very similar figure as the deadliest thief in Alexandria—in 1822! Now, he makes his home somewhere in the Stygian darkness of the Ras al-Thuban swamps. From there, he directs the Children of Set, a Serpent cult of great influence and malignity. The Children of Set are active from Mombasa to Mandalay, with unknown ties to the Daughters of Dionin. Djehuti-Yamun is not averse to slaying other Serpent cultists, especially if they question his pre-eminence or otherwise interfere with his plans.



Djehuti-Yamun is mighty of stature and somber of mien. His leathery, wrinkled skin is the color of stained teak. His eyes burn with inhuman emerald fire. He seldom takes the field himself, preferring to work through sorcerous cut-outs, summoned monsters, or hordes of local cultists.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d8, Smarts d10, Spirit d12, Strength d6, Vigor d8

**SKILLS:** Fighting d6, Guts d8, Healing d8, Intimidation d12, Investigation d10, Knowledge (Arcana) d12, Knowledge (History) d12, Knowledge (Occult) d12, Knowledge (Poisons) d12, Notice d8, Persuasion d8, Spellcasting d6

**CHARISMA:** +2 **PACE:** 5 **PARRY:** 7 **TOUGHNESS:** 8

**EDGES:** Arcane Background (Magic), Bump for Languages, Charismatic, Danger Sense, Fast Healer, Filthy Rich, Followers, Harder to Kill, Quick, Scholar (Arcana, Poisons), Strong Willed, Wizard

**HINDRANCES:** All Thumbs, Arrogant, Callous, Elderly, Vengeful (Major)

**POWER POINTS:** 20

**POWERS:** *barrier, bolt, burst, detect arcana, dispel, elemental manipulation (fire and air), fear, obscure, puppet, shape change (serpent, vulture, jackal), speak language, zombie.*

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **RING OF SET:** Djehuti-Yamun possesses this legend-haunted relic of the prehuman Serpent Empire. It raises his Spellcasting to d12+4, and provides Improved Arcane Resistance and a pool of 40 Power Points. It recharges 1 Power Point per round.
- **BLOOD SORCERY:** Djehuti-Yamun can turn the blood of a freshly slain victim into Power Points: 1 Power Point per victim's die of Vigor. (+2 from virgins or servants of other gods beside the Serpent.)
- **EYE OF THE SERPENT:** Djehuti-Yamun can use the *puppet* power merely by catching a target's eye. He can use it on an entire Large Burst Template.
- **ANIMATE OBJECT:** Djehuti-Yamun can spend Power Points to animate an inanimate object with a Spellcasting roll. It takes 4 Power Points to animate an object up to 40 lbs., with Strength d4, Agility d4, Vigor d4, Fighting d4, Armor 0, and Pace 4. For 6 Power Points, the object can be up to 60 lbs., with Traits at d6, Armor +1, and Pace 6. And so forth. Animated objects are Constructs (see **Savage Worlds** rulebook, p. 140).
- **NAME INSCRIBED ON THE SCROLL OF MAAT:** Djehuti-Yamun can sense when anyone in the world speaks his name. He need not be distracted by it, but he can hear the whole conversation (or recall it) at will with a Smarts roll. That roll also reveals the speaker's identity and location.
- **SUMMONING RITE:** Djehuti-Yamun can summon a demon with a Spellcasting roll, an expenditure of Power Points equal to the demon's highest Trait die, and three hours of chanting and pentacle-drawing. He can summon such demons at a distance—into a room in Arizona while he remains in Africa, for example—if he has an item or earth from that location. He can see through his summoned demons' eyes, hear through their ears, etc. He has many such demons already summoned and bound into small jars, which he can unleash merely by breaking the seal (an instant action). Djehuti-Yamun can command any demon he summons until sunrise dispels it. (Roll on the **Random Demon Table** on p. 87, or pick a demon that feels right.)

Shah is willing to host RAF spy planes, and King Saud is happy to allow the Red Navy port access at Jiddah. All three monarchs have advisers from both powers, some of whom are working for their own ends rather than their imperial (or royal) masters.

## Ras al-Thuban

The Nile is blocked. Cairo is buried. British power is eradicated. The Nile Valley slowly becomes a swamp, lit by fanaticism and marsh gas. This is the land the Serpentfall made of southern Egypt and the Sudan, the land of Ras al-Thuban, the “Head of the Serpent.” Barely governed by the authorities at Khartoum in the best of circumstances, Ras al-Thuban is very far from the best of circumstances.

Perhaps it is the dead, staring atomic wound where the Serpent’s Eye once was. Perhaps it is the curdling psychoactive venom pooling from the Serpent’s dead jaw. Perhaps it is truly, as the Sons of Apep call it, the New Aeon. But Ras al-Thuban is a land of utter chaos and madness; every man for himself, where Hell lets out for breakfast from Darfur to the Ethiopian highlands. Cults of all kinds flourish here, from fundamentalist Islamic sects who search for the Next Mahdi to vile Serpent Cults who search for a way to reopen the Serpent’s wounded Eye, and to bring about the New Aeon indeed.

## Savage Shortlist: Top Five Places To Stomp Nazis

The main bad guys in the **Day After Ragnarok** setting are the Soviets, the Russkies, the godless Commies, the Red Menace, the guys who put the “cold” into Cold War. That said, there’s nothing quite like kicking Nazi butt. Here are the top five places to do it.

### ANTARCTIC REFUGE

Due south of Germany, behind the icy coast of Queen Maud Land, Kriegsmarine architects and slave laborers have blasted out a strange network of warm-water caverns and tunnels. The Ritscher Antarctic Expedition discovered and claimed this territory as Neuschwabenland; here, Admiral Dönitz built “an impregnable fortress” and a place of refuge. MI5 is very concerned about increasing contacts (and even trade) between the Refuge and Boer extremists in South Africa.

### ARGENTINA

As mentioned on p. 74, President Perón builds Argentina’s future on a skeleton of Nazi expatriates. Paraguay, Chile, and Bolivia do the same to the extent that they can. In a secret Pampas airfield, Nazi aerospace genius Reimar Horten works on rocket planes, flying saucers, and anything else that will allow the Argentines to climb to the top of the Serpent.

### IRAQ

The Ba’ath Party is technically illegal, and definitely fascist, but King Faisal II of Iraq increasingly warms to the notion of a disciplined cadre of fighters who hate Russia and Britain equally. Former Waffen-SS men who escaped the Balkans wind up here, building the nucleus of a mighty Arab army.

### MEXICO

Before their coup, the Sinarquistas depended heavily on German and Spanish subsidies and support. Now that they control (most of) Mexico, they are happy to provide jobs for dedicated specialists. Former Gestapo interrogators are particularly welcome; Ahnenerbe mystics interested in studying Aztec necromancy need to keep a somewhat lower profile in this increasingly theocratic Catholic country.

### SPAIN

Franco keeps his former Nazi allies at arm’s length, moving everyone without the price of Spanish citizenship along to Macao, Morocco, or Mexico. He makes an exception for intelligence officers, especially those with extensive files on Soviet activity. There are so many Abwehr and SD veterans in SECED (the Spanish intelligence agency) that German is as common as Spanish in the meeting rooms.

## LATIN AMERICA

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In most of Latin America, life moves on much as before. Cuba was shattered by the mega-tsunami, and brutal Communist rebels battle refugee American gangsters to establish a dictatorship over the wave-battered island. Perhaps Guatemala would like to move into the Soviet sphere, but neither America nor Mexico wants that to happen. The U.S. military runs Panama as a private fief, taxing it to keep the Canal open, but otherwise leaving matters to the locals. Colombia topples into civil war; Bolivia and Paraguay square off for border wars every dry season. Venezuela grows (relatively) rich on oil and piracy; for Nicaragua, there is just piracy.

### Mexico

Shortly after the Serpentfall, General Juan Andreu Almazán launched a successful coup that put the Sinarquist Party into power in Mexico. Many Mexicans believe that Texas or California oil interests instigated the Sinarquist coup; if so, it has backfired fairly spectacularly. Among the Sinarquists' main aims (including restoring the Catholic Church to primacy, and returning the peasants to serfdom) is the Reconquista of the American Southwest. Both Texas and California have fought armed clashes with the Sinarquistas' Mexican forces.

Fortunately for the Yanquis, the Sinarquistas are busy putting down revolutionary rebellions (and a major Kulkulkan cult army in the Yucatan) throughout the south of Mexico. Less fortunately for America, the Sinarquistas increasingly turn to Japan for arms and aid.

### Brazil

The populist dictator Getulio Vargas keeps the lid on Brazilian politics as best he can, alternately favoring the Integralist Right or the Communist Left. Brazil's upper crust ignores the whole problem, partying the long night away in the exquisite mansions and luxurious casinos of Rio de Janeiro, the world's last, best city of sin and pleasure. By contrast, the Serpentfall tsunami hit northeastern Brazil fairly hard, driving the peasants into the hills as *cangaçero* bandits. A bigger potential problem exploded at the same time in the interior, when a chain of geologically unprecedented (not to say impossible) volcanoes burst forth all around the Mato Grosso plateau.

Most scientific opinion considers the eruptions an aftershock of the Serpentfall; that the crash of the Serpent's head into Egypt "knocked loose" a current of magma that came out in Brazil. By contrast, the popular mystic Zelio de Moraes believes that the door to Muspellheim (the land of the fire-giants in Nordic myth) has cracked open in Brazil. By his reckoning, the death of the Serpent prevented the "door" from opening all the way. Lumberjacks and cowboys in the area have reported monsters, including glowing red-hot dinosaurs (called "lavasaurs" in the sensational press), giving strange credence to Moraes' theory.

### Argentina

Under President Juan Perón, Argentina stayed scrupulously neutral during the War. With America wrecked and Britain distracted, Perón has thrown off his cloak of neutrality, and thrown open his country to any and all veterans of the Nazi regime. Although most of the Reich's commanders died under the Serpent's coils or in front of Soviet firing squads, and the Reich's experts vanished into gulags and Science Cities, some few remained on the loose or escaped the Russian net. Some of the Ahnenerbe's mystics had precognitive warning; some of them found their sorceries suddenly more efficacious in the new world of the Serpent. Mystics, soldiers, or technicians; whoever they were and however they came to Buenos Aires, they are welcome to help build Perón's Argentina into the new master nation of the world.

## Brigadeführer-SS Otto Skorzeny



Known as “Hitler’s commando,” Otto Skorzeny (b. 1908) stands 6’4” in his jackboots. He has dark blond hair, a thin mustache, and a dashing saber scar; he looks like a meatier version of Errol Flynn. He led the rescue of Mussolini, the kidnap of the Hungarian Admiral Horthy, and the assassination of

Patton. His “Operation Greif” disinformation campaign slowed Montgomery down to a crawl after the Bulge. After the Serpentfall, he escaped the Soviet ring around Berlin by piloting an experimental rocket-plane to a secret U-Boat haven in Norway.

Skorzeny currently holds Spanish citizenship (and a colonel’s rank in the Spanish Army), and splits his time between a villa in Spain and a training camp in Argentina. He is an excellent shot, and a champion fencer and racing car driver. The once and future “most dangerous man in Europe” has his finger in everything from ophiurgical research to freelance espionage to training up the seeds of the next Reich wherever he can find them.



**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d6

**SKILLS:** Boating d8, Climbing d8, Driving d10, Fighting d10, Guts d10, Healing d4, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Battle) d8, Knowledge (Sabotage) d10, Knowledge (Tradecraft) d8, Notice d8, Ophi-Tech d8, Persuasion d6, Piloting d8, Shooting d10, Stealth d8, Streetwise d6, Survival d8, Swimming d6, Taunt d8, Throwing d8, Tracking d6

**CHARISMA:** +2 **PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 9 **TOUGHNESS:** 7

**EDGES:** Ace, Arcane Resistance (Magic and Psi), Combat Reflexes, Command, Danger Sense, Fast Healer, Fencing, Fervor, Harder to Kill, Improved Block, Improved Nerves of Steel, Improved Sykes-Fairbairn, Improved Tough as Nails, Inspire, Level Headed, Luck, Quick Draw, Rich, Steady Hands, Strong Willed

**HINDRANCES:** Overconfident, Minor Snakebit, Wanted (by the NKVD)

**POWER POINTS:** 20

**OPHI-TECH GEAR:** Jet Pack, Marconi Gun

**GEAR:** Sturmgewehr 44 assault rifle (7.62 mm) (24/48/96; 2d8+1 damage; RoF 3; Shots 30; AP 2, Auto), 9mm Luger (12/24/48; 2d6 damage; RoF 1; Shots 8; AP 1), Saber (Str+d6), Fighting knife (Str+d4, +1 Parry)

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **COMMANDO:** Skorzeny gets +2 on his Knowledge (Battle) rolls for tests involving special operations and guerrilla warfare.
- **SQUAD:** Skorzeny is almost always accompanied by 8-10 elite soldiers. If on a mission, he commands a company (80-100) of such soldiers.

## Peru

A week after the Serpentfall, General Eloy Ureta was elected President of Peru. Peru was a staunch American ally, but General Ureta was an ambitious man—and the Yankees were busy in their own continent for a change. Peru had 30,000 Japanese settlers before WWII, most of them interned after 1942. Ureta used them as bargaining chips, teasing out Japan’s willingness to supply his military. Now, the IJN makes port calls at Callao, and the Peruvian Air Force flies Zeros over disputed borders with Ecuador and Chile. Ureta has apparently decided to leave the Andes to the deros, who have emerged in some force from Salapunco, Chavin de Hauntar, and other primordial gorges and tunnels. Perhaps he seeks to win them away from their Soviet allies, hoping to combine dero and Japanese weapons to conquer a new Inca Empire. Ureta’s only opponents are the banned leftist party APRA and the network of American agents run by the tennis star, anthropologist, and FBI agent William Clothier II from the National Museum in Lima.

## Optional Darkness: Serpent Taint

The rising of Jörmungandr tore a great wound in the Earth's magical immune system, injecting evil venom into the air, water, and soil. The biological echoes of this spiritual horror are the monsters, the birth defects, the poisoned grain, the tainted wells all over the world. But some places are worse than others; where the Serpent's venom fell like rain or washed up in the sea, where its head lies on the world pooling its poison beneath it. The question, as ophiline fumes pour into the air and Serpent cults plot subversion, is this: Are things getting worse, as the venom festers? Or is the planet slowly healing itself? If you want to make the world of **The Day After Ragnarok** still more deadly and poisonous, use these optional rules for Serpent Taint.

### -ST LEVELS

Every region of the world has a given Serpent Taint Level (ST Level) based on the "background count" of Serpent venom, cult activity, etc. For each point of ST Level in a given place, the creatures of the Serpent (monsters, giant snakes, cultists, Aunt Jennies, etc.) may add a +1 bonus to any single Trait or other sort of die roll in a given encounter. For example, in the Drowned Coast (ST Level 4), a giant alligator might add +4 to rolls on Guts, or Fighting, or Vigor, or to any other single sort of die roll. The specific bonus taken can vary from creature to creature (cultists are more likely to add to Spellcasting, giant snakes to Strength) or even from combat to combat if you're really looking to shake the heroes up. But once it's set, it doesn't change.

Worse yet, the ST Level subtracts from any roll the heroes make to resist the powers of the Serpent or its progeny: Vigor rolls to resist poison, Spirit rolls to resist charming, Guts rolls to resist panic, etc. (Just like the Snakebit Hindrance, except the whole country is Snakebit.) You might want to compromise, of course, and only use the ST Level to determine penalties while leaving monster statistics the same, or vice versa. It's your game, after all.

Here's how you can present the various "background" ST Levels in terms of look and feel, and a guide to which regions of the world they might apply. As always, change them at your whim.

#### ST LEVEL ZERO

Normal. The skies are blue, the water clear and delicious, people move with confidence and meet your eyes gladly. Night is a time for crickets and fireflies, for moonlit walks and comforting silences. (The Australian Outback, the South American Pampas. Possibly the regions of the "Red Spring" in Russia. Antarctica. The high seas of the Pacific and Arctic.)

#### ST LEVEL 1

Okay. There's no doubt that something was out there, once upon a time, but it's mostly gone now. The skies are clear, the water fine. People are a little brash, and a little relieved. Night is good for adventure, even romantic adventure. Probably. Most places. (Pacific seacoasts, most of the Southern Hemisphere. The rest of the Soviet Union. The Japanese Empire, China. California, Oregon, Washington, surviving Canada, the Iowa Soviet. Greenland and the Arctic icecap. High seas in the Atlantic and Indian Ocean.)

#### ST LEVEL 2

Tolerable. The shadows are a little too long, the light a little too green at sunset. The water is well filtered. People start a bit, if they hear something like rustling leaves. Don't go near a sewer entrance if you can't help it, don't look at strange snakes. Going out at night is not safe, per se, but it can still be a lot of fun. (Texas, Idaho, Utah, Arizona. Mexico. Atlantic and Indian Ocean coasts. India, Persia, Iraq, Eastern Europe, Turkey, Spain, southern France. Much of Algeria and West Africa. Iceland. Cities with a lot of ophiline pollution: Sydney, Captetown, Buenos Aires.)

#### ST LEVEL 3

Problematic. Things are a little weird here. The sky is cloudy or strangely colored, and so is the water. People are skittish and don't meet your eyes. Sometimes folks just disappear, and it's maybe best not to ask a lot of fool questions about it. There's something leaving tracks on the riverside, or living in the abandoned chemical works. Don't go out alone at night, unless you're lucky or armed or both. (The Mayoralities, New Mexico, Oklahoma, coastal Texas, Arkansas, Alaska. Most of the rest of Canada. Arabia, Abyssinia, Kenya, the Levant, the Red Sea coast, the shatterzone in Europe and Africa, the Congo. Yucatan, Jamaica, the southern Caribbean, and the Northern coast of Brazil.)

## Optional Darkness: Serpent Taint

### ST LEVEL 4

Not Good. The sky never looks good, even when it's clear. The water clings oddly, and always has an oily cast even if you boil it. The vegetation mats itself, or grows in strange shapes. It rustles when there's no wind, and when there is wind, it moves the wrong direction, like it was out of practice. People are clannish and tribal; they have to stay together or they reappear in pieces. Go out at night well-armed, with friends, unless you want people arguing whether that can possibly be your arm. (The Drowned Coast and High Plains, Ireland, Cuba, the Bahamas)

### ST LEVEL 5

Bad. The sky and the water are the same color, and neither is the color they ought to be. Both of them flow toward you when you're not looking. The fetid air is always too close, and you can smell yourself getting gangrene. You don't recognize half the plants, and wish you didn't know the rest. Even the land is leering at you now. People are hunted animals here, or they are predators. Night is for hunkering down and hoping. (Ras al-Thuban, Haiti). By comparison, conditions inside the Serpent's body are ST Level 8.

## • CHANGING ST LEVELS

Some specific areas might be higher or lower: A purified Mormon temple garden in Wisconsin might have an ST Level 2, one lower than the surrounding countryside, or a Wisconsin lake with an Orm in it might have an ST Level 4, one higher. Nagas lower ST Levels, lots and lots of burning ophiline plants raise them. A Serpent cult might work great magics to raise the ST Level in their city, or in some neighborhood of it; a Hong Kong feng-shui architect might design buildings to divert Serpentine chi away and thus lower the ST Level there. In the short term, heroes can lower ST Levels locally (or at least stop them from raising) by killing Serpent-spawned monsters, busting up Serpent cults, and that sort of thing. In the longer term, other possibilities might work.

### MAGIC

What magic has caused, magic might be able to undo. Certainly the primordial lore of the Narts, and the mystic revelations of Henry Wallace's guru, have had some success at holding the taint at bay. Planting moly and mistletoe among the crops hasn't done any harm, either. Perhaps some solar magic, or cleansing ritual, holds the key.

### MIRACLES

Jörmungandr came from a religious ritual, herald of a literal apocalypse. Getting right with the Lord will restore the Lord's Creation to its wonted state. Mormon temple gardens clear out the worst of the poison; the Sufis in Turkey use prayer and dance to heal Snakebite; churches in Tennessee can take up vipers without harm. Moses and Jesus both promise victory over the Serpent; it shall come to those who believe truly.

### TECHNOLOGY

What killed the Serpent was an atomic device, invented by a team of geniuses and built in gritty laboratories in Tennessee and New Mexico and Washington state. Science killed it; science can cure it. Better chemistry, new understandings of biology and heredity, will lead to not just an end to the Serpent's poison but a better world for the survivors.

### RETURN TO BARBARISM

The problem is not the taint but the broken, foolish responses to it: Cluster together! Tamper with what caused it! Pray for a miracle! Burn its fuel and drink its parasites! Human beings survived two Ice Ages and untold horrors—they can survive this, and evolve to flourish again, if they return to what they're good at. Killing, and living. If cities invite in cults and poison, all the better—they should burn.

### COMPLETING RAGNAROK

According to the sagas, Ragnarok ends with the rebirth of the human race, living in a new earth. Perhaps finishing the cycle is the key. Or perhaps it continues even now; Thor has killed the Serpent, and died in turn. Now, we await the howling of Fenrir, and the death of Tyr.







# Born Of Venom and Ice

In the world after the Serpentfall, the laws are suspended—both the laws of man, and the laws of nature. Chaos flows into both voids. Bandits, pirates, and thugs prey on the weak; those who would stop them must enforce order first, and justice a distant second. Worse things wait in the darkness, and some men would bring them out, or bring the darkness down on all the world. Some men drink the darkness into themselves, and cease to be men at all. Serpents and crawling things grow to monstrous size, and the earth and water give forth horrors.

## BAD GUYS

Even without supernatural poison or Stalinist experimentation, the damaged world would be a dangerous place. Some of these people are as vile and awful as the slimiest serpent; others are just in the heroes' way.

### Bandit

Rebuilding the world is hard. It's much easier to take stuff from people who are doing all the hard work. Bandits roam the Poisoned Lands, and hide out in hills and forests from Mexico to Matabeleland. In Afghanistan, Central Africa, and other places, whole tribes of bandits survive by raiding their neighbors. Others practice banditry part-time, as it were.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**SKILLS:** Fighting d6, Gambling d4, Guts d4, Notice d4, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d4, Tracking d4

**CHARISMA:** 0 **PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 5 **TOUGHNESS:** 5

**EDGES:** None or Woodsman

**HINDRANCES:** Callous, Greedy, Minor Habit (Leering or Sniggering), Wanted (Major or Minor)

**GEAR:** Discarded or cast-off weapons

**NOTES:** Bandits in the remoter parts of Africa and South America don't have as many guns as they want; their Shooting is d4. Bandits in the Poisoned Lands, North Africa, or the Middle East will have Riding d6. Some bandits, especially rebellious tribesmen or back-country folk, have the Outsider Hindrance. For pirates, trade Survival and Tracking for Boating and Climbing, and add Swimming d4.

**VETERAN BANDITS:** Increase all die sizes by one. Parry 6, Toughness 6.

### Bandit Chief

He has to stay one step ahead of the law—and of his own men, sometimes.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

**SKILLS:** Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Survival d4

**CHARISMA:** 0 **PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 6 **TOUGHNESS:** 5

**EDGES:** Command, Quick Draw

**HINDRANCES:** Callous, Wanted (Major or Minor)

**GEAR:** Better than his men.

**VETERAN BANDIT CHIEF:** Increase skill die sizes by one. Parry 7.



### Cultist

Throughout the world, the coming of the Serpent caught up the weak and evil in its toils. Secret cults sprang up or were revitalized, from the aristocratic Daughters of Dionin in the British Empire to the tent-city Church of the Brazen Serpent in the Poisoned Lands. In some places, the cults operate overtly; in others, they control through fear and secret killing; in still others, they lurk

behind a façade of decency and respectability... until their hour comes around again.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**SKILLS:** Fighting d6, Guts d8, Knowledge (Occult) d4, Knowledge (Day Job) d4, Notice d4, Shooting d6, Stealth d6, Throwing d6

**CHARISMA:** 0 **PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 5

**TOUGHNESS:** 5

**EDGES:** Frenzy

**HINDRANCES:** Bloodthirsty

**GEAR:** Sacrificial daggers or garrotes for rituals; any for other occasions.

## Cult Leader

Cults not led by a naga or a were-serpent will likely have human sorcerers at their apex. Some of these devotees of dark gods pose as respectable members—even leaders, sheriffs, or bankers—of their community, or as priests of more acceptable religions. A clever cult leader might rise to power in a small town simply by dint of the fact that since he's been in charge, the giant snakes don't come into town any more! He just has to sacrifice you passing strangers to keep his job...

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d4, Vigor d6

**SKILLS:** Fighting d6, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Occult) d8, Notice d8, Shooting d6, Spellcasting d10, Stealth d6

**CHARISMA:** 2 **PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 5 **TOUGHNESS:** 5

**EDGES:** Arcane Background (Magic), Arcane Resistance, Charismatic, Command, Fervor

**HINDRANCES:** Bloodthirsty, Overconfident

**POWER POINTS:** 20 or 25

**GEAR:** Magical, cursed, or unholy weapons: +2 to damage when wielded by a cult leader

**NOTES:** Some cult leaders may have Arcane Background (Miracles) and Faith d10 instead of Magic and Spellcasting



## Loner

The collapse of society leaves a lot of broken bits out at the edges. If you live alone in this world, you've got to be tough, and mean, and suspicious. Loneliness, unpleasant habits, or other things can turn someone from a mere creepy recluse into a creepy, *dangerous* recluse.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d10, Vigor d8

**SKILLS:** Fighting d10, Guts d8, Notice d8, Stealth d6, Survival d10, Tracking d6

**CHARISMA:** -3 **PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 7 **TOUGHNESS:** 6

**EDGES:** Frenzy, Woodsman

**HINDRANCES:** Blank Stare, Bloodthirsty, Minor Habit

**GEAR:** Cleaver, hunting knife

**NOTES:** Add bandits to make a Loner into the patriarch of a clan of cannibals. Personalize the minor habit; a creepy giggle, licking of the lips, constant sharpening of axes, whatever.



## Police

Even the best of heroes may find themselves on the wrong side of the law now and then. And in some cities, the police might be on the wrong side of the law themselves.

## Garrotes

Many cults of the Serpent practice ritual strangulation, using a silk cord or piece of piano wire as a garrote. To garrote a foe, the cultist must approach from behind, with surprise. The cultist must make a called shot to the neck (-4 to Fighting roll, although the cultist may want to make a wild attack for a net -2). A successful garrote attack does Str+d4+4 (which includes the +4 for a called shot to the neck); on a raise, the victim is automatically Shaken as well. A cultist who can get The Drop on a target can make a garrote attack at a net -0 to Fighting roll, and does Str+d4+8 damage! On future rounds, resolve this combat as Grappling, except that the garroter automatically does Str+d4+4 damage each round that the victim does not break free.

## Serpent Cults

Not surprisingly, the most active and dangerous mystical cults around the world worship some aspect of the Serpent. Its awakening was, after all, an overwhelming event, setting off as big a tsunami in the astral-magical realm when it rose as it did in the Atlantic when it fell.

Most Serpent Cults hate and despise Americans—the Serpent-Killers—but, as blasphemous and evil sorts, also oppose any agent of order or decency. Although the official Soviet propaganda line is that all religions (including mad cults) are counter-revolutionary and false, some Soviet agents provide aid and comfort to particularly venomous Cults working against the British Empire and its allies. Of course, some Serpent Cults hate the godless Soviets, too, and at least one Aranda cult in Australia worships Harry S Truman on the grounds that anyone powerful enough to kill the Serpent must be worthy of fearful reverence.

Here's a quick run-down of the various names under which various cults and traditions worship the Serpent:

- **ALGONKIN (EASTERN AMERIND):** Gitchee Knebic, Misikinipik
- **PUEBLO (SW AMERIND):** Kolowisi
- **SALISH, KWAKIUTL (NW AMERIND):** Sisiutl
- **MEXICO:** Quetzalcoatl
- **YUCATAN, GUATEMALA:** Kulkulkan
- **HAITI:** Damballah, Dan Petro
- **WEST AFRICA:** Aida Wedo
- **FINLAND, BALTICS:** Aiatar
- **ALBANIA:** Kulshedër
- **PERSIA:** Zahhak, Azi Dahaka
- **INDIA:** Ananta Shesha, Aparajita, Kadru, Varuna, Vasuki
- **CHINA:** Chu-Lung, Chu-Yin
- **JAPAN:** Kuraokami, Okami, Orochi, Ryujin
- **PHILIPPINES:** Bakunawa
- **BORNEO:** Djata
- **MELANESIA:** Agunua, Degei, Hatuibwari, Make
- **AUSTRALIA (ABORIGINES):** Aranda, Borlung, Bulaing, Ngalyod, Rainbow Serpent, Yurlungur
- **ISLAMIC:** Falaq
- **HERMETIC MAGIC:** Aion, Apophis, Azazel, Glycon, Ophion, Ouroboros, Tiamat, Typhon
- **BRITISH EMPIRE:** Dionin
- **GLOBALLY:** Jörmungandr, Leviathan, Lucifer, Rahab, the Serpent, Yig

Anthropologists note that some of these gods are traditionally “good” gods who favor mankind. Has the Serpent corrupted those religions, or were they always mistakenly worshipping Jörmungandr?

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d6

**SKILLS:** Driving d6, Fighting d8, Guts d8, Intimidation d6, Notice d6, Shooting d4, Streetwise d6

**CHARISMA:** 0 **PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 6 **TOUGHNESS:** 5

**HINDRANCES:** Stubborn

**GEAR:** Truncheon (Str+d4), revolver

**NOTES:** Beat police in most Commonwealth countries will not have Shooting, although detectives and special units might. Use these statistics for elite and secret police as well, with Intimidation and Shooting raised to d8.

## Secret Agent

Whether wearing a trenchcoat or a tuxedo, a secret agent does things his country doesn't tell anyone. And sometimes, things his country doesn't even know about. Although most heroes will face the feared agents of the NKVD or the Kempeitai, it's not impossible to imagine that they find themselves at cross-purposes to the SIS or the OSS, either.



**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**SKILLS:** Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Investigation d8, Knowledge (Tradecraft) d8, Notice d8, Persuasion d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d8, Streetwise d6

**CHARISMA:** 0 **PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 6 **TOUGHNESS:** 5

**EDGES:** Hard to Kill, Investigator

**HINDRANCES:** Curious

**GEAR:** Top of the line. British agents may have ophi-tech.

**NOTES:** This template can be used for internal and secret police officials (FBI, MI5, SAP) and for really good regular police detectives, with Knowledge (Law) in for Knowledge (Tradecraft).

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## Soldier

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Red Army or Royal Army, theirs is but to do and die.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**SKILLS:** Fighting d6, Guts d6, Notice d6, Shooting d6

**CHARISMA:** 0 **PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 5 **TOUGHNESS:** 5

**EDGES:** Soldier

**HINDRANCES:** Vow

**GEAR:** Rifle, bayonet, entrenching tool, etc.

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## Elite Soldier

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Red Guard Shock Army, Black Watch, Foreign Legion, Teishin Shudan, Marine Corps; they're the best units for the job, and the job is combat.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d6, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**SKILLS:** Fighting d8, Guts d8, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Throwing d4

**CHARISMA:** 0 **PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 6 **TOUGHNESS:** 6

**EDGES:** Block, Combat Reflexes, Marksman, Soldier

**HINDRANCES:** Vow

**GEAR:** Assault rifle or SMG, bayonet, etc.

**NOTES:** Really elite troops—SAS, Spetsnaz, U.S. Rangers—are Wild Cards, and may have higher Trait values to boot.

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## Militia Soldier

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National Guardsmen, the Home Guard, the town militia in the Poisoned Lands, or the “professional” army of a corrupt (or enfeebled) country like Iraq or Peru.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**SKILLS:** Fighting d6, Guts d4, Notice d4, Shooting d6

**CHARISMA:** 0 **PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 5 **TOUGHNESS:** 5

**GEAR:** Rifle, bayonet, etc.; not as good as regular soldiery.

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## Officer

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Their job is to lead men into battle, and ideally to lead them back out of it again.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**SKILLS:** Fighting d6, Guts d6, Knowledge (Battle) d8, Notice d6, Shooting d6

**CHARISMA:** 0 **PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 5 **TOUGHNESS:** 5

**EDGES:** Command, Hold the Line!, Soldier

**HINDRANCES:** Vow

**GEAR:** Automatic pistol, etc.

**NOTES:** Officers in the Japanese Army have katanas. Elite Soldier Officers are Wild Cards, and increase all attributes and skills by one die size. (Parry 6, Toughness 6).

## Thug

Urban bullies of some sort, usually part of a criminal gang.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d6, Smarts d4, Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

**SKILLS:** Driving d4, Fighting d8, Gambling d4, Guts d6, Intimidation d6, Shooting d4, Streetwise d4, Taunt d6

**CHARISMA:** -2 **PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 6 **TOUGHNESS:** 5

**HINDRANCES:** Mean, Wanted (Major or Minor)

**GEAR:** Knives, clubs, cheap pistol if lucky. A really powerful boss can equip his thugs with tommy guns.

## Thug Boss

Anyone from a single gang leader to a racket boss.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d6, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**SKILLS:** Fighting d6, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Persuasion d4, Shooting d6, Streetwise d6, Taunt d6

**CHARISMA:** 0 **PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 5 **TOUGHNESS:** 5

**EDGES:** Connections, Strong Willed

**HINDRANCES:** Arrogant, Wanted (Major or Minor)

**GEAR:** Automatic pistol.



## CHIMERAS

Some of the monsters infesting the world used to be human, or have some connection with humanity. Not everyone treats these “chimeras” as simple monsters to be killed—their inner humanity deserves better. Of course, some people think chimeras are even worse than regular monsters—and chimeras are certainly more creatively evil when they do go bad.

Which is usually.

## Aunt Jenny

The name comes from the Navajo *‘ant’ihni*, or “witch,” and is slightly more common (much moreso in the Southwest) than “were-snakes” or “reptoids.” They are people who can turn into serpents, or serpents who can turn into people—nobody quite knows which. Some Aunt Jennies turn into snakes of human mass (see giant snakes, p. 90); others turn into normal-sized venomous snakes (see *Savage Worlds* rulebook, p. 131); others turn into 6-8 normal-sized venomous snakes; still others have a sort of interim form between snake and man (their stats remain the same).

Priestesses of the Daughters of Dionin cult, which began during pre-Roman times in Britain and has spread throughout the Commonwealth since then, are were-snakes of this latter sort.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d10, Vigor d8

**SKILLS:** Fighting d8, Guts d6, Intimidation d8, Notice d12, Stealth d6

**PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 5 **TOUGHNESS:** 6

### Special Abilities

- **ARCANE BACKGROUND (MAGIC):** Some Aunt Jennies have (additional) magical powers. Their Power Point pool ranges from 20-40.
- **BITE:** Does Str damage.
- **CHARM:** Aunt Jennies can use the *puppet* power on targets who catch their gaze, using Spirit as the arcane skill. They can cast and maintain this power indefinitely, on one target at a time.



- **DEVOUR LIKENESS:** Some Aunt Jennies can take the shape of any human being they have eaten. Eating the brain provides enough memories to aid the impersonation. A hero who knows the victim must make a Notice roll at -4 to detect the difference.
- **POISON:** Anyone bitten must make a Vigor roll at -2 or gain a Fatigue level. Physical activity (such as combat) will bring on another Vigor roll (also at -2) in 2d6 rounds. Once Incapacitated by the poison, the victim dies in 1d4 hours. Some Aunt Jennies have even more potent poison (similar to venomous snakes), and some can control their poison's potency.
- **QUICK:** Discard draw of 5 or less for new card.
- **TRANSFORMATION:** Aunt Jennies can shift between forms with a Spirit roll; it takes one action.
- **WEAKNESS (HEAT AND COLD):** Aunt Jennies are cold-blooded; they make Vigor rolls to withstand temperature extremes at -1.
- **WEAKNESS (MUSIC):** An Aunt Jenny must undergo a test of will (resist with Smarts) against specialized music. You might rule that specific music has specific strength—Hindi snake-charming music (d8); Navajo Blessing Song (d10)—or require a hero to test her Knowledge (Music) or Knowledge (Singing) to thwart a reptoid.

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## Ghoul

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After the Serpentfall came the famines; two years without summer, and the land covered with salt water. Some people turned to cannibalism, eating the dead and then the living. Corpses picked up venom from the water, and the brains of corpses bred new monstrosities in those who ate them. Cannibals became ghouls, gray of skin and coyote-like in feature.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d8, Smarts d4, Spirit d4, Strength d8, Vigor d10

**SKILLS:** Fighting d6, Guts d4, Notice d10, Stealth d8

**PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 5 **TOUGHNESS:** 7

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### Special Abilities

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- **CLAW/BITE:** Either does Str+d4
- **ENHANCED SMELL:** Ghouls get a +2 to all Notice rolls to detect objects with odors, and ignore all darkness penalties.
- **FEAR:** Seeing a ghoule requires a Guts roll.
- **FRENZY:** A ghoule must frenzy if it can smell fresh blood.
- **INFECTION:** Ghouls' teeth and claws are coated with rotting human meat; anyone Shaken or wounded by a ghoule must make a Vigor roll at -2. On a failure, roll 1d6: 1-5, horrible debilitating blood poisoning results (make a Vigor roll at -2 each day; gain one Fatigue level if this roll is failed; on a success, the infection ends and levels recover one per day); 6, victim begins to turn into a ghoule (lose 1 die of Spirit every week until ghouled); the *healing* power can negate the effect with a -2 modifier to the roll if used within 10 minutes but only gets one attempt; *greater healing* suffers the same penalty but can be attempted once per week. A healed character regains one die type of Spirit per day.

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## Man-Ape

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Even before the Narts revealed the lore of the giants to him, Stalin dreamed of building super-soldiers. One such project was the human-ape hybrid project, begun by Ilya Ivanov in Soviet Georgia in 1927, using apes taken from expeditions to French Guinea. Ivanov's research bore strange fruit; the Narts' lore has multiplied the ranks of Soviet man-ape warriors still further. Most Soviet man-apes are used as infiltration and commando forces in British Africa, but they might turn up anywhere else the Reds do. It's up to you whether Robert Yerkes' similar research in Cuba and Florida produced man-apes to haunt the Drowned Coast of the Poisoned Lands.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d4, Strength d10, Vigor d8

**SKILLS:** Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Guts d6, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d4, Survival d6, Throwing d6

**PACE:** 8 **PARRY:** 6 **TOUGHNESS:** 6

**GEAR:** Most Soviet chumanzees and orang-humans carry AK-47s; some Soviet man-rillas carry modified SG-43 machine guns slung so they can be fired from the hip. Maboons prefer bladed weapons.

## Special Abilities

- **CHUMANZEE:** Vigor d10, Toughness 7, Climbing d8, +2 to grappling attacks, Dodge, Fleet-Footed (in trees only)
- **MABOON:** Fighting d10, Bite Str+d4, Improved Frenzy, Low-light Vision
- **MAN-RILLA:** Strength d12+2, Toughness 8, Size +2
- **ORANG-HUMAN:** Climbing d10, +2 to grappling attacks, Fleet-Footed (in trees only), Sweep, Two-Fisted
- **WEAKNESS (STRESS ATAVISM):** If Shaken, a man-ape must make a Smarts roll or give in to his animal instincts and flee.

## Swamp Devil

These human-plant hybrids likely germinated in the stomachs or wombs of survivors who ate venom-tainted fruit or roots. They lurk in ruins and bayous all along the Gulf Coast and as far north as the Chepachet Swamp in Rhode Island. They occasionally become shamans or chieftains of bandit clans or gangs. Some may lurk in the Sudd, the swamp in the Nile Valley now increasingly tainted with venom from the Serpent's fallen head.



**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d12, Smarts d6, Spirit d10, Strength d12, Vigor d10

**SKILLS:** Climbing d6, Fighting d10, Guts d8, Intimidation d10, Notice d10 (swamp only), Spellcasting d10 (if magically gifted), Stealth d12 (swamp only), Tracking d8

**PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 7 **TOUGHNESS:** 10

## Special Abilities

- **ARMOR +3:** Swamp devils have a thick, bark-like integument.
- **FOXFIRE:** Swamp devils glow with phosphorescent fungi; this confuses enemies' aim (-1 to ranged attacks; extra -2 to called shots) and gives swamp devils the equivalent of *darkvision* (see p. 21).
- **HARD TO KILL:** Ignore wound modifiers on Vigor rolls on Knockout Blow and Injury tables.
- **ILLUSION POLLEN:** Swamp devils emit a cloud of pollen spores that, when inhaled, have a strongly psychoactive effect. If they have reason to suspect such a thing, victims must make a Smarts roll at -2 to disbelieve the illusion, and a Spirit roll at -2 to throw off the effect and attack the devil. One common illusion swamp devils create is to change their own apparent position: attacks on an illusory devil, of course, will miss! Swamp devils release their pollen in a Large Burst Template around themselves; some impregnate puffball mushrooms with their spores and leave them in their victims' path as "land mines" (Medium Burst Template, Notice -4 to avoid).
- **PENETRATING CLAWS:** Str+d6 damage, 2 AP
- **ARCANE BACKGROUND (MAGIC):** A magically gifted swamp devil may have any or all of the following powers: *beast friend*, *blast* (of foxfire), *burrow* (swamp or river only), *entangle* (clinging vines, roots, or Spanish moss), *fear*, *puppet*, and *zombie*.

## MONSTERS

Though none of them are technically monsters, running into a bear, a pack of wolves or feral dogs, or a mountain lion (use the lion from p. 140 of the *Savage Worlds* rulebook with Size +1) that has lost its man-fear is still not good news for travelers in the Poisoned Lands. But there's much worse, there and elsewhere...

### Death-Worm

Apparently native to the Western desert, this seismically sensitive species was awakened after long dormancy by the Serpentfall. Death-worms nearly destroyed Los Alamos in August of 1945, but were driven off by the scientists there and a relief force of Texas Rangers. Unconfirmed rumors out of Japan say that there are colonies of death-worms in the Gobi Desert of Mongolia as well. Use the statistics for giant worms from the *Savage Worlds* rulebook (p. 128), but add:



- **ELECTRICAL BURST:** Death-worms emit a burst of static electricity on the round immediately after emerging from underground. This burst shorts out any nearby electrical equipment (within a Large Burst Template) and does 1d6 damage (ignoring armor) to any living thing in the same area.

### Dero

More technically, "dwerger," but the name "dero" stuck with American fans of *Amazing Stories*. Since both the scientific dero and the Nordic mythical dwerger are vile, cruel, swarthy, twisted, dwarfish troglodytes, it's a natural mixup.

Dero apparently dwell in both natural cave formations and vast underground cities in Latin America, North Africa, and Central Asia. Disturbingly, some dero have been seen using AK-47s, implying some connection (or worse, an alliance) with the Soviets.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d6, Strength d4, Vigor d6

**SKILLS:** Climbing d6, Fighting d6, Guts d4, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Stealth d10, Taunt d6, Throwing d6

**PACE:** 5 **PARRY:** 5 **TOUGHNESS:** 5

**GEAR:** Pain whip; when it touches non-dero flesh, it forces an immediate Vigor check at -4, failure leaves the target whimpering and Shaken. If hit while Shaken, the target becomes Incapacitated on a second failed Vigor roll. Deros also may have any other nasty weapon, from barbed and poisoned cleavers to dazzle-rays that intentionally blind.

### Special Abilities

- **FEAR:** Deros are inherently emotionally harmful; anyone within a Large Burst Template of one must make a Guts roll. Deros also have fear rays that can induce Guts checks at -2 (for rifle versions) or higher.
- **LAMP-LIKE EYES:** Provide *darkvision* (see p. 21), but deros are at -2 to Notice and attacks in bright, open sunlight.
- **SIZE -1:** Deros are about 3' to 4' tall.
- **UNIMAGINATIVE:** A hero can predict deros' combat actions with a successful Knowledge (Battle) roll. He and any companions he can communicate with get +1 to their attacks for the combat; +2 on a raise.
- **DERO BOSS:** As dero, except: WC, Smarts d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8; Fighting d8, Guts d8, Intimidation d8, Taunt d8, Toughness 6, Command.



## Devil-Flower

The Poisoned Lands have sprouted lots of different kinds of man-eating carnivorous plants since the Serpentfall, from vampiric ivy to strangling willows. These stats are for the devil-flower, or mantrap orchid, a Venus flytrap about 10' around capable of ingesting a large man. They grow inside other brush or vegetation, along trails or near tempting springs or water holes.

Rhodes University teams have also spotted similar plants in the Sudan and in Central Africa growing near the fallen Serpent.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d12+2, Smarts d4 (A), Spirit d4, Strength d8, Vigor d10

**SKILLS:** None

**PACE:** 0 **PARRY:** 2 **TOUGHNESS:** 7

### Special Abilities

- **SNAP SHUT:** When a human brushes one of the orchid's jaw cilia (-4 to Notice while moving through vegetation), the jaw of the orchid snaps shut on the victim, who must make an opposed Agility roll against the orchid. If the orchid succeeds, it has clamped down on the victim's leg (1-3) or arm (4-6) for Str damage; on a raise, it has managed to swallow the whole victim. The orchid will now begin digesting whatever it has eaten; this does Str-1 damage automatically each round. The target may try to extricate himself with an opposed Strength roll; on a success, he is free but his action is gone, while on a raise, he is free and he may still act.
- **SOFT PALATE:** Attacks from inside the devil-flower automatically hit; from inside, the orchid's Toughness is 4.

## Enormous Scorpion

Not quite "giant," but eighteen inches is still pretty big for a scorpion. They travel in swarms of 1d6+2 arthropods, and range in color from rust to brazen to deep black. They roam the Southwest, but sea scorpions of similar size crawl through the ruined coastal cities. Scientists speculate that the latter are evolved versions of eurypterids, prehistoric scorpions that lived in the Permian Era.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d6, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d4, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**SKILLS:** Fighting d8, Stealth d10

**PACE:** 8 **PARRY:** 6 **TOUGHNESS:** 5

## Random Demons

Need a threat on the fly? Just make a roll on the **Random Demon Table** and see what kind of threat is nearby to menace your players. While most common in the Poisoned Lands, it should be noted that this table is good for random demons anywhere in the world.

### Random Demon Table

2d8	DEMON
2-3	Fly-By-Night
4-5	Carnivorous Ape
6-10	Giant Snake
11-12	Enormous Scorpion
13-14	Sentient Swarm
15	Giant Ghost Snake
16	Primordial Serpent-Man

- **CARNIVOROUS APE:** Use statistics for the Man-rilla (p. 85) but add Fear (Guts -2), Bite Str+d6, and the Fearless Monstrous Ability.
- **ENORMOUS SCORPION:** See p. 87, but add Fear (Guts -2).
- **FLY-BY-NIGHT:** See p. 88, but increase Fear to Guts -2.
- **GIANT SNAKE:** See p. 90 and roll 1d8 (1-3: 20', 4-5: 30', 6-7: 50', 8: 80'); add Fear (Guts -2) to all.
- **GIANT GHOST SNAKE:** See p. 90 and roll 1d8 as for Giant Snake; add Fear (Guts -2) to all; add Ethereal. Ghost Snakes are still affected by fire and electricity. Magnetized or red-hot weapons do half damage.
- **PRIMORDIAL SERPENT-MAN:** Use statistics for the Aunt Jenny (p. 83), with Arcane Background (Magic), 20 Power Points, and the powers *bolt*, *obscure*, and one other (GM choice).
- **SENTIENT SWARM:** Use statistics for the Swarm (*Savage Worlds* rulebook, p. 154), with Smarts d6 and Fear (Guts -2).

## Special Abilities

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- **QUICK:** Scorpions discard action cards of 5 or lower.
- **THREE ATTACKS:** Enormous scorpions get three attacks in a round: two Claw attacks (Str-1) and a Sting (Str). On a raise, the sting injects poison; the victim must make a Vigor -2 roll or become immediately Incapacitated, with death following in 1d6 minutes.
- **SEA SCORPION:** Add Swimming d8 and *aquatic*.
- **GIANT SEA SCORPION:** The largest eurypterids got up to 8 feet long. Use the same stats as above, except: Strength d10, Toughness 8, Armor +2, Size +1, Swimming d10, *aquatic*.

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## Fly-By-Night

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These winged terrors have appeared all over the world since the Serpentfall. A man-sized cross between bat, great ape, and toad in appearance, they swoop out of the sky and snatch human prey, taking them to isolated mountain caves or ruined skyscrapers. Some unconfirmed reports claim they drink blood—ranchers have discovered cattle, horses, and water buffalo dead and exsanguinated from mysterious slashing wounds. Or the blood-drinking Thing may be different from what the Americans call the “fly-by-night.” British authorities have sardonically nicknamed it the “valkyrie,” after the legendary “choosers of the slain” in Nordic myth.



Elsewhere it has other names: the camazotz in Mexico, the kinyan tiwicakte among the Sioux, the guiafairo in Senegal, the sasabonsam in the Gold Coast, the kikiyaon in Upper Volta, the olitiau in Central Africa, the kongamato in Rhodesia, the ahul in Java, the orang-bati in the Moluccas, and the wakwak in the Philippines.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d10, Smarts d8(A), Spirit d6, Strength d10, Vigor d10

**SKILLS:** Fighting d10, Intimidation d8, Notice d8, Stealth d12

**PACE:** 6 **PARRY:** 7 **TOUGHNESS:** 8

## Special Abilities

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- **ARMOR +1:** Valkyries have thick hide under their thick fur.
- **BITE:** Str+d4; if the fly-by-night is a blood-drinker, the target gains a Fatigue level on a Shaken or better result from damage. Such levels recover after 24 hours.
- **FEAR:** Seeing a fly-by-night forces a Guts roll.
- **FLIGHT:** Pace 12, Climb 4
- **INFRAVISION:** Fly-by-nights halve normal penalties for darkness when attacking warm (or very cold) targets.
- **LONG ARMS:** +2 to grappling attacks
- **QUICK:** Fly-by-nights discard action cards of 5 or lower.
- **SWOOPING ATTACK:** A fly-by-night that makes a grappling attack with a raise does its normal damage to the target, then carries him up into the sky, moving the remainder of its flight pace. Depending on circumstances, the fly-by-night may continue to grapple, attempt a bite, or drop the victim onto something hard, sharp, or unpleasant. In the latter case, the victim might have to grapple in order to stay aloft.
- **ARCANE BACKGROUND (MAGIC):** Some Theosophists believe that the fly-by-night is actually a Lemurian survivor reawakened by the cataclysm; some African and Asian tribes consider it a transformed witch. If they're right, it has Smarts d10, Spellcasting d10, and possible powers like *bolt* (lightning), *deflection* (gust of wind), *elemental manipulation* (air), *invisibility*, *obscure*, and even *teleport*.

## Giant Alligator

Giant alligators roam the entire American southeast outside the Appalachian mountain chains. Giant crocodiles infest the Nile valley, and reports are coming in to Rhodes University of giant crocodiles seen in the Congo, Zambezi, and Limpopo Rivers as well.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d6, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d8, Strength d12+3, Vigor d12

**SKILLS:** Fighting d8, Guts d8, Notice d6, Swim d8

**PACE:** 3 **PARRY:** 6 **TOUGHNESS:** 13

### Special Abilities

- **ARMOR +2:** Thick, leathery hide; does not apply to the inside of the beast's mouth.
- **AQUATIC:** Pace 5
- **BITE:** Str+d10
- **ROLLOVER:** A giant alligator that hits with a raise does an extra 2d6 damage to its prey in addition to its regular Strength damage, as it rolls over and over, battering and flinging its victim. A rollover also does that same damage to any boat it hits; other boats caught in the wave (Large Burst Template) require immediate Boating rolls to avoid capsizing.
- **SIZE +3:** The beasts easily top 20 feet long and reach almost 2 tons in weight.

### Variant

- **GIANT CROCODILE:** The same stats as above, except: Strength d12+6, Toughness 14, Bite Str+d12+1, Size +4, Large

## Giant Gila Monster

So far, the closest thing anyone in America has seen to a dragon. But nobody knows what else might crawl down out of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains...

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d6, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d10, Strength d12+4, Vigor d12

**SKILLS:** Fighting d8, Guts d12, Intimidation d10, Notice d8, Tracking d8

**PACE:** 3 **PARRY:** 6 **TOUGHNESS:** 15



### Special Abilities

- **ARMOR +3:** Nubbly, beaded scales.
- **CLAWS/BITE:** Str+d8 (Bite does AP 4 on a raise)
- **GRIPPING JAWS:** After making a successful bite attack, the giant Gila monster clamps its jaws on the prey, automatically hitting each round for normal Str+d8 damage. Escaping this grip requires a contested Strength roll.
- **HARDY:** Does not suffer a wound from being Shaken twice.
- **KEEN SMELL:** A normal-sized Gila monster can track an egg rolled across bare rock. Giant Gila monsters are at +4 to Notice or Track anything with an odor, including prey hiding underground, in vehicles, or in caves. It ignores all penalties for darkness in such cases.
- **POISON:** Anyone bitten must make a Vigor roll at -1 or gain a Fatigue level. Physical activity (such as combat) will bring on another Vigor roll (also at -1) in 2d6 rounds. Once Incapacitated by the poison, the victim dies in 2d6 hours.
- **SIZE +4:** Giant Gila monsters reach 20' from snout to tail, and weigh over 3000 lbs. It is a Large creature: human-sized foes have a +2 to hit it.

## Variant Versions

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- **BREATH CLOUD:** The Apache believe that the Gila monster breathes a poison cloud; if the giant Gila monster has this power, it uses the Cone Template on breath attacks. Any target within the cone may make an Agility roll (no modifier) to avoid the attack. Those who fail inhale poison, with the effects above. Giant Gila monsters may not bite or claw in a round in which they breathe poison.
- **REALLY GIANT GILA MONSTER:** A 70' long Gila monster has been reported in northern Mexico. It would have Strength d12+10, Toughness 20, Armor +4, Size +8 (+4 to be hit by humans).

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## Giant Snake

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By far the most common monster appearing after the Serpentfall, giant snakes infest all continents (except Antarctica) and all but icy polar seas. Giant snakes come in all varieties, including venomous constrictors, a combination not found in pre-Serpentfall nature. Giant snakes range from 20' to 80' or even longer. These statistics are for a 20' long venomous constrictor weighing 200-300 lbs.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d8, Smarts d4(A), Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**SKILLS:** Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Guts d6, Notice d10

**PACE:** 8 **PARRY:** 5 **TOUGHNESS:** 6

## Special Abilities

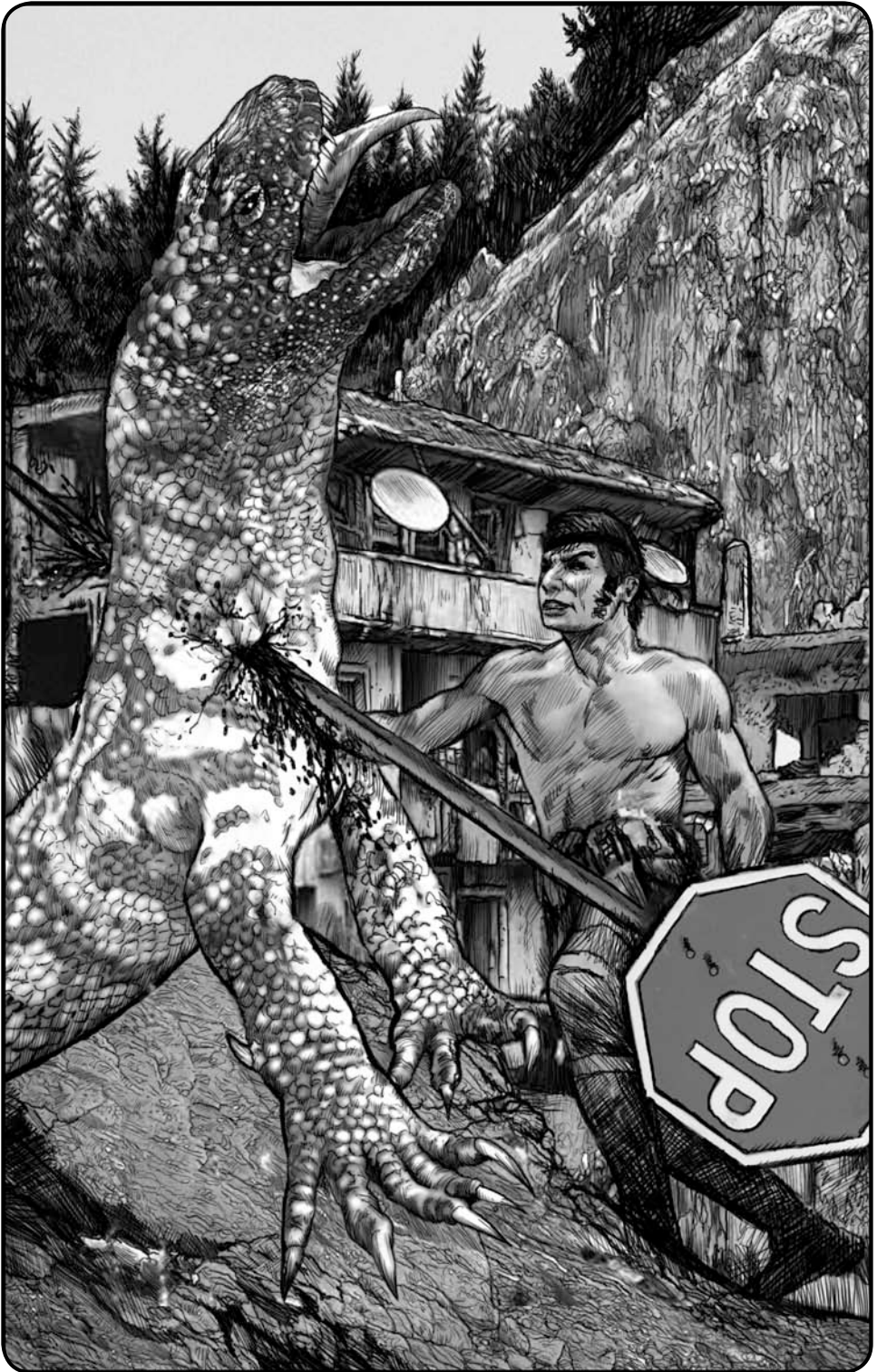
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- **BITE:** Str+d4
- **CONSTRUCT:** Giant snakes bite when they succeed at a Fighting roll and entangle when they succeed with a raise. The round they entangle and each round thereafter, they cause damage to their prey equal to Str+d8. The prey may attempt to escape on his action by getting a raise on an opposed Strength roll.
- **FEAR:** Seeing a giant snake requires a Guts roll.
- **POISON:** Anyone bitten must make a Vigor roll at -2 or become Exhausted until healed. Physical activity (such as combat) will bring on another Vigor roll (also at -2) in 2d6 rounds. Once Incapacitated by the poison, the victim must make another Vigor roll (also at -2) or die in 1d4 hours.
- **QUICK:** Discard action cards of 5 or lower.
- **REACH 1:** A giant snake can rear and strike out to a third its length.
- **WEAKNESS (HEAT AND COLD):** Giant snakes are cold-blooded; they make Vigor rolls to withstand temperature extremes at -1.

## Variant Versions

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- **LARGER SNAKES YET:** Larger snakes have more formidable statistics, as follows:
- **30' SNAKE:** Strength d10, Toughness 7, Reach 2, Size +1; **POISON:** Exhausted on successful Vigor roll at -2, on failed roll Incapacitated and must make second Vigor roll at -2 or die in 2d6 minutes.
- **50' SNAKE:** Strength d12+3, Pace 10, Toughness 9, Reach 3, Size +3, Bite Str+d6, Constrict attacks ignore armor, Fear -1; **POISON:** As 30' snake.
- **80' SNAKE:** WC, Strength d12+6, Pace 12, Toughness 10, Reach 5, Size +4, Bite Str+d8, Constrict attacks ignore armor, Fear -2, Large (+2 to be hit); not Quick; **POISON:** As 30' snake, but Vigor rolls at -4 and death occurs in 2d6 rounds.
- **SEA SNAKES:** River, lake, or ocean giant snakes are *aquatic*, and have Swimming d8 and Pace the same as a land snake of the same size.



- **SNOW SNAKES:** Living in glaciers and mountains, snow snakes have white scales (-4 to Notice rolls to spot in snow; -2 to ranged attacks in snow if the attacker knows the snow snake is there). They are warm-blooded.

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## Giant Spider

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Increasingly common in the Poisoned Lands and Africa, where witch-doctors and shamans have trained them as guard beasts, hunting coursers, and pets. Giant spider legs are reinforced with some sort of resinous chitin that keeps them from collapsing under their own weight; some bandit clans in the Poisoned Lands make scale armor out of them. (+2 Armor, negates 2 AP, half the weight of plate mail)

Use the giant spider statistics from the *Savage Worlds* rulebook (p. 154) but add:

### Special Abilities

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- **POUNCE:** Some giant hunting spiders can leap up to 3", which grants them a +2 bonus to their first Fighting roll against the target of their pounce.

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## Hydra

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Giant snakes aren't bad enough—the lakes and fens of the Poisoned Lands (and of the Sudan) host giant snakes with multiple heads! The body of a hydra more resembles an alligator's than a snake's, being many times thicker.

These statistics are for a nine-headed hydra, the most commonly reported version. Fighting a hydra involves fighting one (or more, with Sweep) of its heads. Every wound kills one head, lowering the hydra's attributes and skills.

***For example:** Lt. Keenan is fighting a nine-headed hydra. He kills one head, taking it to eight heads, with no effect on the hydra's attributes. But when he kills the next head, it drops to seven heads, and its attributes and skills all drop one die to d6. At six heads, no loss; at five heads, everything drops to d4. At three heads, d4-1; at one head, d2. At no heads, the hydra is dead.*

However, every killed head grows back in 1d4 rounds as two heads, unless the neck is cauterized with fire (damage from a successful attack with a torch, flamethrower, etc.).

***For example:** Lt. Keenan has killed one head of a nine-headed hydra. Two grow back in its place, for ten heads, which has no effect on its attributes. But if he kills one more head (dropping it to nine), when two grow back the hydra will have eleven heads, and all its attributes and skills increase to d10; at thirteen heads, d12; at fifteen heads, d12+2, and so forth.*

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d8, Smarts d8(A), Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

**SKILLS:** Fighting d8, Guts d8, Notice d8

**PACE:** 4 **PARRY:** 7 **TOUGHNESS:** 9

### Special Abilities

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- **AQUATIC:** Pace 6.
- **BITE:** Str+d4
- **ENHANCED SMELL:** With all those tongues flicking the air, the hydra is at +2 to Notice anything with an odor. It halves all penalties from darkness.
- **FEAR -1:** Seeing a hydra imposes a Guts check at -1.
- **IMPROVED SWEEP:** Unless there are more such targets than it has heads, a hydra can strike at any or all adjacent targets in a single round without penalty.
- **POISON:** Anyone bitten must make a Vigor roll at -2 or become Exhausted until healed. Physical activity (such as combat) will bring on another Vigor roll (also at -2) in 2d6 rounds.

Once Incapacitated by the poison, the victim must make another Vigor roll (also at -2) or die in 1d4 hours.

- **SIZE +3:** A hydra is 20' long, and weighs 1,500 lbs.

## Jotun



At the beginning of Ragnarok, the jotun, or frost giants, emerged from the ice. The sagas describe the jotun as fierce, inhuman killers of monstrous size, but possessed of the ancient wisdom of Mimir. Stalin's giantish allies are known to have provided him with much antediluvian lore; those who have faced them can confirm the rest of the description. The best-known of the jotun are the Stalin-allied Narts of the Caucasus Mountain glaciers, but USAAF personnel in Greenland have reported sighting jotun while on patrol. Rumors persist of giants hidden in caves in the Rockies, but Canadian and American officials eager to get their own hands on primordial lore have found...or at least reported...none.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d6, Smarts d10, Spirit d8, Strength d12+5, Vigor d10

**SKILLS:** Climbing d8, Fighting d10, Guts d8, Innate Gift d8, Intimidation d10, Knowledge (Primordial Lore) d10, Notice d4, Throwing d6

**PACE:** 10 **PARRY:** 7 **TOUGHNESS:** 16

**GEAR:** Ice-coated mail hauberk (+4 Armor); great axe (Reach 2, Str+d10, AP 2).

### Special Abilities

- **HARDY:** Further Shaken results do not wound a Shaken jotun.
- **IMMUNITY (COLD):** Once freed from their icy prisons, jotun are immune to cold.
- **IMPROVED ARCANE RESISTANCE:** 4 points of Armor against magical attacks, and +4 to all rolls to resist magical effects. This includes Serpent effects, such as Serpent-cult miracles and ophi-tech.
- **INNATE GIFT:** All Narts, and possibly all jotun, have some innate gift: Soslan has steel skin, Batyrez cannot be defeated with the blade, Satanya is impossibly beautiful, Nasren can see the future. Personalize this gift for any Nart or jotun in your game. Like superpowers, a jotun's innate gift is its own skill, with a die the same as her Spirit. It has no Power Point cost.
- **REACH 1:** Jotun have Reach 1 with their fists, Reach 2 with long weapons like great axes and great swords.
- **SIZE +5:** Jotun are 15' tall; as Large creatures, they are at +2 to be hit by man-sized attackers.
- **SWEEP:** Jotun may hit all adjacent targets at -2 to skill.
- **THROWN BOULDER:** Jotun can hurl boulders, trees, halftracks, or anything else handy at their foes. Range 5/10/20; impact wrecks a Small Burst Template and does 3d6 to whatever it hits.
- **ARCANE BACKGROUND (MAGIC):** Many jotun know magical spells and lore; if so, they have Spellcasting d10 in addition to their innate talent.

## Kraken

The Norse kraken was supposedly the size of an island, but the term is now applied to any tentacled monstrosity in the ocean. Krakens infest the coasts of the Poisoned Lands, the Mediterranean, and the waters around the Serpent's body, but have been spotted globally.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d10, Smarts d8(A), Spirit d6, Strength d12+4, Vigor d12+2

**SKILLS:** Fighting d8, Guts d4, Notice d6

**PACE:** 0 **PARRY:** 6 **TOUGHNESS:** 15

## Special Abilities

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- **AQUATIC:** Pace 10
- **BEAK/FANGS/JAWS:** One or several; Str+d6
- **SIZE +5:** (Ranging up to +10); Large or Huge
- **TENTACLES:** Reach 5 (or more). Krakens may attack up to four targets simultaneously at no penalty; if two tentacles attack the same target, the second receives a +1 to grappling attacks, and so forth. The kraken grapples its prey, squeezing for Str+d10 damage per round and pulling it underwater to drown.
- **VISCOUS COMPOSITION:** Some krakens are seemingly composed of a weird jelly-like substance that bullets simply pass through when they hit, doing minimum damage automatically.

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## Naga

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Human-headed snakes have appeared in the rivers of the Poisoned Lands since the Serpentfall. The British and Congress Indian governments both deny rumors of these “nagas” emerging in South Asian rivers. Debates rage on their nature: are they chimeras—mutated or twisted humans—or an entirely separate sort of monster? They reportedly have the power to cleanse water of Serpent venom, but demand human worship and the rejection of all technology in return. So far, only a few towns in Vermont have taken them up on the offer.



**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d6, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

**SKILLS:** Fighting d6, Guts d6, Notice d10, Spellcasting d8

**PACE:** 4 **PARRY:** 5 **TOUGHNESS:** 5

## Special Abilities

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- **AQUATIC:** Pace 10
- **CONSTRUCT:** Nagas wrap a coil of their body around their target when they succeed at a Fighting roll, reducing the target's Agility- and Strength-related skills by -2, and lowering his Pace and Parry by a similar amount. On a raise, the naga fully entangles the target. The round they entangle and each round thereafter, they cause damage to their prey equal to Str+d8. The prey may attempt to escape on his action by getting a raise on an opposed Strength roll.
- **ELEMENTAL MANIPULATION (WATER):** As the power; may purify or create a gallon of water. No Power Point cost, but the naga can only purify its home waters.
- **IMMUNITY (POISON):** Nagas cannot be poisoned.
- **MIND CONTROL:** A naga can use the *puppet* power with no Power Point cost, but can only charm a single victim at a time. Its victim automatically breaks free if the naga is Shaken or wounded. Naga mind control is accompanied by telepathic contact, allowing the victim to hear the naga's thought commands.

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## Thunderbird

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Scientists call these creatures pteranodons, but cannot explain their strange effect on luck except to mutter about *folies a deux* and “mass hysterical self-hypnosis.” Thunderbirds raid ranches and farms, carrying away sheep and goats and the occasional small child.

**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d8, Smarts d6(A), Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d8

**SKILLS:** Fighting d8, Notice d10, Stealth d8

**PACE:** 2 **PARRY:** 6 **TOUGHNESS:** 6



## Special Abilities

- **BITE:** Str+d4
- **DEATH CURSE:** Anyone who kills a thunderbird receives the Bad Luck Hindrance. At your discretion, this curse can be removed by some medicine men, miracle workers, etc. Also at your discretion, a thunderbird might grant a hero the Luck Edge in exchange for some activity or favor.
- **FLIGHT:** Pace 12, Climb 8.
- **RUN SILENT:** Thunderbirds on the wing have +4 to Stealth rolls.
- **SUN IN MY EYES:** Ranged attacks on thunderbirds are difficult for some reason: -4 to all Shooting or Throwing rolls. On a roll of 1 on the skill die, the weapon jams or malfunctions. If the weapon was already prone to malfunction on a 1 (cheap, ill-maintained, experimental ophi-tech, etc.), it does so on a 1 or 2 on the skill die. For the rest of the combat, the firer has the All Thumbs Hindrance.

## Wendigo

Wendigowak (the plural of wendigo) may be chimeras like ghouls, or they may be creatures similar to yeti or sasquatch that have gained a taste for human flesh. Their reputed powers over cold might be the result of a dark bargain with some icy god, or just superstitious panic spread by survivors of wendigo attacks. These survivors' stories describe a hairy creature with webbed or deformed feet; it can leap great distances or fly. Its eyes are red and glowing.



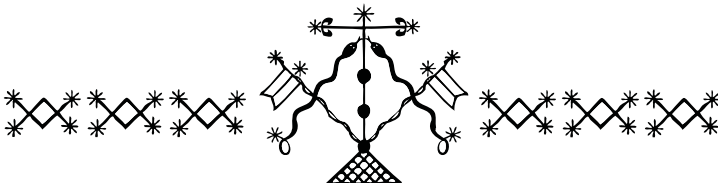
**ATTRIBUTES:** Agility d10, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d12+2, Vigor d12

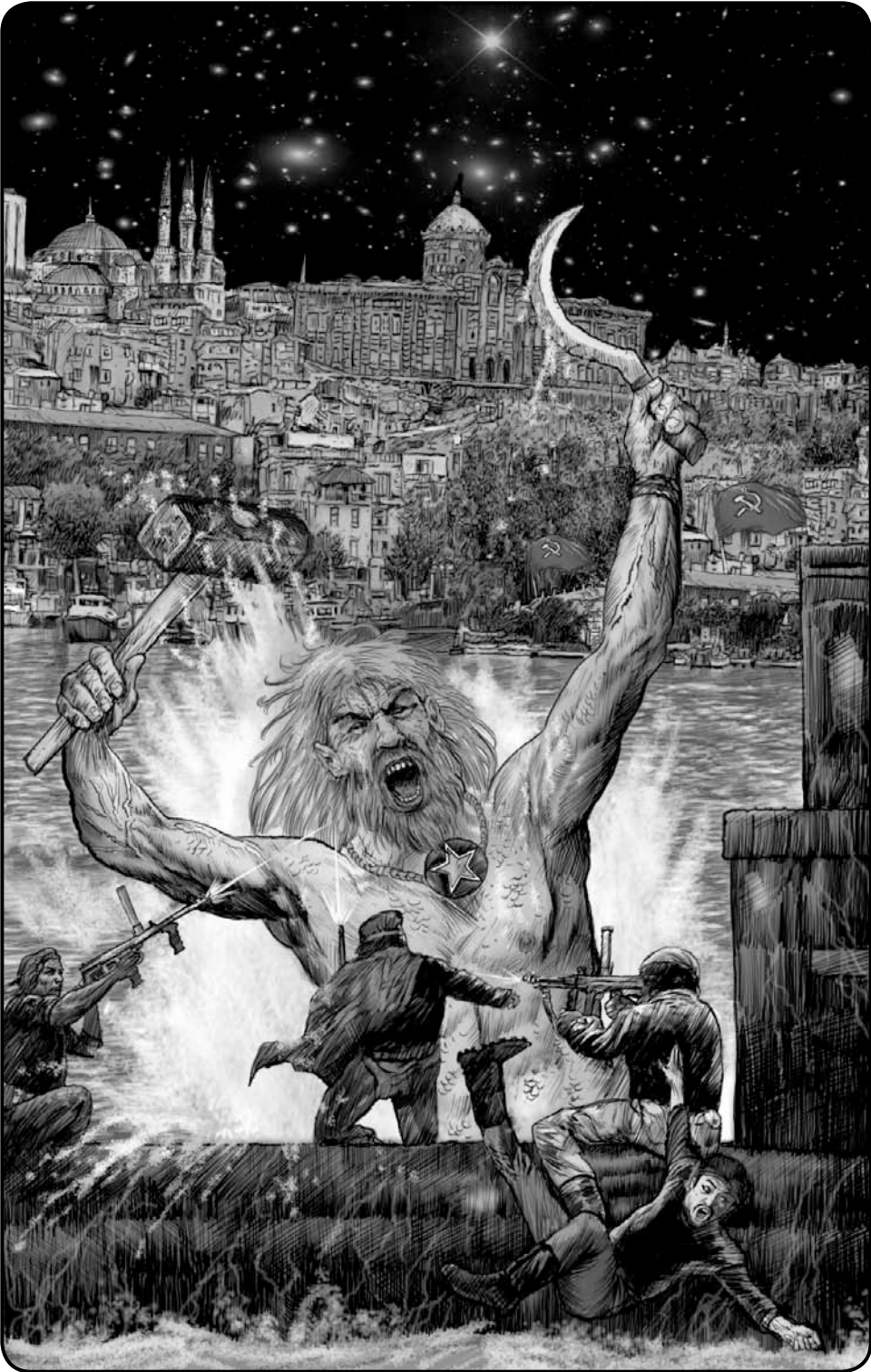
**SKILLS:** Fighting d12, Intimidation d12, Notice d10, Stealth d10, Track d10

**PACE:** 8 **PARRY:** 8 **TOUGHNESS:** 8

## Special Abilities

- **BITE/CLAWS:** Str+d8
- **FEAR -2:** Seeing a wendigo triggers a Guts check at -2; hearing the howl of a wendigo from afar triggers it at -1.
- **FEARLESS:** Wendigowak are immune to fear and Intimidation.
- **FRENZY:** A wendigo frenzies when attacking a human.
- **ICY TOUCH:** Being grabbed or struck by a wendigo freezes to the marrow. Any target who suffers damage or a Shaken result from a wendigo must make a Vigor roll at -2 or be frozen solid and incapable of any action for 2d6 rounds.
- **IMMUNITY (COLD):** Wendigowak do not suffer from cold or cold-based attacks.
- **INFRAVISION:** Wendigowak can see any warm object even in pitch blackness; they take no penalties from it.
- **LEAPING:** A wendigo can leap 8" vertically or 16" horizontally; a leaping Fighting attack does +3 damage.
- **QUICK:** Discard action cards of 5 or lower.





# — Adventures in the Serpent's Shadow —

You've got your heroes, their killing (and surviving) gear, and a whole world of monsters and Commies to kill and survive. What's next? Adventuring!

## SAVAGE CAMPAIGNS

Rather than limit your adventuring to one sort of campaign in one part of the world, this section lays out four different campaign types, any of which can be played most anywhere in the Savage World of *The Day After Ragnarok!* For each type, we've provided a few pointers to sample heroes, locations, stage dressing, and such. (But go ahead and surprise us!) If a bunch of you seem interested in such a thing, we'll offer up a good old-fashioned Plot Point campaign—or more than one!—later on down the road. But for now, it's all just possibilities. There aren't any Points that have to happen, any more—Stalin might live to be a hundred, or Richard J. Daley might build a mighty pirate empire on the Great Lakes. The world got a whole lot *bigger*, somehow, after the Serpent fell...

### Wolves Beyond the Border

This first type, the “freelance heroes” saga, is the most traditional sort of campaign. Your heroes are outlaws or barbarians or just footloose types who don't fit in anywhere. They wander the Poisoned Lands, or Africa, or the Pacific, or anywhere, killing horrors and living by their own code. They might be roving bounty hunters taking down monsters for money in the Mayoralties, a crew of master thieves ready to liberate museums from their masterpieces and generals from their loot, a driven squad of crusaders fighting spectral evil across the globe, an occult cabal seeking lost tomes and sorcerous wisdom, or prospectors looking for unique specimens to sell to Rhodes University or for antique lamps in submerged mansions on Long Island.

The key to this campaign is flexibility, or freedom: the heroes can pick up or turn down anything they want. If they make things too hot for themselves in Algeria, they can hop a convenient steamer to Colombia, or barter a favor for a plane trip to Macao. If they hear a rumor, they can chase it; if they make a friend, they can help him. Your job is to throw tempting loot, dangerous monsters, and fascinating strangers into their path as often as you can.

- **TYPICAL HEROES:** Barbarians, mercenaries, bounty hunters, prospectors, jacks-of-all-trades, thieves, missionaries, outlaws, aces, McGyvers, pirates, investigators, martial artists, wizards, deserters, explorers, woodsmen.
- **WELL-SUITED LOCATIONS:** The Poisoned Lands, French Africa or the Congo, Ras al-Thuban, China, the South China Sea, the Andes, the Caribbean, globe-trotting.
- **LIKELY SETTINGS:** Ruined cities, haunted jungles, windswept battlefields, someone else's mansion or vault, the high seas, seedy dives, archives with indifferent security, caravan routes, gambling dens, just past a bribed guard, prisons and dungeons, remote airfields, the docks.
- **PROBABLE OPPONENTS:** People just like the heroes only worse, the long arm of the law, monsters, Serpent cults, rivals for love or money, femmes (et hommes) fatale, tinpot would-be dictators, the other side's Red Army advisers, racket bosses, targets of opportunity.
- **WELCOME REWARDS:** Fabulous gems, Krugerrands and double-eagles, loose pieces of ophitech, the dirt on someone, gold bars, a cargo of rifles, a plane of your own, much-needed repairs, true love's kiss (or the best substitute money can buy), pre-Fall whiskey, a good fight against bad people, a ticket out of Dodge on the next fast boat.

## Savage Skeleton: Pirate's Grand Tour

Here's how a sample "Wolves Beyond the Border" campaign arc might run. The heroes are pirates in the Caribbean...to start with.

- **ADVENTURE ONE:** The heroes spot a fine wallowing yacht off the coast of Alabama. Best of all, it belongs to a Klansman looking to set up a slave entrepot in the ruins of Biloxi!
- **ADVENTURE TWO:** Whoever the Klansman was buying the slaves from must have lots of cash! The heroes go to Haiti to rob those slavers blind! Oh, yeah, and free all those slaves, too.
- **ADVENTURE THREE:** Turns out Haiti is full of zombie-monsters. Who knew? Fortunately, there's a French daredevil on the island, and she'll fly the heroes to Dakar if they do her a little favor when we get there.
- **ADVENTURE FOUR:** Her "little favor" turns out to be "act as muscle for a raid on the Foreign Legion payroll." The Legion, a scorned daredevil, and an ambitious French politician chase the heroes across the Sahara in any vehicle that will carry them!
- **ADVENTURE FIVE:** The mad sky-pirate "Le Robur" knows how the heroes can get over the Serpent and away, but they have to beat his five champions in a series of awesome smackdowns.
- **ADVENTURE SIX:** The heroes' plane is caught in an impossible jet stream; they have to kill the sky-kraken responsible for it before they get sucked into its horrific maw.
- **ADVENTURE SEVEN:** Coming down from the sky-kraken, the heroes crash into Japanese-held Sumatra. Fight or connive their way through the Japanese on the coast, or follow the rumor of the Jade Temple in the interior?
- **ADVENTURE EIGHT:** Either way, the heroes run into Lung Choi San and her flotilla of pirates. She falls hard for one of the heroes, and the romantic challenge of keeping her interest becomes increasingly adventurous. ("If you really loved me, you'd kill that warlord.")
- **ADVENTURE NINE:** The heroes need to steal a fast boat and get out of Chinese waters before the Dragon Queen loses interest...fatally. It's a caper, a chase, and maybe a fight against a sea serpent! Where to next?

## Servants of the Crown

If the heroes start (or start out) consistently taking one side or helping one employer—MI5, Free China, or the great State of Texas—then the campaign is a "mission-driven" campaign. Someone gives the heroes orders, or suggestions, or a good hard shove in the back; they go in the indicated direction and do damage to their patrons' enemies. It's most likely that the "someone" is, at one or another remove, the British Empire: the SIS, the Royal Navy, MI5, Rhodes University, and so forth. The heroes might be contract employees of a deniable sort, or fully enlisted fighting men. The heroes might be SAS, RRAF, or similar, or they might be Easy Company or the Fightin' Roughnecks. This sort of structure also works if the heroes are Texas Rangers, Foreign Legionnaires, U.S. Marine Raiders, a mercenary company in the Midwest or South America, or members of any other military or paramilitary outfit. Similarly, the SIS version of the campaign applies (with a few fillips) to the American ONI or OSS, or some other mostly-secret service, or even to geological prospectors and troubleshooters for Royal Dutch-Shell Oil! The heroes' employer might be on the up-and-up, or the campaign might be a long story arc of betrayal...and revenge!

With a slightly broader remit, this campaign structure can blend with the "Wolves Beyond the Border" sort. The heroes might be wandering stringers for Rhodes University, freelance "eyes on the ground" for the Colonial Office, or a bunch of crooks given a pardon by the FBI on the condition that they always answer a telegram from "Mr. Able." Such a connection can provide plenty of mission-driven adventures alongside the explore-kill-and-loot stories that a pure "freelance heroes" (or "freelance outlaws") campaign supplies.

## Savage Skeleton: Yesterday Was Quite Enough

Here's how a sample "Servants of the Crown" campaign arc might run. The heroes work for the SIS, on His Majesty's secret service.

- **ADVENTURE ONE:** The SIS sends the heroes to an experimental Rhodes University psi laboratory in Uganda to see why it was destroyed, and find out if Soviet man-apes in the area did it.
- **ADVENTURE TWO:** Rescuing the sole survivor of the lab, the heroes have to get her back to Nairobi while dodging Mau-Mau assassins.
- **ADVENTURE THREE:** Otto Skorzeny was spotted in the ruins of Boston, looking for something. The heroes have to find him, find what he's looking for, and keep it politely out of the hands of the American ONI team who arrive halfway through.
- **ADVENTURE FOUR:** He was looking for a rare grimoire from a small university library wrecked in the tsunami—and everyone in the Empire who can translate it is dying mysteriously!
- **ADVENTURE FIVE:** The heroes have to infiltrate a fashionable Brazilian casino frequented by royalty—and run by the Daughters of Dionin, who (it turns out) were the ones killing off those scholars. But Skorzeny shows up there, too, in a gambling mood.
- **ADVENTURE SIX:** Word from "C"—the girl from the psi lab has left Nairobi, on a plane heading for Buenos Aires. On her own, or kidnapped? Is Skorzeny involved here, too?
- **ADVENTURE SEVEN:** The heroes track the girl to a secret Argentine black magic lodge, run by a fugitive Ahnenerbe scholar. Bust in and kill everyone, or infiltrate and find out what's going on?
- **ADVENTURE EIGHT:** Skorzeny plans to restart Ragnarok with an incantation from that grimoire, amplified by the girl's psionic powers! The heroes must battle South American Nazis on the threshold of Muspellheim!
- **ADVENTURE NINE:** And then the Soviet Strategic Rocket Troops show up—the girl was an NKVD esper all along. Is Stalin working with the Nazis? After all, opening Muspellheim would mostly wreck the British and Americans, not Russia. Or can the heroes trust the Reds?

What you need to bring to a "Servants of the Crown" campaign is a good variety of missions, an interesting cast of "headquarters types" (think M, Moneypenny, and Q from the Bond movies), and a few nice recurring villains. The keys to this sort of campaign are structure and predictability; make those its strengths, not its weaknesses.

- **TYPICAL HEROES:** Mercenaries, scientists, soldiers, spies, airmen, rocketeers, champions, assassins, oilmen, holy warriors, speleo-herpetologists, Texas Rangers, Mounties, mentalists, scholars.
- **WELL-SUITED LOCATIONS:** The borders of the British Empire, Kansas and Arkansas, the Philippines, the Congo, the Mayoralities, the Oil States, behind the Serpent Curtain, enemy territory however defined.
- **LIKELY SETTINGS:** Enemy airbases, hidden fortresses, illicit laboratories, the edge of space, a good spot for an ambush, island battle-stations, the belly of the beast, storm-wracked battlefields, huge gun emplacements, radar stations, bandit camps, Serpent cult compounds.
- **PROBABLE OPPONENTS:** The NKVD and Commies in general, the Kempeitai and the Japanese military in general, the Grand Kounty of Birmingham, goons and cannon fodder, strategic geniuses, "the player on the other side," Serpent cults, a bald man with a scar and a monocle, bandit chiefs, warlords, rogue ophiurgists, rebels, fugitive Nazis, jerks and traitors on your own side, mad scientists, man-apes, demons, Djehuti-Yamun.
- **WELCOME REWARDS:** Promotion, access to cutting-edge black ophi-tech, battlefield honors, saving lives (your comrades or innocent civilians), "all found," hazard pay, not getting shipped back to Robben Island, another dose of the experimental drug you need to keep your powers under control, bigger guns.

## Phoenix and the Sword

The “rebirth and rebuilding” campaign differs somewhat from the “Servants of the Crown.” The heroes are still consistently on one side, but it’s the side of recovery. They aren’t romantic barbarians striding past the gleaming battlements of Dayton, or pirates swooping down on a freighter full of looted temple furnishings. They may be U.S. Army Rangers defending Dayton from hordes of bandits, or crusaders avenging the looting of a temple whose gardens fed hungry refugees. Or they may be a pocket of heroes determined to take a stand somewhere that needs them, and take on all comers for it. They may be deputized by the Crown or the President or the Baptist Convention, or mercenaries carving out their own pocket empire on the fringes of a crumbling world. They may be one band of brave rebels throwing off the dead hand of Japan or Russia or Britain, or they may be true only to some personal vision of a better future. Heroes like this can still rove around, doing good and moving on in the morning, finding points of light in a dark world and brightening them. But it’s more likely, and often more satisfying, for the heroes to stay where they know they make a difference, and often call the shots.

This doesn’t have to be a campaign about hope. You can model a “Phoenix and the Sword” campaign on the classic Western—gunfighters building a civilization—and get plenty of pathos out of it as the new peace and safety makes the heroes unnecessary. After all, the greatest “rebuilding” story in the world ends in tragedy and destruction: Arthur brings a new era of peace and unity to Britain...until Camelot collapses in the new Dark Age.

The key to this campaign type is pacing. While the setting is important, so much of it will be built or co-created by the players over time that you can focus on the challenges they face. Some challenges might be internal—political or social opposition from the people they help, rival adventurers with their own goals for the future—but mostly the challenges are external. Keep the problems coming, from all directions, but mix in a sprinkling of reward moments—easy fights

## Savage Skeleton: Our Own Private Iowa

Here’s how a sample “Phoenix and the Sword” campaign arc might run. The heroes have decided to protect, preserve, defend, and rebuild Davenport, Iowa.

- **ADVENTURE ONE:** Welcome to Davenport—introducing the ongoing NPCs and their immediate crisis, a river serpent that devours the local children.
- **ADVENTURE TWO:** A Serpent cult in Rock Island, across the Mississippi, was behind the monster; rooting them out and making enemies in Rock Island.
- **ADVENTURE THREE:** Tension builds when Cedar Rapids demands exclusive access to the ruins of Iowa City. Negotiate or fight?
- **ADVENTURE FOUR:** Exploring the area for salvageable resources; wandering monsters and more NPCs.
- **ADVENTURE FIVE:** Davenport is divided: war with Rock Island or not? Whichever side the heroes are on—and maybe some are on each side—they have to convince their opponents or see the town dissolve.
- **ADVENTURE SIX:** A huge dust storm wrecks vital machinery in town; do we trade with Cedar Rapids for replacements, steal the parts we need, or find a better solution?
- **ADVENTURE SEVEN:** A flotilla of pirates sails down the Mississippi from Dubuque, looting everything they can. They must be stopped, with allies from a suspicious (or occupied!) Rock Island.
- **ADVENTURE EIGHT:** Building a bridge across the Mississippi, with lots of monsters to keep the engineering exciting. Someone in town is working for the Iowa Soviet, and doesn’t want the bridge built.
- **ADVENTURE NINE:** A big caravan arrives from Chicago, with an ultimatum from its Mayor. Or maybe it’s an offer of alliance. Or both...

against someone who was pretty tough awhile back, connections with the people the heroes help, unexpected allies building their own town up in the next county. By such contrast, bring out the danger and sweat of the next crisis.

- **TYPICAL HEROES:** Engineers, rebels, merchants, lawmen, scientists, gadgeteers, preachers, soldiers, champions, Mr. Fix-Its, scholars, frontiersmen, doctors, Mounties, bards.
- **WELL-SUITED LOCATIONS:** The Mayoralties, the Caribbean, Mexico, Canada, France, British Africa, India, Palestine, Pacific islands, the East Indies.
- **LIKELY SETTINGS:** Frontier stockades, river crossings and bridges, abandoned university libraries, burned-over city neighborhoods, the new mill, potentially idyllic islands, monster dens inconveniently nearby, meeting halls, caravan routes and caravanseries, rough-hewn saloons, railheads, the wilderness around any of the above.
- **PROBABLE OPPONENTS:** Bandits, ghouls, the weather, rival mercenaries, troublemaking know-it-alls, Serpent cultists, panicky demagogues, plague, famine, barbarians, the all-too-local monsters, the hated British and other oppressors, shortages, hoarders, failing technology, migrating monsters, river-pirates, interfering officials from elsewhere, extortionists, and did I say bandits?
- **WELCOME REWARDS:** Survival, a decent harvest, a successful caravan, twenty dollars in gold, technical progress, a melting look from the schoolmarm, political power, getting to design your own flag, the next generation of humanity, life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness.

## City of the Emerald Night

A campaign in which the heroes work for the LAPD is strikingly similar to a campaign in which the heroes work for L.A. crime boss Mickey Cohen. Both have strong similarities to a campaign in which the heroes just walk the mean streets of L.A., helping the wounded and trying to keep the sun coming up each morning. Whether outlaws or lawmen, barbarians or builders, the city remains the same. Which is why city-based campaigns are their own special thing. It hardly matters if the heroes are Special Branch anti-terrorist cops in British Calcutta, or Vietnam rebels in Japanese-held Saigon, or freelance hellraisers in the Motor City, Detroit. The heroes might be protectors of a neighborhood, troubleshooters for a political boss, the best grifters in the whole damn town, or adrenaline junkies who hunt Things through sewers and subways. It's all urban adventures, all the time.

The key to this campaign type is, unsurprisingly, its setting: You need to make the city feel real, breathe riotous life and challenge and mystery and familiarity into every neighborhood and building. Give the *players* a sense of belonging and comfort, although you can keep the heroes feeling like outsiders on their last shilling. Anything can happen anywhere, and somehow it couldn't have happened anywhere else. This "Arabian Nights" sense of wonder will keep your heroes on their toes, while they grow to feel like your city is their own, their home to defend... or to judiciously loot, or both.

- **TYPICAL HEROES:** Rebels, cops, priests, private eyes, con men, boxers, merchants, entertainers, spies, thieves, gangsters, secret police, artists, exterminators, occult investigators, holy warriors, acrobats, Mr. Fix-Its, scholars, wizards.
- **WELL-SUITED LOCATIONS:** Los Angeles, San Francisco, Vancouver, mostly-cleared Houston, Chicago, another city in the Mayoralties, Rio de Janeiro, Marseilles, Leopoldville, Nairobi, Capetown, Sydney, Calcutta, Bombay, Shanghai, Macao, Manila.
- **LIKELY SETTINGS:** The docks, a neighborhood bar, jail, the university campus, the city gates, the sewers, fleabag hotels, City Hall, that weird old bookshop, opium dens, the stadium, the parish church, the bank, the red-light district, the casino, subway stations, Chinatown, the heroes' office, parks, cemeteries, penthouses, pawnshops, the rather less welcoming bar, diners, conspirators' basements, the cathedral, crime scenes, the plaza, Old Town.

## Savage Skeleton: Istanbul Not Constantinople

Here's how a sample "City of the Emerald Night" campaign arc might run. The heroes, a loose collection of troublemakers, live in Istanbul, a city taken from the Turks and given to the People's Republic of Greece. The heroes, broadly, object to this.

- **ADVENTURE ONE:** The heroes get into a turf war with a neighboring gang of Albanians. This adventure establishes the neighborhood boundaries and NPCs.
- **ADVENTURE TWO:** The Albanians bring in the sorcerous artillery, a Serpent cultist of Kulshedër. This adventure introduces a colony of ghouls in the sewers, and not in a pleasant way.
- **ADVENTURE THREE:** The city officials want to know what caused the huge fire in the sewers, and start rounding up usual suspects. The heroes have to find a better sap to hang the frame on before they get juggled.
- **ADVENTURE FOUR:** Recai, a cunning Turkish detective, sees through their frame. (Or, if it didn't work, he springs them from jail.) He needs a grotesque monster killed in order to open the water gate in the Golden Horn to a smuggler.
- **ADVENTURE FIVE:** To raise a little quiet cash, the Greek government removes a jeweled sword from the Topkapi Museum. If the heroes can liberate it in transit, the Greek government can never admit it was ever stolen. Free Turkey! Or free jewels!
- **ADVENTURE SIX:** There's a new Soviet commissar in charge of the Russian navy base. He's honest, and smart. He has to be embarrassed, broken, or otherwise removed without anyone catching on.
- **ADVENTURE SEVEN:** The Albanians have kidnapped some girls from the heroes' turf, to sell—or to sacrifice to Kulshedër? Or are they just bait for a hero-trap?
- **ADVENTURE EIGHT:** Recai is back! His smuggler friend knows where the heroes can get a Marconi gun, but he needs radio antennas put up on five separate rooftops. Each house is its own challenge: One is a convent in Albanian turf, one has a pterosaur nest in its attic, one is full of tempting illegal goods, and so forth.
- **ADVENTURE NINE:** Someone has sicced a fly-by-night on one of the heroes—and it gets stronger every night. Which makes putting up those last two antennas darn inconvenient. Who have they made an enemy of? Moonlit rooftop chases, and fistfight-punctuated investigations, ensue.

- **PROBABLE OPPONENTS:** Thugs, mobsters, rivals, the police, Serpent cults, the Mayor, aldermen, the occupation authority, creepy foreigners, high society, monsters in the sewers, demagogues, blackmailers, thieves, Aunt Jennies, ghouls, loudmouths at the next table in the bar, the town watch, torch-bearing vigilantes, bureaucrats, spies, serial killers, rich and powerful scumbags.
- **WELCOME REWARDS:** Cash, a round on the house, clout, a blind eye to those weapons charges, the true set of books, Madame Dumont's emeralds, the friendship of the rich and powerful, the enmity of the rich and powerful, new windows, getting the street light fixed.

## ADVENTURE GENERATOR

The following tables exist to help you, the GM, come up with thrilling adventures for the heroes of a *Day After Ragnarok* campaign. They are intentionally generic and wide-ranging—after all, adventures might occur anywhere in this world, with heroes ranging from French air-pirates to Chinese rebels to Texas Rangers to British secret agents! Thus, if something doesn't fit your present campaign, feel free to change it, re-roll, or just pre-select a result from one or another table.

For example, in a "Servants of the Crown" campaign in which all the heroes are Royal Marine Commandos, the Hook is almost always going to be "Patron"—the Marines order the heroes to go somewhere and do something! Likewise, a campaign centered on the mean streets of occupied Shanghai is always going to have a "City" Location. In short, use these tables to inspire your campaign, not to drastically change or strait-jacket it.



## The Hook

The Hook is the reason the heroes get involved, the story element that draws them into the adventure. Some hooks might overlap—an Old Enemy becomes a Patron by hiring the heroes—or combine—the heroes attend an Innocent Beginning function and receive a MacGuffin (or a Dying Message) there. Roll a d12 on the **Hook Table**.

- **CAUGHT UP IN EVENTS:** The heroes just happen to be passing through or hanging around when a crisis hits, and their course of action is obvious or compelled. Alternately, a previous adventure might have fallout that triggers this adventure.
- **DUTY/HONOR:** One of the heroes (or all of them) have made a promise, or sworn an oath, or somehow feel their duty calls them to right some wrong. Or perhaps someone calls the heroes cowards for neglecting the problem, or otherwise impugns their honor over it. Tailor the nature of the adventure to a hero's pre-existing duty.
- **DYING MESSAGE:** The "dead man falls through the door" introduction always works, but this might be a diary that turns up, or a treasure map, or a hero's name scrawled in blood on the wall at a murder scene.
- **INNOCENT BEGINNING:** The heroes are invited to something innocent and seemingly unadventurous: a unit reunion, a lecture, a social function at the Palace, a bar brawl. Something or someone here sets them on the course of adventure—maybe the host tells them a story, or a girl runs away in intriguing fashion, or a different fight breaks out.
- **LEGEND/RUMOR:** The heroes hear about the Lost Dutchman Mine, or the Lemurian city in the Grand Canyon, or the City of the White Apes in the Congo. Or they hear a rumor of something unpleasant or profitable going on where they can get involved. Perhaps they find an old book in the ruins of Toledo, or they receive a most-secret briefing from the SIS.
- **MACGUFFIN:** The heroes get ahold of something that somebody else wants badly enough to harass, burglarize, and perhaps kill them for. What is it? And who wants it? And what can they do with it?
- **MOTIVATION:** Something triggers a pre-existing motive for one or more heroes. It could be something or someone from their past, or something more generic like "I never like to see a kid get hurt" or "I should know better than to listen to redheads, but..." Tailor this to a specific hero's past or personality, ideally something revealed or developed in play.
- **MYSTERY:** Something strange is going on, and it piques the heroes' curiosity. Maybe it seems like the kind of thing the heroes might want to know, or it's just the sort of weirdness that anyone with a Tommy gun would want to look into. It might be a formal murder mystery, or just the enigma of why nobody has robbed the payroll for the Scranton Mining Co. yet when it *seems* so undefended.
- **OLD ENEMY:** An enemy from a previous adventure shows up in town, or in a rumor, or in a field report. What's he up to? How did he survive that explosion? Wouldn't you like to know...

### The Hook

D12	HOOK
1	Caught Up in Events
2	Duty/Honor
3	Dying Message
4	Innocent Beginning
5	Legend/Rumor
6	MacGuffin
7	Motivation
8	Mystery
9	Old Enemy
10	Old Friend
11	Patron/Client
12	Squeeze Play

- **OLD FRIEND:** An old friend gets the heroes involved somehow, either by asking for their help directly or by getting into trouble they hear about later. Essentially, this is usually a modified version of the Patron/Client hook or the Legend/Rumor hook.
- **PATRON/CLIENT:** Someone orders, hires, or begs the heroes to do something. This “someone” can be an official, a senior officer, a mysterious blonde, or a bandit chief.
- **SQUEEZE PLAY:** The heroes are forced into action by coercion, threats, or danger to themselves. The mayor promises to let the heroes leave Cleveland in one piece if they do him one favor, a Japanese colonel threatens to kill a hero’s loved one in a POW camp somewhere if she doesn’t steal a British weapon prototype, a giant snake chases the heroes into a ghoulishly haunted ruined arsenal.

Location

This is where the main action of the adventure will occur. “Globe-trotting” adventures, or serial adventures with a series of goals and clues, might involve several locations—roll a d12 on the **Location Table** just once, or until you get tired.

- **CITY:** The adventure happens in a city, possibly the heroes’ home base, or another city they encounter on their travels. If lots of city adventures are on the agenda, roll on the City Location Subtable (see sidebar) to spread the fun around town.
- **DARK LAND:** The heroes must enter a land controlled by tyranny: the Soviet sphere, the Japanese Empire, the Grand Kounty of Birmingham. This adventure will likely require covert entry, and possibly a hasty exit. Even if they’re not the main villains, the tyrant’s forces will be omnipresent obstacles and threats.
- **EXOTIC LAND:** The adventure happens somewhere far away and different from the heroes’ usual stomping grounds. Getting there could be an adventure or three in its own right, or as simple as a red line moving across a map in a montage scene. The adventure should play up some characteristic feature of the foreign setting: a unique monster, villain, dilemma, or larcenous opportunity.
- **FORT/MILITARY BASE/PRISON:** All harder than normal to get into and out of; all guarded better than most places, by people with better weapons and lots of justification for using them. Most such places are isolated, but some might be right in the middle of a bustling city. This can be a caper scenario or a prison-break adventure, or begin as one and become the other!

Location	
D12	LOCATION
1	City
2	Dark Land
3	Exotic Land
4	Fort/Military Base/Prison
5	Mansion
6	On the Road
7	Ruined City
8	Settlement/Outpost
9	Subterranean
10	Villain's Lair
11	War Zone
12	Wilderness

City Locations	
D12	CITY LOCATION
1	Gate/Checkpoint
2	Jail
3	Laboratory/Factory
4	Church
5	Rich Neighborhood/Bank
6	Slum/Criminal Dive
7	Dock/Airport/Railway Station
8	Sewers/Subways
9	City Hall/Government Building
10	University
11	Barrio/Ghetto/Ethnic Enclave
12	Secret Location, roll again for type

- **MANSION:** An adventure in a mansion might be a haunted house story, a daring art theft, a tale of “social combat,” or a fight with a rich villain or criminal boss. Layout and décor take pride of place when designing such tales; lots of places to hide and things to steal or break.
- **ON THE ROAD:** The journey, as the Chinese saying has it, is the destination. The “real” purpose of the adventure—bandit attack, fortuitous plane crash, damsel in distress—happens on the way to somewhere else. That “somewhere else” may be a sequel, a red herring, or a jumping-off point to another adventure entirely.
- **RUINED CITY:** The world has plenty of ruins, from archaeological sites to drowned Eastern Seaboard towns to quake-ravaged Paris and Hereford. Something in those ruins attracts the heroes’ attention: treasure, a monster, an enemy hideout, or all of the above. Maybe it wasn’t ruined yet last year...or yesterday!
- **SETTLEMENT/OUTPOST:** A remote site on the fringes of civilization, be it Poisoned Kansas or the Upper Congo. It might be a fort, a struggling town, or a caravansera. The threat might come from farther out in the wilds, or from corruption or chicanery where authority is thin on the ground.
- **SUBTERRANEAN:** Underground adventures can range from dero warrens to the medieval sewers of Agra to a network of bomb shelters in Brisbane. As for what might be lurking in a maze of tunnels and confined rooms: surely we don’t need to spell it out?
- **VILLAIN’S LAIR:** Best as the climax of a series of adventures (although an adventure where the—horribly outgunned—heroes just stumble over it is great) this one is all about bagging the bad guy. Who is likely to be surrounded by henchmen, traps, tame monsters, and escape hatches. Bring lots of ammo! You may want to roll again to see just where the villain’s lair happens to be.
- **WAR ZONE:** Whether it’s as big as China or as small as a bandit-ridden county in Pennsylvania, a war zone means lots of jumpy strangers with heavy weapons in the heroes’ way. The heroes may have a military mission (“Get the convoy through!”) or they may be trying to hunt down treasure (or a lost friend) and avoid both sides.
- **WILDERNESS:** Jungle, desert, poisoned plains, mountains—this adventure takes place where Nature (and super-Nature) are red in tooth and claw. No buildings, no roads, no reinforcements. Foes are less likely to be human...or mostly human.

## Heroes’ Goal

This tells you what the heroes’ actual purpose will turn out to be after all the introductory hooks have been swallowed and straightened. While one goal is plenty for a team, you can roll two and combine them (“Solve Mystery” may lead to “Destroy,” for example). For complex adventures, roll once for each hero, and build those motives into the setup! However many times you roll on the **Heroes’ Goal Table**, you roll a d12.

- **ASSIST/GRATITUDE:** The heroes want to help someone, be it a lost scholar or a town besieged by ghouls. They fundamentally seek gratitude, which might take on romantic, political, or other dimensions. This is a good choice for knight-errant heroes, or heroes who always want to help out the underdog.
- **DESTROY/HUNT:** The heroes want to destroy someone or something: a wizard, a siege gun, a dragon. They may have to hunt it across the countryside, or merely beard it in its den. Maybe they just need to collect a new type of Serpent-spawn for Rhodes University, or have to chase a fugitive. This goal requires a good, red-meat hook, but players are usually willing to unleash their bloodthirst.
- **DISCOVER/SOLVE MYSTERY:** Find the dingus, clear up the crime, figure out how the Reds know all about the new rocket plans—the mystery-solving adventure is an old favorite. The

heroes might have to clear their own names, and stay one jump ahead of the rightful authorities while they hunt down the true villain. Or the mystery might be intellectual: who built these ruins? What destroyed them? Is it coming back?

- ESCAPE/RESCUE:** The heroes have to get out of somewhere bad, or they have to go into somewhere bad and get someone out. This adventure might begin with the heroes in prison, or with a plane crash that traps them in trouble. Figuring out who to trust on the inside is a key part of this adventure.
- EXPLORE:** This can be a dungeon crawl through a ruined Manhattan, a scouting mission through once-thriving Ontario, or a journey into the belly of the Serpent itself. This goal almost always requires a Patron or Client unless the heroes are unusually curious about blank spots on the map.
- LIBERATE:** As opposed to the rescue, in this adventure the heroes have to go into somewhere bad and turn it less-bad. The heroes might mount a coup d'etat, kill an evil warlock, suborn a bandit chief, or open the road for the Marines to come in.
- MONEY/REWARD:** "Do this and I'll pay you handsomely." It may be an old standard, but it's reliable. The heroes might have a Patron who hires them, or simply hear about a treasure too rich to ignore. This goal also encompasses specific promises, from "I'll tear up that warrant" to "There's a promotion in it for you."
- PREVENT/PROTECT:** A fundamentally reactive goal; the heroes have to guard a bridge, bodyguard the mayor's daughter, keep a secret from getting out, hide an arms cache, escort a ship through Japanese-patrolled waters, keep bandits away from a village.
- RETRIEVE/STEAL/ACQUIRE:** There is a thing the heroes want to get for themselves, or for the rightful owners. Perhaps they have to keep the theft secret, even from the victim. Perhaps the target has moved. Perhaps the thing does more than sparkle in the moonlight.
- REVENGE/THWART VILLAIN:** This goal is personality-driven, and works best if the heroes have crossed paths with the villain before. The villain might be a mastermind safe back in Moscow or Tokyo, or a neighboring politician they can't just kill outright. Or maybe this is the "47 Ronin" adventure, where they kill the unkillable bad guy or die trying.
- SURVIVE:** Their only goal is to stay alive and get out of this. "This" might be a monster attack, a Japanese raid, a zombie plague, a gang war in Kansas City, or anything else seemingly too big to actually stop. This might be a "gauntlet" the heroes have to run or just a Really Bad Night.
- WIN BATTLE/CONTEST:** The heroes have to win a battle, a race, a martial arts tournament, a living chess game, a dragon hunt. Their foes will undoubtedly cheat.

Heroes' Goal	
D12	HEROES' GOAL
1	Assist/Gratitude
2	Destroy/Hunt
3	Discover/Solve Mystery
4	Escape/Rescue
5	Explore
6	Liberate
7	Money/Reward
8	Prevent/Protect
9	Retrieve/Steal/Acquire
10	Revenge/Thwart Villain
11	Survive
12	Win Battle/Contest

Villain

Who is the villain, the prime mover of the bad things in the adventure? Most adventures only have one, but a "team-up" story can be interesting, especially if both villains have appeared before. Roll 1d12 on the **Villain Table**.

## Villains

D12	VILLAIN
1	Agent
2	Bandit/Rebel
3	Chimera/Monster
4	Conspirator
5	Corruptor
6	Cultist
7	Despot
8	Fanatic
9	Mastermind
10	Rogue
11	Warlock
12	Warlord

- **AGENT:** The villain works for someone else. He might be a SMERSH operative or a Kempeitai asset...or he might work for ONI, SIS, or the Texas Rangers! Maybe he's gone rogue, or maybe he just doesn't think the heroes ought to be running around loose. Maybe everyone's at cross-purposes.
- **BANDIT/REBEL:** This might be the stereotypical "irregular" out in Arkansas somewhere, or a Mau-Mau warrior who lives to give the British fits, a sky-pirate in the Sahara, or a racketeer on the Los Angeles docks. These villains have a "home turf" where they're comfortable and dangerous, and a crew of desperate sorts at their beck and call.
- **CHIMERA/MONSTER:** The villain might be a fiendish skinwalker or simply a Really Big Serpent that needs killing. A monstrous villain can be cunning and proactive or lumbering and reactive.
- **CONSPIRATOR:** This villain lurks in the shadows, furthering a secret agenda. Maybe he's a Red, or part of a cabal of influential fascist bankers, or just planning to overthrow the mayor of Wheeling for his own aggrandizement. Depending on how wild you want to get, he might be a Freemason mystic, a dero fifth-columnist, or a psionic agent of the hidden city of Shangri-La in Tibet.
- **CORRUPTOR:** This villain wants to undermine an existing institution and turn it to his own purposes. Maybe he's a South African general who wants to start a race war, or a mayor who wants to declare Boise independent, or a Navy man who wants to turn pirate.
- **CULTIST:** A servitor of the Serpent. He might be a high-ranking Dionin worshiper in the Admiralty or a tabernacle preacher gone 'round the bend in the ruins of Lavonia, Georgia. Cultists might be secretive conspirator-types or foaming maniacs or subtly twisted scholars.
- **DESPOT:** The ruler of somewhere: a mad sharif in the ruins of Morocco, the raja of Bundelkund, the mayor of St. Paul, the Imperial Kleagle of Yazoo City, the Soviet commissar in Nablus.
- **FANATIC:** This villain is devoted to some monomaniac goal, be it Soviet Communism, the greater glory of the Serpent, inventing anti-gravity, or Alaskan independence. More than most, this villain might overlap with another sort on this list.
- **MASTERMIND:** While a conspirator is part of a larger organization, the mastermind is the spider in the center of his own web. He might be a "Napoleon of Crime," or the devil-doctor of Buenos Aires, or the NKVD station chief for a whole country.
- **ROGUE:** The sort of villain who gets played by Errol Flynn...or Veronica Lake. Charming, possessed of a unique sense of honor, this villain's story depends more on her style than her agenda, which may simply be "beat the heroes to the Ruby of Rajnapur." This sort of villain makes an excellent romantic interest for a hero, either before or after his villainy is clear.
- **WARLOCK:** This villain uses magic to further his foul ends. He might serve the Serpent, but he does so with open eyes (or so he thinks). This die result might also indicate a "mad scientist" ophiurgist wholly contaminated by the Serpent, or some other unwholesome blend of science and sorcery.

- **WARLORD:** This villain has a military command, and uses it to increase his power and wealth. He might be a militia captain in Kentucky, a Soviet general in Persia, a Japanese commandant in Java, or a Belgian colonel deep in the Congo.

Villain's Goal

Villains don't just sit around the burned-out skyscraper waiting for heroes to drop by. They have plans and dreams and schemes of their own, driving plots that unfold whether the heroes show up or not. To see what the villain is up to, roll 1d12 on the **Villain Goal Table**.

- **CONQUER:** The villain wants to conquer something, by military force, by threats, or by political machinations. This might be the town the heroes are passing through, a stretch of ground they have friends in, or something unrelated to the main plot. Everything the villain does is intended to increase his strength or weaken his foes.
- **DESTROY:** The villain wants to destroy something; this is the same goal as the heroes' Destroy/Hunt. The villain may want to destroy it before the heroes can steal it, or to destroy it because the heroes value it, or because it lies in the way of his larger agenda, whatever that may be.
- **DISCOVER:** The villain wants to find something out, from mad-scientific curiosity or in order to further his vile plans. He may want to find the heroes, or uncover the SIS presence in his city, or locate the map to King Solomon's Mines. Villains seldom want to solve a mystery, unless there's another villain crossing them up somewhere.
- **GREED:** The villain wants something that's worth a lot of money. The money may be its own reward, or it may be needed to build an experimental rocket to Mars, or it may be for the coffers of the Party. Perhaps the villain is running a racket or a smuggling ring, or plotting a brilliant series of jewel thefts, or blackmailing rich worshipers of Dionin.
- **KIDNAP:** The villain wants somebody, alive. The heroes may be protecting the victim, or one of them may be the kidnap target! This may just be about the ransom, or it may tie into another goal, or the villain may just be in love with Princess Manisha.
- **REVENGE:** The villain wants somebody to suffer. Again, the heroes may be connected with this person, or they may be the villain's bête noir. Perhaps the revenge is aimed at a city, or an organization, or a military unit. Perhaps the villain's revenge is justified!
- **RIVALRY:** The villain is driven by a rivalry; he wants something (possibly another roll on this table) because his rival wants it. The villain may be an NKVD agent trying to one-up the SIS station chief, or a mad scientist trying to prove something to a competitor, or a jewel thief trying to beat his mentor. Again, the heroes may be the rivals in question, or connected somehow to the rivalry, or simply drawn into the action.
- **STEAL:** The villain wants the dingus, or the treasure, or the prototype. This is the same as the heroes' Retrieve/Steal/Acquire goal. The heroes might be racing the villain to steal it for themselves, or assigned to protect it, or have it dropped in their lap by a dead man on the wharf.

Villain Goal	
D12	VILLAIN'S GOAL
1	Conquer
2	Destroy
3	Discover
4	Greed
5	Kidnap
6	Revenge
7	Rivalry
8	Steal
9	Subvert/Recruit
10	Survive
11	Twisted Honor
12	Worship

- **SUBVERT/RECRUIT:** The villain wants to subvert or recruit some target, bringing them over to the villainous way of thinking. This might involve psionics, blackmail, bribery, persuasion, or simply the right offer at the right time.
- **SURVIVE:** The villain wants to keep alive and free, and believes the heroes to be an obstacle to that goal. The heroes may not know that they threaten the villain, or the villain may be mistaken! This goal also works for monsters, vampires, or any other predator.
- **TWISTED HONOR:** The villain is driven (or constrained) by an oath: magical, military, or something else. This might be a variant on Revenge, if the heroes killed the villain's brother, or it might be just a quirk of villainous behavior in pursuit of some other goal.
- **WORSHIP:** The villain worships the Serpent, and does what he does for its greater glory and power. If this comes up, add a Cultist flavor to whatever else got rolled on the **Villain Table**.

Henchmen

Villains seldom work alone, if only because the heroes need more than one person to beat on. Roll 1d12 as many times as seems right on the **Henchman Table** to see who's helping the villain this time around.

- **ASSASSIN:** This henchman has a specialized job: killing people, usually from a distance or in secret. An assassin might be a trained Russian sniper, a knife-wielding brute, or a Serpent death cultist. Tune the assassin's m.o. to the villain's style unless the contrast is intentional—assassin henchmen often come from faraway, exotic lands.
- **CHIMERA/MONSTER:** The villain has a “tame” monster, perhaps penned up in a death-pit underneath her base. Alternately, the villain works with a chimera: a Soviet agent might have a man-ape on staff, or a corrupt politician might employ an Aunt Jenny for unsavory but deniable deeds.
- **CORRUPTED HERO:** The villain has turned a former hero into a henchman, with money or extortion, or perhaps the hero was always a bad apple. This is the sort of henchman that turns out to be the Old Friend who vanished way up in the Hook section.
- **CULTISTS:** The villain has a whole nest of Serpent cultists to do his bidding. He might be a cult leader, or he might have suborned them to his purposes with trickery or promises, or he might control them with a jade serpent crown he found in the ruins of the Louvre.
- **FEMME FATALE:** This henchwoman often poses as an innocent (or not-so-innocent) victim to lure the heroes into a trap, or simply to keep tabs on their plans. She might be the villain's inamorata, or she might be a consummate professional. Her skills might be murderous, magical, or anything, really. This henchman might, of course, be *un homme fatale* if the scenario calls for it.
- **IGOR:** Deformed, devoted, and fearful in equal measures, Igor does his master's bidding with the occasional over-enthusiastic screwup. Most common with mad scientist type villains, Igor might be a spy, a preternaturally strong snatch-and-grab artist, or just someone to beat when times get frustrating.

Henchmen	
D12	HENCHMAN
1	Assassin
2	Chimera/Monster
3	Corrupted Hero
4	Cultists
5	Femme Fatale
6	Igor
7	Mob
8	Operative
9	Right-Hand Man
10	Soldiers
11	Thugs
12	Warlock

- **MOB:** The villain has an angry mob at his beck and call; perhaps he is a demagogue, or has one in his pay. Perhaps he is (or can pass as) prominent in a restive neighborhood. Either way, he can arouse the populace in his defense, whether they know it or not.
- **OPERATIVE:** The villain has a “secret agent” sort of henchman, expert at infiltration and acquisition. The operative may work under cover, or simply be a master of disguise. Operatives can kill, but aren’t assassins per se.
- **RIGHT-HAND MAN:** The villain has a trusted assistant with much the same skills (command, tactics, etc.) as the villain, ready to step in should anything happen. The right-hand man might pose as the main villain, or be sent off to manage things in the other part of the adventure.
- **SOLDIERS:** The villain commands soldiers, whether uniformed military, tough bandits, or a secret nest of Red Army troops disguised as longshoremen. With enough soldiers, he may be able to get a sniper, an engineer, or any number of specialists.
- **THUGS:** The villain has a criminal following, from common leg-breakers to a crew of thieves to a “beggar’s guild.” The villain isn’t necessarily a gangster: spies, cult leaders, and shady politicians (for example) can all use thug followers.
- **WARLOCK:** The villain has a magical specialist in his retinue. Whether the villain fears, trusts, or even believes his henchman is a separate question. He may consider the warlock just another expert, or he may constantly seek the warlock’s advice on omens and fate.

Victim

This is the person the villain is aiming at, or that the heroes are protecting, or both. The “victim” might not necessarily die, or even know the adventure is going on around him. Roll once or twice (for a cross-purposes sort of adventure) on 1d12.

- **COP/SOLDIER:** The victim is a uniformed servant of a government. The villain may attack a specific cop, or just strike at the Sydney Police in general; the motive may or may not have anything to do with the victim’s uniform. Perhaps the victim has betrayed that uniform in some fashion.
- **DAMSEL IN DISTRESS:** A classic potential romantic interest as victim, the “damsel in distress” may be coincidentally present at the scene, or the specific target of the villain for reasons of lust, revenge, or genetics. The “damsel” may, of course, be highly competent in her own right, or male, or both.
- **DECENT FOLK:** The villain is targeting decent but essentially powerless folk: shopkeepers, farmers, teachers, preachers, etc. They may be in his way, he may want to corrupt them, or he may just hate decency.
- **DESERVING:** This sort of victim deserves whatever happens to him; maybe he’s a criminal, a traitor, a coward, or just a repellent human being. (You can re-roll on this table to see what sort of deserving victim they are.) However, the heroes can’t let the villain win...no matter how much they’d like to.
- **HERO’S ASSOCIATE:** The villain is targeting a hero’s friend, family member,

Victims	
D12	VICTIM
1	Cop/Soldier
2	Damsel in Distress
3	Decent Folk
4	Deserving
5	Hero's Associate
6	Inanimate/Infrastructure
7	Innocent
8	Investigator/Journalist
9	Marginal Types
10	Politician
11	Professor
12	Relative



lover, mentor, or sidekick. Does the villain know of the connection? Is this just a ploy to entrap the hero?

- **INANIMATE/INFRASTRUCTURE:** The villain is aiming at a thing, not a person: a crucial railroad bridge, the prison, the bank.
- **INNOCENT:** The victim is fundamentally not involved in whatever is going on. (Except, of course, as a victim.) An “innocent victim” may be guilty of a whole different set of things, from embezzlement to black magic; this sort of red herring tangles the story nicely.
- **INVESTIGATOR/JOURNALIST:** The victim is someone who looks into mysteries or shines light on dark places. Has she uncovered the villain’s tracks? Is his investigation connected with the villain’s larger plan, or is it just bad luck? Is the villain competing with the investigator, or hiding from her?
- **MARGINAL TYPES:** The victim or victims are those on the margins of society: prostitutes, petty criminals, junkies, vagrants, etc. Aunt Jennies love to prey on those that society has abandoned, as do other monsters, some of them human.
- **POLITICIAN:** The victim is politically or financially connected to the local (or global!) power structure. As with the Cop/Soldier, the villain may have targeted them because of these connections, or because of their personal activities or attitudes.
- **PROFESSOR:** The victim is a scholar, inventor, or other egghead type. Villains love to kidnap, blackmail, or suborn Professors to make them use their research for villainy, or kill them if they won’t cooperate. Professors surprisingly often have beautiful daughters, for a bonus Damsel in Distress victim.
- **RELATIVE:** The victim is a relative of someone else in the story: a hero, the villain, or a long-running NPC. The blood tie may be the key to the adventure, or just a convenient hook to get things going.

## Guest Star

Many adventures have a “guest star” who is neither (primary) villain nor (primary) victim, but just shows up to help, to snarl things up, or to die informatively. (Or all three.) Sometimes the guest star provides the Hook; other times, the guest star provides a subplot or a red herring. This table can also work for “random guests at a party,” or (with some adjustment) for random encounters generally. Roll 1d12 on the **Guest Star Table** if desired:

- **CRIMINAL:** Someone on the other side of the law, though perhaps on the same side as the heroes. This might be a bandit, a racketeer, a rival thief, a smuggler, or anyone else with an interest in the main chance. Criminals make excellent sources of heroic gear, either bought on the black market or picked up from cooling bodies.
- **DETECTIVE:** Cooperative or competitive, someone else is looking into the heroes’ mystery, and perhaps into the heroes. The detective might be a relentless pursuer, a convenient way to get clues, or just another Marconi pistol at the show-down.
- **EXPERT/SCHOLAR:** Someone knows more than anyone about what’s going on. That someone may have their own agenda, or be blithely ignorant of the bigger picture. Experts are great for delivering key exposition right before dying even more informatively.
- **EXPLORER/SCOUT:** Back from the frontier, or met out in the wilds, an explorer is a breath of wilderness in civilization or a breath of civilization in the wilderness. The scout might guide the heroes to the adventure...or into a trap. Did they know?
- **FRIEND/RELATIVE:** Ideally, this should be someone who’s been on screen in another adventure, or at least mentioned awhile back. It’s not a bad idea to toss a friend into every couple of scenarios just so you have a backlog to kill, or endanger, or otherwise involve when you need one.

- **LOVE INTEREST:** Not necessarily a full-time girlfriend or spouse, the “love interest” can be a cute blonde or that helpful young lieutenant. They’re on screen to intrigue at least one hero. If the love interest intrigues *two* heroes, there’s your subplot right there.
- **MADMAN:** Ranting preacher, mad genius in a deserted warehouse, a soldier who’s seen too much, a fanatic obsessed with the heroes...madmen don’t have to be wrong to be interesting. Quite the reverse.
- **MERCENARY:** Someone combat-ready and combat-capable, tossed in to tangle up the chess game. The heroes have one more factor to keep their eye on...or perhaps one more gun in their posse.
- **MERCHANT:** Not necessarily an open and above-board shopkeeper or trader, a merchant might be a fence, a drug kingpin, an arms dealer, or something else convenient. Merchants also provide ready supplies for heroes and villains alike, and often have the most interesting stories about what’s going on just over the horizon.
- **OFFICIAL/BUREAUCRAT:** Almost always shows up to irritate, delay, harass, or even imprison the heroes, even in a campaign where the heroes work for the same bureaucracy. Every so often, throw in a helpful one as a change-up...which should make the heroes suspicious.
- **PRIEST/PREACHER:** As a guest star, the preacher is probably a good guy, if almost always out of his depth. (As a villain, the sky’s the limit.) He can provide introductions, medical care, and maybe a miracle or two.
- **RICH AND POWERFUL MAN:** If he’s not the Patron, he wants to be...unless he actually wants to be the villain. Rich and powerful men seldom involve themselves in adventures without a motive, or without lackeys and goons to make their motive known.

Guest Star	
D12	GUEST STAR
1	Criminal
2	Detective
3	Expert/Scholar
4	Explorer/Scout
5	Friend/Relative
6	Love Interest
7	Madman
8	Mercenary
9	Merchant
10	Official/Bureaucrat
11	Priest/Preacher
12	Rich and Powerful Man

Guest Star's Goal

To figure out what the guest star wants, should it come up, roll once on the **Heroes' Goal Table** and once on the **Villain's Goal Table**, and see which one you like better. Or which one makes more sense. Many guest stars just sort of want to know what's going on, and then they just want to survive it. That's often enough.

Obstacles

An adventure is the story of things going wrong in exciting fashion. Hence, there will likely be obstacles twisting the heroes' path and opening pits for the unwary. Roll 1d12 on the **Obstacle Table** and make some trouble.

- **ACCUSED:** The heroes are accused of something and have to clear their name or flee the jurisdiction. This might be the Hook, or it might happen midway through the action to goose things along, or it might happen at the end to get them moving on to the next adventure.
- **BANDITS/CRIMINALS:** Someone violent or unseemly or both tries to muscle in on the heroes' racket, or has been hired by the villain to delay them, or just shows up on (or across) the same trail.

- **CHIMERA:** A chimera is active in the area, or is guarding the treasure, or otherwise adds a nasty complication. Chimeras can drive the story in other directions: an Aunt Jenny might be a rival villain, while man-apes imply Soviet involvement.
- **DISASTER/WEATHER:** A great way to get rid of inconvenient excess gear, slow the heroes down, or keep them focused. This might be a blizzard, an avalanche, a hurricane, a shipwreck or plane crash, a monsoon, or anything else that can't be evaded but has to be dealt with.
- **MONSTER:** What's life without a wandering monster or three? This can just be a simple combat to get everyone's blood flowing, or it can be tied in with the main story line by plot or theme. Killing a giant snake while hunting Dionin cultists, or battling the wendigo and a Spetsnaz team in the Canadian wilds, can juice the scenario all kinds of ways.
- **MYSTERY:** Something in the adventure isn't what it looks like, and the heroes have to figure it out before they can go forward. A mystery can drop into any scenario; that said, most mystery scenarios are already mysterious enough without it.
- **OFFICIAL OPPOSITION:** Whoever's in charge doesn't want the heroes to succeed. This is par for the course in adventures of infiltration or theft, of course; it's more interesting when the powers that be shouldn't care—or should support—the heroes' actions.
- **RIVAL:** The heroes have a rival who wants the same thing they do, or wants to make sure that they don't get it. He can be the Hook at the beginning, show up in mid-story, or be the hidden villain behind it all along. He might be a "good guy" or a friendly rival, or he might be the "player on the other side" working for the Reds.
- **SECRECY:** The heroes have to complete their mission in secret: No explosions, no calling in the cavalry, no big holes left in the treasury or the landscape. Maybe they have to hide from surveillance the whole time, or mount a distraction, or frame someone else.
- **SOCIAL OPPOSITION:** The powers that be might be okay with it, but the locals don't like it. Maybe they're afraid, or deluded, or they worship the thing in the lake. Maybe they've got a secret of their own that they don't want the heroes to uncover while solving mysteries around them.
- **TRAP:** The heroes stumble into a trap in the course of things: a monster lair, a bandit ambush, a band of slavers "recruiting" for the mines, a quicksand bog, or just a horribly dangerous ruin. Perhaps the trap is set by the villain, perhaps it just happens to be in the way.
- **WAR:** War doesn't necessarily make robbing a bank any harder, but it sure doesn't make it easier. The same is true for most things heroes want to do. The war might be a Japanese attack, a gang war, a bandit raid, a rebel uprising, or a full-blown mercenary throw-down between St. Paul and Duluth.

## Obstacles

D12	OBSTACLE
1	Accused
2	Bandits/Criminals
3	Chimera
4	Disaster/Weather
5	Monster
6	Mystery
7	Official Opposition
8	Rival
9	Secrecy
10	Social Opposition
11	Trap
12	War

Twist

And then, suddenly, came the twist in Act Three! Not all adventures need twists, and if they all have them anyway then the campaign is either a cynical spy game or desperately unrealistic. That said, throwing a curve every few pitches keeps everyone honest. Spit on the ball or roll 1d12 on the **Twist Table**.

- **ALLY IN TROUBLE:** Either as a consequence of the heroes' actions, or as an unwelcome coincidence, a valued ally needs their help. Can they abandon the case to save their friend, or abandon their friend to save their plan? This can also be the "innocents in peril" twist, in which the heroes' action potentially endangers innocent bystanders. Do they risk it?
- **COOPERATE WITH VILLAIN:** Something bigger than either—a runaway doomsday robot, a dragon attack, a dero invasion—forces the heroes and the villain to cooperate. Who backstabs whom first?
- **DISCOVERY:** Resolving this adventure casts new light on something else. This discovery may change the heroes' relationship with an NPC, kick-start a new adventure, or force them into flight.
- **DOUBLE CROSS:** Somebody (likely whoever set the Hook) double-crossed the heroes and left them to take the fall. This often sets up an immediate sequel scenario with Revenge as the Heroes' Goal.
- **ESCALATION:** Settling one problem just opens the door to an even bigger problem. The monster has a mother off in the reservoir, the bandits were the only thing keeping the fascist Federales out of the valley, killing the Japanese general brings in reinforcements under a more competent admiral.
- **FALSE FLAG:** The heroes were recruited under false pretenses. Their Patron didn't work for Rhodes University, but the South African Police; the girl wasn't actually the professor's daughter but his lover; the dragon (and its treasure) doesn't exist, but there was plenty of awfulness in the ruin just the same. This isn't quite the same as a Double Cross, but the heroes were lied to, and might well resent it.
- **NATURAL HAZARD:** It was at just that moment that the volcano erupted! Something the heroes didn't count on and can't control shows up and wrecks things. This has a lot of similarities to the Disaster/Weather obstacle, but happens at the climax, not in the beginning or middle of the adventure.
- **SHOCKING REVELATION:** "He's not dead after all!" "So you were the Yellow Mask all along!" "You mean the ONI is in contact with undersea monsters?" "The doom-wolf Garm still lurks in the upper atmosphere?" The answer to the mystery turns something important on its head; it's the Discovery twist on steroids.
- **TICKING CLOCK:** Suddenly the adventure has a time limit. If the heroes don't steal the ruby tonight, it will be removed to the mayor's palace; if they don't stop the villain by sundown, he can escape on a Soviet sub; if they don't break up the cult before the new moon, the girl is snake-bait.

The Twist

D12	TWIST
1	Ally in Trouble
2	Cooperate with Villain
3	Discovery
4	Double Cross
5	Escalation
6	False Flag
7	Natural Hazard
8	Shocking Revelation
9	Ticking Clock
10	Trap
11	Unexpected Ally
12	Unexpected Foe

- **TRAP:** The whole thing was a trap! Were they double-crossed, or was the villain expecting them, or both? A macro-trap like this often involves a lesser trap, like fighting giant scorpions in the arena, or escaping a flooding bank vault.
- **UNEXPECTED ALLY:** The heroes have help from somewhere they didn't expect: the villain's beautiful mistress, the local tribes, an RRAF air strike. Sometimes this help comes with strings attached, or at least with the expectation of protection or paycheck.
- **UNEXPECTED FOE:** The heroes have trouble from somewhere they didn't expect: their native guide, a hidden Serpent cult, an IJAF air strike. The villain might not have expected it, either, of course.

## SAVAGE SAMPLES

To set up this shakedown for the Adventure Generator, I rolled a whole bunch of d12s...well, I had the computer do it, which was easier and made less noise. Let's use the raw results to bake some adventures; one for each of the Savage Skeletons in the Savage Campaigns section.

### The Shadows Over Ponape

The first Savage Sample is for the "Pirate's Grand Tour" story, a "Wolves Beyond the Border" style campaign. I rolled: 2, 6, 10, 8, 5, 4, 8, 1, 11, 2. The first Hook I get with the 2 is "Duty/Honor," which seems unlikely for a bunch of pirates. So I toss that and go with the 6, for a "MacGuffin." What's a better pirate MacGuffin than a treasure map? The Location is 10, "Villain's Lair," so we have a map to a Japanese admiral's cache of loot.

The Heroes' Goal would seem obvious (get treasure), so we skip ahead to Villain, which is also obvious (a Japanese admiral), but the 8 means he's a "Fanatic," and that's always fun. His Villain Goal is 5, "Kidnap," which might mean he planted the map to lure the heroes to his island lair. I rolled a 4 for his Henchmen, "Cultists" (I'm liking this Pacific island better and better...) and an 8 for his Victim, "Investigator." Sounds like the admiral meant to plant the map for someone else, and the heroes got in the way; this implies an opening scene with the investigator and the heroes fighting over the treasure map.

It doesn't sound like we need a Guest Star, so we'll skip that and look for Obstacles. We get a 1, "Accused." Does the investigator accuse the heroes of stealing his map? That sounds like it would slow down the story; the next one is an 11, "Trap," which sounds more like it. Of course a Pacific island controlled by a fanatical Japanese admiral, stocked with Ryujin cultists, would be full of death traps. If we need a Twist, we have 2, "Cooperate With Villain," so maybe some horrible tentacled monstrosity rises up at the climax, and the heroes need to convince the Japanese Navy to bombard it, hopefully while they escape with the treasure and the investigator on their own fast boat to somewhere else.

### You Can Always Tell Blood

Now, let's do a Savage Sample for the "Yesterday Was Quite Enough" story, a "Servants of the Crown" style campaign. I rolled: 4, 8, 3, 8, 6, 7, 10, 7, 12, 3, 7, 3, 12. The Hook is 4, "Innocent Beginning," which we can fill in once we get some sense of the rest of the adventure. The Location is an 8, a "Settlement/Outpost," let's say somewhere on the Afghan frontier.

The Heroes' Goal is a 3, "Discover/Solve Mystery," which seems straightforward enough. The Villain is, let's see ... we got an 8, and then a 6, which gives us a "Fanatic" or a "Cultist," but we just used those in the last example. So the next one is a 7, or a "Despot." What does he want? The Villain's Goal is 10, "Survive." This is interesting: how does a British fort threaten the life of a despot? Is the despot under the gun, maybe from the Russians? Maybe the despot is a vampire, and the fort sits on his ancestral burying ground. The first idea sounds more like a spy story, so we'll go with it. The villain's Henchman is a 7, a "Mob." The populace of his benighted principality,

most likely, who turn their delightful local folkways (and sharp Afghan knives) against the heroes. The Victim is a 12, a "Relative." It might be more interesting if the commander of the fort was (unbeknownst to him?) related to the despot; maybe he'd even make a claimant to the throne, if the relationship were discovered. The Russians have turned up proof of the relationship, and are urging the despot to act.

Cue the Guest Star, 3, an "Expert/Scholar," doubtless of the local genealogy. Does the despot's attempted assassination of the genealogist – perhaps at an innocent royal reception in Kashmir—trigger the heroes' involvement? (What does the genealogist want, what's her Guest Star's Goal? Comparing the 7 "Reward" from the Heroes' Goal table with the 3 "Discover" from the Villain's Goal table gives us a genealogist who either wants to find the truth ... or wants to blackmail the despot with it. Hmmm.) The Obstacle is a 3, "Chimera," which sounds like there's a fight with a troop of Soviet man-apes in the works, probably once the heroes get onto the track of the despot. And the 12 on the Twist, "Unexpected Foe," sounds like the genealogist turning on the heroes once they blow her blackmail scheme. Excelsior!

## Snakes and Leaders

Our third Savage Sample is for "Our Own Private Iowa," a "Phoenix and the Sword" type campaign. I rolled: 9, 1, 4, 4, 6, 5, 3, 3, 6, 10, 7. The Hook is 9, an "Old Enemy." Let's say it's one of the political bosses of Cedar Rapids, just to start with. The Location is 1, "City," so maybe the adventure happens in Cedar Rapids. (Our City Location is 4, "Church.") A 4 on the Heroes' Goal is "Escape/Rescue." Are they trapped in Cedar Rapids? Or does their old enemy the boss want the heroes to rescue someone? Or did the boss kidnap someone the heroes have to rescue? All good story possibilities; let's see.

Our Villain is 6, a "Cultist," and since we got a Church location, we'll let it ride. The Villain's Goal is 5, "Kidnap," which works well enough with the Escape/Rescue heroes' goal to keep around. For Henchmen we get a doozy, 3, a "Corrupted Hero." This sounds like a former ally in Davenport who has fallen for the Serpent cult. The Victims are 3, "Decent Folk," which fits well enough, too. For Guest Star, we get a 6, a "Love Interest." Did she get kidnapped? Let's leave her goal out of it, as it's probably to rescue the heroes or get rescued by them. The Obstacle is "10," Social Opposition – the boss (or the Cult, or both) have grass-roots support in Cedar Rapids. The Twist is 7, a "Natural Hazard," which is probably a fire given the setting.

Putting it all together: The heroes track the disappearance of their ally and girlfriend to Cedar Rapids, where their old enemy the boss seems tied up in things. But (after suitable persuasion, which alienates the townsfolk) he claims he's as confused as they are. Do they trust him? They have to find the girl, and root out the Serpent Cultist, and suffer the shock of finding their old friend on the Serpent's side. It can only end in fire...

## The Corpses Have Begun To Sprout

Our final Savage Sample is for the "Istanbul Not Constantinople" series, a "City of the Emerald Night" type campaign. I rolled: 1, 12, 8, 11, 9, 10, 5, 7, 3, 9, 7, 11. The Hook is 1, "Caught Up in Events," which sounds promising. We know the main location is the city, so on the City Location Subtable, we get a 12, a "Secret Location," and rolling again we get an 8, "Sewers/Subways." A quick consult with Wikipedia tells us that Istanbul didn't have a subway in 1945, so it must be an old Byzantine-era sewer tunnel, lost centuries ago during some long-forgotten spate of urban renewal.

The Heroes' Goal is 11, "Survive," which sounds about right if they're merely caught up in events. Who's down in that forgotten sewer? A 9, a "Mastermind." This is great stuff! His rolled goal is 10, "Survive," which definitely makes him a vampire. Perhaps he's Dracula himself, killed by the Turks in 1476 and buried down here where the waters of the Bosphorus would keep him at bay forever – until the Serpentfall shifted the sea levels. With the help of his Henchman, a 5 or "Femme Fatale," he is rebuilding his army of the night ... just when the heroes stumbled into things. His key Victim

is, unsurprisingly, an “Innocent” (from the 7), and there’s a Guest Star who is another 3, an “Expert/Scholar,” but what’s Dracula without a Van Helcinglu?

To make it interesting, let’s apply that 9 to the Villain’s Goal table and decide that Helcinglu’s goal is not to destroy Dracula but to “Subvert/Recruit” Dracula to the side of the Turkish resistance to the Communists! Quite a tall order, you might think. Do the heroes help Helcinglu, or do their best to kill Dracula and his bride? If they oppose Helcinglu, they may meet 7, “Official Opposition” from the Turkish resistance commanders; if they need one, they might find an 11, an “Unexpected Ally,” even deeper in the sewer: a reanimated Byzantine knight, perhaps



## — Appendix: Poisoned Lands Encounters —

Each day the heroes spend traveling in the Poisoned Lands (as opposed to adventuring inside a city), draw a card from your Action Deck. If you draw a face card, roll on the **Main Encounter Table**, and then on the indicated secondary table or tables, to see just what trouble the heroes wander into. If you draw a Joker, it’s a really exciting day: roll twice on the **Main Encounter Table** and combine the results. Reshuffle the deck after every encounter.

These tables can also inform encounters in the west slope of the Rockies, or in the wilder stretches of Texas jurisdiction: New Mexico, Oklahoma, Louisiana, etc.

Main Encounter Table	
D12	ENCOUNTER TYPE
1-4	People
5	Event
6	Hazard
7-8	Animal
9+	Monster

Modify the roll on the **Main Encounter Table** by +1 for the Drowned Coast and +2 for the High Plains. Roll on the corresponding table for the specifics of a given adventure.

### ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS

Modify the roll on the **Animal Table** by -1 for the Drowned Coast, +1 for the Mayoralities, and +2 for the High Plains.

- **BISON:** Use Bull statistics from the *Savage Worlds* rulebook (p. 145).
- **MOUNTAIN LION:** Use Lion statistics from the *Savage Worlds* rulebook (p. 150), but change Size to +1 and Toughness to 7.

Animal Encounters	
D12	ANIMAL ENCOUNTERED
0	1d4 Sharks
1	1d6 Alligators
2-4	1d4 Bears
5-7	2d12 Bison
8	Lion; roll 1d6 for type:
1	1d2 escaped zoo lions
2-6	1 mountain lion
9+	Wolves; roll 1d6 for type:
1	2d4 Dire wolves
2-3	3d6 Wolves
4-6	4d6 Feral dogs

Events		
D10	EVENT ENCOUNTERED	
0-1	Battle; roll 1d6 for timing (1-5: Grisly aftermath; 6: In progress) and 2d6 twice for the two sides:	
	2	2d4x10 Elite Soldiers
	3	3d6 Elite Soldiers and 1d6x100 Soldiers
	4	2d4 Elite Soldiers and 1d6x100 Militia
	5	1d8x100 Soldiers
	6	2d6x10 Soldiers and 1d6x100 Militia
	7-8	2d4x100 Militia
	9-10	2d10x10 Bandits
	11	1d4x100 Bandits
	12	2d6 Elite Soldiers and 1d4x100 Bandits
2-5	Ambush; roll 1d6 for timing (1-2: In progress; 3-4: Grisly aftermath; 5-6: Of the heroes!) and 2d6 for ambushers:	
	2	1d8 Cultists
	3	1d8 Ghouls
	4-8	1d10 Bandits
	9-10	2d10 Militia
	11	2d8 Soldiers
	12	1d10 Slavers
6	Crash Site; roll 1d8 to see what crashed (1: Plane; 2-3: Truck; 4-5: Car; 6: Jeep; 7: Train; 8: AFV) and 2d6 for what's left:	
	2	Being Looted Right Now (roll 1d6 for by who)
	1-3	1d10 Bandits
	4	2d10 Militia
	5	1d8 Soldiers
	6	Roll on People table
	3	1d4 Survivors
	4-7	Mere wreckage
	8-9	Documents
	10-11	Treasure or gear
	12	Vehicle salvageable with Repair raise
7	Cave (1-3: Monster; 4: Bear; 5: Bandit hideout; 6: Bandit hideout with 1d6 bandits)	
8+	Ruin; roll 1d6 for its age (1-2: Very recent; 3-5: Serpentfall or after; 6: Old pre-Serpentfall ruin) and 1d8 for what it was:	
	1	Cemetery
	2	Church
	3-4	Farmhouse
	5	Large Building
	6	Hamlet
	7	Mansion
	8	Small Town



## EVENTS

Modify the roll on the **Event Table** by -1 for the Mayoralalties, and +1 for the Drowned Coast.

- **BANDITS:** For any result of “Bandits,” roll 1d6. On a 1-2, use the Veteran Bandit statistics. On the Drowned Coast, bandits are likely (2 in 3 chance) to be pirates.
- **BATTLE:** Roll twice on the **Random Allegiance Table** (see p. 122) to identify the sides. Roll 1d6 to determine each side’s equipment; 1-2: No transport to speak of; 3-4: One or two heavy weapons, horses, mules, and wagons; 5: 2d6 heavy weapons or motor vehicles; 6: Sufficient heavy weapons and motor vehicles. Modify this roll by +2 for Elite Soldiers, +1 for Soldiers, and -1 for Bandits. A “heavy weapon” is a machine gun, a mortar, a rocket launcher, a light artillery piece, or (rarely) an AFV. Officers and bandit chiefs may be mounted even in all-foot units. In mixed units (Elite Soldiers and Soldiers, or Soldiers and Militia), the more skilled unit has a 1 in 4 chance of being mercenaries.
- **RUIN:** Roll again on the Monster or People Table (or both!) to populate the ruin, or just roll on the Crash Site “what’s left” subtable to see what’s left in the ruin.
- **SLAVERS:** Slave traders, either admitted (usually part of the New Konfederacy) or sub rosa (“indenture-dealers,” “vagrant-takers,” “POW handlers”). Slaves are usually destined for field work or coal mining. Use Bandit statistics, and add 2d10 slaves in a coffle.

## HAZARDS

Modify the roll on the **Hazard Table** by -2 for the High Plains and +1 for the Drowned Coast. Apply the same modifiers to the 1d6 roll under the Storm result.

## MONSTER ENCOUNTERS

Modify the roll on the **Monster Table** by -4 for the Drowned Coast and +4 for the High Plains.

### Hazard Table

2D8	HAZARD ENCOUNTERED
0-3	Avalanche/Landslide
4	Tornado
5	Fire
7-9	Storm; roll 1d6 for type: (<2 = Dust, 2 = Blizzard, 3 = Sleet/Ice, 4+ Downpour)
10-11	Flood
12	Fog
13-14	Bog/Mud/Swamp
15-16	Flood
17	Hurricane

### Monster Table

2D12	MONSTER ENCOUNTERED
<0	Devil-Flower
0	1d6 Giant Sea Scorpions
1	Kraken
2	1d2 Giant Alligators
3	Swamp Devil (roll 1d4; on a 1, add 1d10 Bandit servitors)
4-5	2d6 Ghouls
6	1d4 Nagas
7	Hydra (with 1d6+7 heads)
8	Aunt Jenny
9	Demon (roll on the <b>Random Demon Table</b> on p. 87)
10-14	Giant Snake (roll 1d8; 1-3: 20', 4-5: 30', 6-7: 50', 8: 80')
15	1d6+2 Giant Spiders
16-17	1d8 Ghouls
18-19	Fly-By-Night
20-21	1d6+2 Enormous Scorpions
22	Thunderbird
23-24	1d4 Wendigo
25-26	1d2 Giant Gila Monsters
27+	1d4 Death-Worms

## PEOPLE

Roll on the **Transport Table** (see p. 122) and **Allegiance Table** (see p. 122) to flesh out people encountered in the Poisoned Lands. Modify the roll on the **People Table** by -2 for the High Plains and +1 for the Drowned Coast.

Determine the encounter time of day, and roll 1d6. By night, a result of 1-4 means the people encountered are encamped; a result of 5-6 means they are on the move. Reverse these results for daytime, for fugitives or refugees, and for Serpent cultists.

- **BANDITS:** For any result of “Bandits,” roll 1d6. On a 1-2, use the Veteran Bandit statistics. On the Drowned Coast, bandits are likely (2 in 3 chance) to be pirates.
- **BOUNTY HUNTER:** Almost always armed with a rifle, and mounted on horseback. Use Elite Soldier statistics; add Tracking d8 and either Knowledge (Hunting) or Streetwise at d8.
- **FRIEND:** Someone previously known to the heroes, ideally someone on good terms with them who they owe a favor.
- **FUGITIVE:** Usually exciting NPCs (or an exciting NPC with a few followers) fleeing a possible adventure hook. Roll on the Guest Star table in the **Adventure Generator** (p. 112) for their nature, and apply a pre-existing template or generate additional statistics ad hoc.
- **GERMAN P.O.W.s:** By 1945, the U.S. held over 425,000 Axis prisoners of war (mostly Germans) in 125 camps spread over 45 states. “Elite Soldiers” will be former Waffen-SS, Airmen will be former Luftwaffe (mostly fighter pilots), Sailors will be former Kriegsmarine (U-boat crew), Soldiers will be former Wehrmacht. You can also mix the types.
- **INDIANS:** With the collapse of the U.S. government in the north and east, members of some Indian nations have left their reservations to hunt for food and defend themselves against monster attacks. Use Militia Soldier statistics; raise Notice to d6 and add Riding d6, Survival d6, and Tracking d6. It’s up to you whether the Indians are accompanied by a medicine man, and whether (or which) of such a shaman’s claimed powers actually work.
- **PREACHERS:** Itinerant preachers, Mormon, Catholic, Baptist, etc. Use Bandit statistics, with Spirit d8 and no dice in Gambling, Stealth, or Tracking, and without the bandits’ Edges or Hindrances. Add Knowledge (Religion) d6. At least one preacher will have the Holy Roller Hindrance; if you like, one preacher may have Arcane Background (Miracles) and Faith d8.
- **PROSPECTORS:** Transients looking for salvageable gear, stores, or raw materials. Use Bandit statistics with Knowledge (Scrounging) d8 and Repair d6.
- **SETTLERS OR REFUGEES:** Normal folks seeking a better life, one way or another. Use Bandit statistics, with no dice in Gambling, Stealth, or Tracking, and without the bandits’ Edges or Hindrances. Add Knowledge (Trade or Craft) d4.
- **SOLDIERS:** A “heavy weapon” is a machine gun, a mortar, a rocket launcher, a light artillery piece, or (rarely) an AFV.
- **TEXAS RANGERS:** If the encounter is too far from Texas to seem reasonable (north or east of Memphis, Tennessee, say), reroll or use local law enforcement instead.
- **THUGS:** Only encountered very near cities, except as escorts for major crime figures traveling to (rare) meetings. If the encounter is too far from a city to be believable on its own merits, and if you can’t come up with an entertaining justification, replace thugs with bandits or reroll.

### Random Transport Table

Roll 2d6 for random travelers in the Poisoned Lands. Slaves in a coffle, prisoners on a chain gang, and young children will not have horses or (probably) vehicles. Modify the roll by -2 for Indians, +1 for soldiers, +2 for elite soldiers or merchants, and +3 for politicians, Texas Rangers, or

## People

2D12	PEOPLE ENCOUNTERED	
<1	Loner	
2		1d8 Indians; roll 1d6 for what they're doing now:
	1-2	Hunting
	3-4	Hot pursuit
	5-6	Fleeing from whites
3		Texas Rangers; roll 1d6 for their numbers: 1-3: One Ranger; 4-6: 1d4 Rangers
4		1d4 Bounty Hunters; roll 1d6 for what they're doing now:
	1-3	Looking for escapees or fugitives
	4	Looking for wanted criminals
	5-6	Hunting for monsters
5	1d6 Preachers	
6	Friend	
7		Merchants; roll 1d6 for the composition of their party
	1-2	1d4 merchants (small group)
	3-5	Small group of 1d4 merchants, with 1d6 guards
	6	Caravan; 1d6+2 merchants, with 1d8 guards apiece
8-9		2d8 Soldiers plus 1 officer; roll 1d6 for T.O.:
	1	Elite soldiers with 1d4 heavy weapons
	2	Elite soldiers without heavy weapons
	3	Normal soldiers with 1d4 heavy weapons
	4-6	Normal soldiers without heavy weapons
10-11	1d8 Serpent Cultists; roll 1d6 for their leadership (they have a cult leader along on a 1) and another 1d6 for what they're doing now:	
	1-2	Kidnapping someone
	3-5	Engaging in vile rituals (always with cult leader)
	6	Hunting the heroes
12-14		1d10 Bandits plus one bandit chief
15		2d10 Militia; roll 1d6 for their mission:
	1-2	Tax collecting
	3-4	Coal convoy guards
	5	Hot pursuit
	6	Patrol
16-17		1d12 Settlers or Refugees
18		Politician (1-2: Alone; 3-6: With entourage and guards)
19		4d10 Chain gang prisoners (plus 2d4 guards; use Militia or Police)
20		1d6 Fugitives; roll 1d6 to see who or what they are escaping from:
	1-2	The nearest city
	3-4	Roll on People table
	5	Roll on Monster table
	6	Roll on Hazard table
21-22		1d4 Prospectors
23	German P.O.W.s; roll 1d6 for their statistics (1: Elite Soldiers; 2: Airmen; 3-4: Sailors; 5-6: Soldiers) and then 1d6 again for what they're doing now:	
	1-4	2d10 Chain Gang
	5	2d6 Mercenaries
	6	1d8 Bandits
24	1d6 Thugs	
25+	Loner	

caravans. In the Drowned Coast, replace “horse and wagon” with rowboat or skiff.

Random Allegiance Table

Roll 2d8 for randomly encountered people in the Poisoned Lands. At your discretion, such random allegiances may be temporary, rented, lightly held, or fanatical.

Modify the roll by -1 for the Drowned Coast and -3 for the High Plains. Gang, City, and City Faction sub-results indicate the attitude toward the heroes (enemy, neutral, or allied) of the distant leaders of the gang, city, or faction. The specific encountered people might still react differently, depending on the heroes’ actions or attitudes. (As a rule of thumb, the leaders’ opinion weights the **NPC Reaction Table** on p. 132 of the *Savage Worlds* rulebook: -2 for Enemy leaders, +2 for Allied leaders)

- **ALMIGHTY DOLLAR:** This result might indicate thieves, bandits, prospectors, or mercenaries. Interpret it based on the situation.
- **AMERICA:** Decide whether this indicates loyalty to President Warren, to Texas, to Utah, or to some other aspect of the United States.
- **CITY FACTION:** Indicates allegiance to a faction within a city, not to the city per se.
- **ELKS, KIWANIS, LIONS:** The fraternal orders attempt to remain true to their larger ideals: decency, patriotism, respect, mutual assistance, and “small-town values.” Some of them have begun recruiting their own mercenaries; perhaps in a century, they will be the equivalent of the Templars and Hospitallers.
- **GANG:** This result indicates bandits, thugs, or other crooks with allegiance to a larger group of their own, or to a specific bandit chief or thug boss.
- **KKK:** Support for the “New Konfederacy” is not merely a Southern phenomenon in the wake of the Serpentfall, although only in the Grand County of Birmingham in Alabama has the Klan been able to take open control of the government.
- **NONE:** This result indicates loners, barbarians, and others who reject society. Interpret it based on the situation.
- **OUTSIDE:** In the High Plains, change this result to None. In the Drowned Coast, this might indicate Royal Navy anti-piracy patrols, or their informers. In the Mayoralties, this might indicate advisers, spies, or couriers, or escaped German P.O.W.s loyal to the Reich.
- **THE SERPENT:** In the case of soldiers, politicians, or others who should have a different overt allegiance, it indicates secret Serpent cultism. Roll again for the allegiance they pretend to hold.

Random Transport	
2D6	TRANSPORT
0-4	On foot
5-6	Pack mules
7	Pack mules if needed; Horses for leaders only
8	Horse and wagon
9	Horses for everyone, wagon if needed
10-11	Horses for everyone, motor vehicle for leaders
12+	Motor vehicles for everyone

Random Allegiance	
2D8	ALLEGIANCE
<3	The Serpent
3	Outside (Russian, British, etc.)
4-5	None
6	America
7	Gang (1-4: Enemy, 5: Neutral, 6: Allied)
8	Almighty Dollar
9-10	City (1-2: Enemy, 3-4: Neutral, 5-6: Allied)
11	City Faction (1-2: Enemy, 3-4: Neutral, 5-6: Allied)
12	Elks, Kiwanis, Lions
13	KKK
14-15	Free Colored Army
16	Iowa Soviet

# Inspirations

Some of this book is based on actual fact. Stalin's ape experiments really happened, though they didn't bear fruit. Former Vice-President Henry Wallace really was a Communist fellow-traveler with a mystical hookup for Inner Asian grain. The Nazis really did have a sub-division of the SS dedicated to, among other things, poetry research.

My immediate inspiration for **The Day After Ragnarok** was reading the quote that starts off the "Serpentfall" chapter:

*"The Nazi myth which is important...[to] men like Hitler requires a Götterdämmerung..."*

— U.S. WAR DEPARTMENT COUNTERINTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT, FEB. 12, 1945

If you take that literally, what does it mean? It means that the end of the world was a Nazi war aim. And one end specifically: Wagner's *Götterdämmerung*, the Twilight of the Gods, or in the Norse, Ragnarok. For Ragnarok, and Norse myth in general, H.R. Ellis Davidson's *Gods and Myths of Northern Europe* remains my go-to source. It's probably a trifle academically outmoded by now, but it's matchlessly clear and honest, two qualities not often found in mythography. I prefer W.H. Auden's translation of the *Völuspá* ("The Song of the Sibyl") in sheerly poetic terms, but I kludged together a bunch of different versions for the header quotes in this book, with a strong bias toward dramatic language. The poem shaped the way I shaped the world. I discovered the Narts in C. Scott Littleton and Linda A. Malcor's extraordinarily strange book *From Scythia to Camelot*; the specific connection between Prometheus, Loki, and Nasren I owe to John Colarusso's essay "Prometheus Among the Circassians."

Every scenario involving Nazi invocation of Norse deities probably owes its seed-pearl to David Brin's short story "Thor Versus Captain America." I just took Brin's message ("The Nazis were schmucks!") to its logical extreme. Most of the mega-tsunami came from just scaling up the various disaster scenarios for the Canary Islands mega-tsunami that's supposedly in store once La Palma drops into the sea. The rest came from *Lucifer's Hammer*, by Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle. This 1977 post-apocalyptic novel is about a cometary impact, but it's the same sort of thing.

There's a lot of the Seventies in this setting, or rather, a lot of fiction I devoured in the Seventies in order to avoid paying too much attention to the Seventies. That was the decade that I discovered the biggest single influence on this book: Robert E. Howard's Conan stories. I don't honestly know if I read the Marvel comic first or the Lancer Books paperbacks hacked together by L. Sprague de Camp and Lin Carter. While I can't in good conscience recommend those Lancer editions (though they did a great job of hooking my ten-year-old self), Roy Thomas' Marvel Comics *Conan the Barbarian* still holds up today. Dark Horse Comics has collected Thomas' entire run on the series in sixteen or so trade paperbacks, featuring glorious art by (among others) Gil Kane, Howard Chaykin, John Buscema, and of course Barry Windsor-Smith. I took further inspiration from Ian Sturrock's **Conan RPG** (from Mongoose), Michael Surbrook's lovingly detailed "Creature Adaptations" Web page for the **Hero System** (which includes several Howardian monsters), and Curtis M. Scott's **GURPS Conan**, but I single out for praise Steve Rennick's wonderfully old-school **Savage Worlds** Netbook, **Savage Sword of Conan**. His encounter tables, especially, inspired and propelled my Poisoned Lands random tables to new heights. All that said, the first and last resort must now be to Howard's original material, published in three fine volumes by Del Rey: *The Coming of Conan the Cimmerian*, *The Bloody Crown of Conan*, and *The Conquering Sword of Conan*. (In Britain, they're published by Wandering Star, under the immensely dull title *Conan of Cimmeria*.)

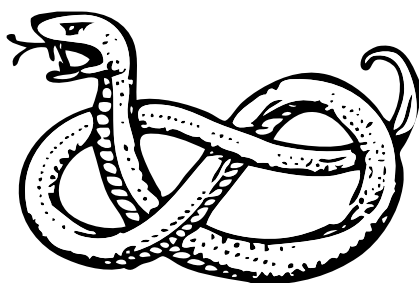
The other major influence on this setting is a sort of cloud of stuff, having something of its last hurrah in the Seventies: a bunch of SF, spy fiction, and adventure stories in which Britain was still the center of the world. This cloud swirls around such icons as Ian Fleming's James Bond, Nigel Kneale's wonderful Professor Quatermass, Terrance Dicks' UNIT (from *Dr. Who*), and

Frank Hampson's *Dan Dare: Pilot of the Future*. All of this wonderfulness came surging into my forebrain once I figured out that some of the British Empire survived the Serpentfall, and I wrote accordingly. This is probably where I should mention S.M. Stirling's alternate history novel, *The Peshawar Lancers*, in which a comet strike (again!) wipes out Europe and America in 1878, leaving the British Empire to rebuild in India. (Stirling even tied that universe to Conan, in his short story "Shikari in Galveston," a stalker-ish homage to Robert E. Howard's Conan story "Beyond the Black River.") While I have my nits to pick with Stirling, this novel is better than his average, and is an undeniable inspiration for ***The Day After Ragnarok***.

I packed in all manner of other war, adventure, and spy shows and comics around the edges; much of it I no doubt absorbed back then, and some of it I've discovered (or rediscovered) since. Of that material, Milton Caniff's *Terry and the Pirates* and *Steve Canyon* comics should be obvious influences. Jess Nevins continues to serve as my un-indicted navigator on these adventures, this time primarily through his *Encyclopedia of Pulp Heroes*, coming soon from Monkeybrain Books. It's about time I dedicated one of these to him.

## About the Author

Kenneth Hite is the multiple Origins and Ennie Award-winning author, co-author, or designer of over 70 roleplaying game books and supplements, including ***GURPS WWII: Weird War II***, ***Back East: the South*** for ***Deadlands***, ***Targets of Opportunity*** for ***Delta Green***, and ***Trail of Cthulhu***. For ten years, he was the Higher Strangeness columnist for *Pyramid* magazine, producing over 300 "Suppressed Transmissions." Other recent works include a work of Lovecraftian criticism, *Tour de Lovecraft: the Tales*, the Mythos introduction *Cthulhu 101*, and two children's books: *Where the Deep Ones Are* and *The Antarctic Express*. His ***Hero System*** supplement ***Adventures Into Darkness*** combined H.P. Lovecraft with Golden Age comics; he has not yet tackled Clark Ashton Smith. He lives in Chicago with his wife Sheila, the mandatory writer's cat, seven thousand or so books, and a well-tempered blade.



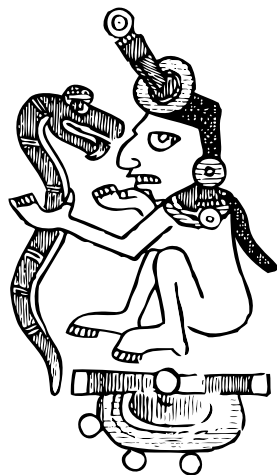
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# THE DAY AFTER RAGNAROK

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Nationality: \_\_\_\_\_  
Description: \_\_\_\_\_

## Attributes

<div>4</div> <div>6</div> <div>8</div> <div>10</div> <div>12</div>	Agility	Base		Mod	AV
<div>4</div> <div>6</div> <div>8</div> <div>10</div> <div>12</div>	Smarts		Charisma		
<div>4</div> <div>6</div> <div>8</div> <div>10</div> <div>12</div>	Strength		Pace		
<div>4</div> <div>6</div> <div>8</div> <div>10</div> <div>12</div>	Spirit		Parry		
<div>4</div> <div>6</div> <div>8</div> <div>10</div> <div>12</div>	Vigor		Toughness		

## Hindrances

## Edges

## Skills

<div>4</div> <div>6</div> <div>8</div> <div>10</div> <div>12</div>		<div>4</div> <div>6</div> <div>8</div> <div>10</div> <div>12</div>	
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## Gear

## Armor

Head: \_\_\_\_\_  
Torso: \_\_\_\_\_  
Arms: \_\_\_\_\_  
Legs: \_\_\_\_\_  
  
Total Wt Carried: \_\_\_\_\_  
Weight Limit: \_\_\_\_\_  
Encumbrance Penalty: \_\_\_\_\_

## Permanent Injuries

Power/Trapping	Cost	Range	Damage/Effect	Duration
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Weapon	Range	ROF	AP	WT	Notes
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